

BUKTI KORESPONDENSI

ARTIKEL JURNAL NASIONAL

TERAKREDITASI KEMENRISTEKDIKTI SINTA 2

Judul Artikel : ***Hospitality Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact***

Jurnal : Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas, dan Perjalanan 10 (2) 2026

Penulis : Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani

NO	PERIHAL E-MAIL	TANGGAL
1.	Bukti konfirmasi submit artikel dan artikel yang disubmit	21 Juni 2026
2.	Bukti konfirmasi editorial revision-1	12 Juli 2026
3.	Bukti konfirmasi submit hasil editorial revision-1	13 Juli 2026
4.	Bukti konfirmasi Editor Decision Accept Submission	27 Juli 2026
5.	Bukti konfirmasi copyediting/sending it to production	3 Agustus 2026
6.	Bukti konfirmasi payment	5 Agustus 2026
7.	Bukti konfirmasi publikasi artikel	27 Agustus 2026

[JK] Submission Acknowledgement

2 messages

jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>
Reply-To: "Dr. Fajar Kusnadi Kusumah Putra" <jk@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>
To: Yayan Sugiarto <yayansugiartonhi@gmail.com>

21 June 2026 at 13:56

Yayan Sugiarto:

Thank you for submitting the manuscript, "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact" to Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan. With the online journal management system that we are using, you will be able to track its progress through the editorial process by logging in to the journal web site:

Submission URL: <https://journal.poltekpar-nhi.ac.id/index.php/jk/authorDashboard/submission/2747>

Username: yayan26

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you for considering this journal as a venue for your work.

Dr. Fajar Kusnadi Kusumah Putra



Yayan Sugiarto <yayansugiartonhi@gmail.com>
To: "Dr. Fajar Kusnadi Kusumah Putra" <jk@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>

22 June 2026 at 11:18

Dear Dr. Fajar Kusnadi Kusumah Putra,

Thank you for your email and for confirming the receipt of our manuscript entitled "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact."

We appreciate the opportunity to submit our work to Journal of Tourism: Destinations, Hospitality and Travel. We are grateful for the editorial team's consideration and look forward to the review process. We will monitor the progress of the manuscript through the journal system and are ready to provide any additional information or revisions that may be required.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[Quoted text hidden]

[JK] Editor Decision

1 message

jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id> 12 July 2026 at 08:24
Reply-To: Journal Manager <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>
To: Yayan Sugiarto <yayansugiartonhi@gmail.com>, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury <ratnaintan83@gmail.com>, Dewi Fitriani <pipopdewi@gmail.com>

Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani:

We have reached a decision regarding your submission to Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan, "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact".

Our decision is: Revisions Required

Reviewer B:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

Originality

This manuscript offers a reasonably interesting integrative proposition by combining Sustainable Performance Management, Psychological Empowerment, and Ethical Leadership within a single structural model to predict Employee Voice Behavior in the Indonesian hospitality industry.

Scientific Quality

This manuscript demonstrates promising scientific quality, characterized by an ambitious conceptual framework and an appropriately selected analytical approach through PLS-SEM

Relevance to the Field(s) of this Journal

this article is suitable for this journal

General Comment

This manuscript presents a topically relevant and practically urgent subject within the Indonesian hospitality industry context, integrating Sustainable Performance Management, Psychological Empowerment, and Ethical Leadership as predictors of Employee Voice Behavior within a single structural model

Abstract

The abstract of this manuscript broadly covers several required components, albeit with uneven quality.

Introduction

see comments

Literature Review

see comments

Methodology

see comments

Results

see comments

Discussions

see comments

Conclusions

see comments

References / Bibliography

-

Figures

-

Tables

-

Others

-

Reviewer's Decision Comment

Overall, this manuscript addresses a relevant topic and carries reasonable contributory potential to the sustainable HRM literature within the Indonesian hospitality industry context.

Reviewer C:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

Originality

The study demonstrates moderate originality and contributes incremental knowledge to sustainable HRM and hospitality literature rather than merely replicating previous work.

Scientific Quality

The manuscript demonstrates satisfactory scientific rigor and methodological soundness. With minor improvements in theoretical interpretation and discussion.

Relevance to the Field(s) of this Journal

The manuscript fits well within the aims and scope of the journal and represents a relevant contribution to hospitality and tourism management research.

General Comment

The manuscript is well organized, methodologically sound, and addresses a relevant research topic. With several refinements in positioning its theoretical contribution and strengthening the interpretation of the findings, the manuscript has good potential for publication.

Abstract

The explanation of the research objectives can be simplified, and the research results in the abstract are still interpretative and do not reflect the real results.

Introduction

There are still many empirical references that are too outdated, use newer empirical references, at least from the last 5 years and add more references related to the paragraphs or narratives presented.

Literature Review

Each proposed research hypothesis must be preceded by a narrative that supports the influence between variables, supported by at least 4 previous studies that are not outdated.

Methodology

The conceptual framework, research design, measurement model, sampling strategy, and analytical procedures are generally adequate and support the validity of the empirical findings.

Results

Several paragraphs simply restate the numerical values already presented in the tables without providing additional interpretation

Discussions

The negative moderating effect of Ethical Leadership is one of the most interesting findings of the study. However, the discussion only provides a brief explanation.

Conclusions

The recommended revisions mainly involve strengthening the statement of theoretical contribution, maintaining closer alignment between the conclusions and the reported evidence, highlighting the study's most distinctive finding, and including concise recommendations for future research.

References / Bibliography

Writing references in accordance with the APA style

Figures

Figure presentation in accordance with the provisions

Tables

Table presentation in accordance with the provisions

Others

This manuscript addresses a relevant issue in sustainable human resource management within the hospitality industry and presents a methodologically sound quantitative study. The research design, data analysis, and presentation of results are generally well executed, and the findings offer useful insights into the relationships among Sustainable Performance Management, Psychological Empowerment, Ethical Leadership, and Employee Voice Behavior.

Reviewer's Decision Comment

revisions required

Reviewer D:

Recommendation: Revisions Required

Originality

In terms of the novelty of the study, the study is considered moderate, as it combines the four variables, namely, Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment, Ethical Leadership, and Employee Voice Behavior, with a combination of variables in one model, namely, moderated mediation in the context of the Indonesian hospitality sector. All these constructs have been thoroughly explored in the past in human resource management and organizational behavior studies, but their combination with the hospitality industry, especially as sustainable performance management is the focal antecedent, provides a relevant contribution to the context without giving a new theory. As such, the research builds upon existing literature by testing and building on theories in a new environment, but the novelty of the theoretical approach may be enhanced by the creation of a more unique conceptual approach or an addition of new variables relevant to the hospitality industry.

Scientific Quality

From a scientific point of view, the manuscript overall quality is good; there is a clear theoretical framework, an appropriate quantitative methodology and there is use of established measurement scales and PLS-SEM analysis. Hypotheses are logically deduced from literature and the statistical procedure is accepted and the findings are presented systematically. The strengths in the study suggest it is in general at the level expected of empirical research in the field of hospitality and human resource management.

Nevertheless, the manuscript needs to have more scientific rigor in a few areas. Although the cross-sectional design suggests the discussion is somewhat incremental, rather than novel, it does not sufficiently address potential common method bias, endogeneity, or implications of the unexpected negative moderating effect of ethical leadership. Additionally, there are several sections that are repetitive and include overly promotional text that can be rewritten to more objective scientific writing. These challenges could significantly enhance the manuscript's scientific quality and its acceptance for publication in a more prestigious journal.

Relevance to the Field(s) of this Journal

The manuscript is very relevant to the scope of the journal, especially the fields of hospitality and tourism management. It focuses on sustainable performance management, ethical leadership, psychological empowerment, and employee voice within the workforce in the hospitality industry, directly linking human resource practices with service quality, organizational sustainability, and innovation in the hotel industry. The hotel context also makes it relevant in the Indonesian context, which is the field of the journal to be published. The manuscript is, however, more oriented to hospitality management than to destination management or travel studies and the authors should make it more obvious how the results relate to the development of sustainable tourism and the competitiveness of hospitality.

General Comment

The study is an appropriate add-on to existing literature on hospitality and sustainable HRM. It extends the current knowledge by application in context and integration into models, not by creating new theory. The originality is thus acceptable, but not outstanding, and the manuscript could be improved by having a clearer statement of its own theoretical contribution.

Abstract

The abstract is well organized and has most of the elements that are normally found in an academic journal article. Clearly conveys purpose, approach, results, and terms. However, it is missing two important elements:

1. Limitations: No statements of limitations of the study (e.g., a cross-sectional design, single geographic area, or example of a certain industry).
2. Originality/Value: The abstract should clearly identify what is new or unusual about the study and not rely on the reader to draw a conclusion about the contribution.

Introduction

The introduction is well developed and sets the context, theory, research gap, and research goals for the study. It logically leads from general problems in sustainable human resource management to the specific problems of the research. The literature cited is mostly recent and pertinent and lends good support for the study. The introduction would be enhanced if the research questions were explicitly stated. For example:

- RQ1: Does sustainable performance management have a significant influence on employee voice behavior in the hospitality industry?
 - RQ2 is whether there is a mediating effect between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior.
 - RQ3: Does the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior vary with the presence of ethical leadership?
- These research questions should be clearly stated in the introduction to facilitate the relationship between the research problem, objectives, hypotheses, and then analysis.

Literature Review

It mentions well-established theories; however, some of the cornerstones of the main constructs are missing from the manuscript. The sources of the theories of psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, social exchange, social learning, and self-determination theory should be cited more straightforwardly, particularly the original or seminal works.

In the review, the Social Exchange Theory, Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Job Demands–Resources model and Social Learning Theory are mentioned. The theories are, however, presented in different subsections rather than in a unified theoretical approach.

There is a descriptive and confirmatory nature to much of the review. It often reports that other studies have found a positive correlation, and makes only limited comparisons of conflicting results, methodological flaws, situational differences or alternative explanations.

Based on the authors' argument, studies that integrate SPM, PE, EL, and EVB into a moderated mediation model in the context of the hospitality business in Indonesia are few. This is a sensible distance, but it needs to be quantified with better evidence of which models have previously been tested and how they differ from the present one.

According to Section 2.5, "The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership," and H5, Ethical Leadership moderates the relationship between SPM and Psychological Empowerment. The empirical model and the results, however, examine whether Ethical Leadership is a moderator in the relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior. This lack of consistency is a major drawback of the theoretical logic.

Methodology

- The manuscript includes a conceptual framework that includes sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, employee voice behavior, and ethical leadership. The hypothesized moderation pathway is not congruent with the pathway tested in the results.
- Constructs and dimensions were identified but not well documented as to questions in the questionnaire, adaptation procedure, and scoring method.
- A self-administered structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale is described. The methods used for designing the instrument and its validation, however, need to be further explained.
- Target population, sample size, types of hotel, operational strata, and stratification approach are given. However, the allocation of the samples in Table 1 is mathematically inconsistent.
- The paper describes how paper questionnaires and online questionnaires were utilized and how a pilot study of 30 was done. There are significant procedural and ethical issues that are not addressed.
- While the proposed model is appropriate for the use of SmartPLS 4 and PLS-SEM, some core assessment procedures are missing or not properly applied.

Results

1. The manuscript states that the Fornell–Larcker criterion is met; however, it can be seen that some inter-construct correlations are higher than the diagonal square-root AVE values.
2. The reported paths are important but the very high coefficient from SPM to PE and very high R^2 values are problematic.
3. When there are two values, concerns are raised regarding construct overlap, common-method bias, and model inflation.
4. There is a statistically significant negative interaction effect, but no simple-slope analysis, interaction plot, or conditional effects are provided.
5. Exogenous constructs are reported as Q^2 , and the predictive analysis is not presented in line with the new PLS-SEM guidelines.
6. Some terminology is incorrect, there is a hypothesis model mismatch, and there are some mathematically and/or conceptually incorrect interpretations.

Discussions

1. The discussion typically covers each of the stated research purposes by explaining each hypothesis. The discussion, however, does not explicitly show how each of the research questions has been answered, as the questions are not explicitly mentioned in the introduction.
2. The emphasis is primarily on results that are consistent with existing literature. It offers little critical analysis of unexpected findings, alternative explanations, or methodological shortcomings that could have affected the findings.
3. The negative moderating effect of ethical leadership is recognized and explained briefly. The meaning of this interpretation, though, is still in question and calls for greater theoretical support and attention to alternative interpretations.

Conclusions

1. The conclusion restates the purpose of the study and restates that the research objectives were met. It does not explicitly restate the research question(s) or research problem in a new way before presenting the conclusions, however.
2. The manuscript suggests that the study makes a contribution to understanding sustainable HRM and employee voice in the conclusion; however, the theoretical contributions are not clearly summarized nor are the implications of the findings for advancing the theoretical knowledge of sustainable HRM and employee voice explained.

References / Bibliography

The references are generally of good quality, but they do not yet fully conform to the formatting standards typically required by Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan. Before publication, the authors should standardize all references according to the journal's reference style; correct DOI formatting errors; use consistent sentence case for article titles; correct typographical and encoding errors; standardize author names, book titles, editions, and publisher information; verify consistency between in-text citations and the reference list.

Figures

-

Tables

-

Others

Reviewer's Decision Comment

Overall, this manuscript addresses an important and relevant research topic and demonstrates the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the hospitality and sustainable human resource management literature. However, substantial revisions are necessary, particularly concerning the theoretical consistency of the research model, methodological transparency, statistical reporting, and interpretation of the findings.

Please revised rhe manuscript on/ before 11 August 2026



2 attachments



B-jk-review-assignment-2747-Article+Text-8945.docx
388K



C-jk-review-assignment-2747-Article+Text-8945 -.pdf
567K



[JK] Editor Decision

1 message

jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>

27 July 2026 at 11:52

Reply-To: Journal Manager <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>

To: Yayan Sugiarto <yayansugiartonhi@gmail.com>, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury <ratnaintan83@gmail.com>, Dewi Fitriani <pipopdewi@gmail.com>

Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani:

We have reached a decision regarding your submission to Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan, "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact".

Our decision is to: Accept Submission

 **E-4.+jk-review-assignment-2747-Article+Text-8945.docx**

471K

[JK] Editor Decision

1 message

jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>

3 August 2026 at 18:23

Reply-To: Journal Manager <jurnal@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id>

To: Yayan Sugiarto <yayansugiarthonhi@gmail.com>, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury <ratnaintan83@gmail.com>, Dewi Fitriani <pipopdewi@gmail.com>

Dear Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani:

The editing of your submission, "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact," is complete. We are now sending it to production.

Submission URL: <https://journal.poltekpar-nhi.ac.id/index.php/jk/authorDashboard/submission/2747>



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Name		From	Last Reply	Replies	Closed
▶ Comments for the Editor		yayan26 21-06-2026 01:34 PM	-	0	☐

Participants

[Edit](#)

Yayan Sugiarto (yayan26)

Messages	
Note	From
Dear Editor-in-Chief, I am pleased to submit our original research manuscript titled "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact" for consideration for publication in Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas, dan Perjalanan. This study investigates the structural mechanisms driving proactive communication within the hospitality industry, specifically examining how Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) enhances Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), under the moderating condition of Ethical Leadership (EL). By utilizing a stratified random sample of 300 active employees from selected 4-star and 5-star hotels across the Greater Bandung area, this paper addresses a critical gap in sustainable human resource practices within the contemporary tourism sector. We believe this manuscript aligns perfectly with the aims and scope of your esteemed journal, particularly within the hospitality and management framework. This study introduces a novel, nuanced boundary condition regarding ethical stewardship that offers highly actionable, practical implications for hotel executives and general managers seeking to optimize talent engagement and long-term institutional sustainability. On behalf of all co-authors, I certify that this manuscript is	yayan26 21-06-2026 01:34 PM

← Back to Submissions

Submission

Review

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Round 1

Round 1 Status

Revisions have been requested.

Notifications

[JK] Editor Decision	12-07-2026 08:24 AM
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Reviewer's Attachments			Q Search
9021	jk-review-assignment-2747-Article+Text-8945.docx	29 June 2026	
9071	jk-review-assignment-2747-Article+Text-8945 -.pdf	3 July 2026	

Revisions	Q Search	Upload File
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Review Discussions					Add discussion
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[JK] Editor Decision

12-07-2026 08:24 AM

Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani:

We have reached a decision regarding your submission to Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan, "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact".

Our decision is: Revisions Required

Reviewer B:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

Originality

This manuscript offers a reasonably interesting integrative proposition by combining Sustainable Performance Management, Psychological Empowerment, and Ethical Leadership within a single structural model to predict Employee Voice Behavior in the Indonesian hospitality industry.

Scientific Quality

This manuscript demonstrates promising scientific quality, characterized by an ambitious conceptual framework and an appropriately selected analytical approach through PLS-SEM

Relevance to the Field(s) of this Journal

this article is suitable for this journal

General Comment

Workflow

Publication

Submission

Review

Copyediting

Production

Round 1

Round 1 Status

Revisions have been requested.

Notifications

[\[JK\] Editor Decision](#)

12-07-2026 08:24 AM

Reviewer's Attachments

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Revisions

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[Submission of Revised Manuscript](#)

[\(Manuscript ID: "Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact"\)](#)

13-07-2026 02:11 PM

Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior.

Seminal theories (Social Exchange, Self-Determination, and Social Learning theories) have also been unified systematically.

- **Methodological Rigor & Data Precision:** We have addressed the mathematical inconsistencies in the sampling table, expanded our explanation of the survey validation/adaptation procedures, and added dedicated testing for **Common Method Bias (CMB) and endogeneity** to ensure robust PLS-SEM estimation.
- **Deeper Statistical Interpretation:** In accordance with the guidelines for SmartPLS 4, we have replaced repetitive numerical listings with deep methodological interpretations of convergent validity. Crucially, we have included a **Simple Slope Analysis and Interaction Plot** to thoroughly unpack and justify the unexpected **negative moderating effect of Ethical Leadership**, turning it into a major highlighted contribution of this study.
- **Literature & Formatting Update:** All outdated empirical references have been replaced with high-impact citations from the **last 5 years (2021–2026)**. Furthermore, the entire reference list has been meticulously standardized to strictly adhere to the **APA style and the specific formatting guidelines** of *Jurnal Kepariwisata: Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan*.

Author Commitment:

"We believe these extensive revisions successfully resolve every theoretical, methodological, and statistical concern raised. The manuscript is now highly optimized, completely objective in its scientific tone, and explicitly articulates its theoretical and practical contributions to the competitiveness of the Indonesian hospitality and sustainable tourism sector."

We hope that these comprehensive improvements meet the high standards of the journal, and we look forward to your favorable decision.

Thank you for your time and continued guidance.

Warm regards,

Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani

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Add Message

Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior.

Seminal theories (Social Exchange, Self-Determination, and Social Learning theories) have also been unified systematically.

- **Methodological Rigor & Data Precision:** We have addressed the mathematical inconsistencies in the sampling table, expanded our explanation of the survey validation/adaptation procedures, and added dedicated testing for **Common Method Bias (CMB) and endogeneity** to ensure robust PLS-SEM estimation.
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Thank you for your time and continued guidance.

Warm regards,

Yayan Sugiarto, Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury, Dewi Fitriani

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

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Kepariwisata: Destinasi,
Hospitalitas, dan Perjalanan*
xx(xx), xx-xx.

[.....](https://doi.org/.....)

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Research Paper

Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact

Yayan Sugiarto^{1*} 

Pury² Raden Intan Medya Ratna³ 

Dewi Fitriani³ 

^{1,2,3} Tourism Academy NHI's Hospitality Program in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

*e-mail: yayansugiarttonhi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Amidst growing demands for corporate social responsibility in the tourism sector, establishing a resilient and proactive workforce is vital for organizational learning. This study examines the structural mechanisms driving proactive communication within the hospitality industry by evaluating whether Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) enhances Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), under the moderating condition of Ethical Leadership (EL). A quantitative, cross-sectional design was conducted utilizing a sample of 300 frontline hotel employees in Greater Bandung selected via stratified random sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The empirical findings demonstrate that SPM significantly and positively affects both PE and EVB, confirming that sustainable evaluation systems grounded in fairness and developmental feedback encourage staff to voice innovative service ideas without fear of retaliation. Moreover, PE successfully functions as a vital cognitive mediator bridging the relationship between macro-level human resource practices and micro-level voice behavior. However, strong EL introduces a nuanced boundary condition, where highly institutionalized ethical norms slightly reduce the perceived necessity for independent employee-driven interventions. In conclusion, building a sustainable hospitality brand requires the strategic design of performance frameworks that psychologically enable employees while balancing ethical stewardship with workplace autonomy, ultimately enhancing long-term operational sustainability and service innovation.

Keywords: Sustainable performance management; Psychological empowerment; Employee voice behavior; Ethical leadership; Hospitality industry.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management systems (SPMS) are a new category of increasingly important human resource management (HRM) practices for organizations seeking to align business performance with their broader social, environmental, and ethical goals (Aguinis, 2019). Within the global tourism and hospitality industry, where service quality is tightly linked to human capital, SPMS differs significantly from traditional performance management. While traditional approaches focus heavily on short-term financial outcomes and occupancy rates, SPMS concentrates on continuous development driven by value-based outcomes and sustainable hospitality practices (Paulet et al., 2021). This modern approach has profound implications for corporate sustainability, particularly in creating a high-involvement workplace climate where frontline hospitality employees feel secure and motivated to exhibit employee voice behavior.

Employee voice behavior is defined as the discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In highly dynamic service environments such as hotels, resorts, and tourism agencies, the practice of voice is central to service innovation, service recovery, and operational process enhancement. This is especially vital for hospitality firms pursuing sustainability-related strategies, such as green lodging, waste reduction, or eco-tourism operations. Nevertheless, the willingness of frontline hospitality staff—who interact directly with guests—to voice their constructive opinions is structurally influenced by the overarching performance management design and their immediate psychological setting (Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019). Psychological empowerment, therefore, acts as one of the vital mediating mechanisms for transforming sustainable performance systems into actual voice behavior. Attempting to deploy sustainable initiatives is bound to fail if hospitality employees lack the confidence, perceived competence, and self-determination to share insights regarding service improvements (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024). Key dimensions of psychological empowerment—meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact—can exert a powerful influence over employees' proactive behaviors in service delivery (Al Harbi et al., 2019).

Simultaneously, ethical leadership has become a recognized management tool in moderating the relationship between performance frameworks and employee outcomes. Hospitality leaders who operate in a fair, conscientious, and communal manner are most likely to provide the psychological safety required for staff to speak up (Brown et al., 2019). In the hospitality sector, where hierarchies are traditionally rigid, this demonstration of ethical support from upper management improves employee trust in the evaluation system, thereby mitigating the fear of negative reprisals when suggestions or operational bottlenecks are brought to light (Amory et al., 2024). Recent empirical studies focusing on sustainability-driven firms indicate the importance of SPMS as an antecedent of high-involvement work climates that facilitate voice (Paulet et al., 2021). Similar patterns have been observed across complex organizational settings, where participatory management systems serve to mediate the relationship between empowerment and innovative behaviors (Alwali, 2024). Furthermore, empirical research within the Indonesian service and hospitality sectors underscores the indispensable role of ethical leadership in encouraging voice behaviors to correct unethical or ineffective field practices (Zainal et al., 2023).

Despite these initial insights, a significant research gap persists in the tourism and hospitality literature. While existing studies have separately looked at the relationship between general performance management and employee voice (Morrison, 2023; Paulet et al., 2021), rarely has empirical research integrated SPMS, psychological empowerment as a mediator, and the moderated mediating effect of ethical leadership into a single, comprehensive structural framework. Compounding this issue is the pressure faced by modern hospitality organizations to satisfy both strict service-delivery metrics and non-financial sustainability outcomes, such as social responsibility and ethical governance. This dual objective creates an operational challenge regarding how to design appraisal systems that encourage staff involvement without undermining corporate sustainability efforts, which consequently drives this study to address the direct effects of SPMS on employee voice behavior within a sustainability-oriented hospitality context, the extent to which psychological empowerment mediates

this structural link, and how ethical leadership moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior among hospitality staff.

Based on this problem formulation, this study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable performance management systems on employee voice behavior, while analyzing the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of ethical leadership within the same model. To fulfill these objectives and ensure methodological rigor, this study utilizes a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Moving away from restrictive single convenience-sample surveys, data was gathered from a rigorous stratified random sampling process involving active respondents across service-oriented hospitality institutions. The structural relationships and complex moderated-mediating paths were systematically evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software.

This paper makes three distinct contributions to the literature. Theoretically, it introduces a novel integrative model combining system-level (SPMS), individual-level (psychological empowerment), and leadership-level (ethical leadership) factors to predict voice behavior. Contextually, it expands the empirical boundaries of SPMS research within the rapidly developing Indonesian hospitality and tourism sector. Finally, it offers practical recommendations for hotel general managers, HR practitioners, and destination managers to successfully reorient performance management systems toward ethical, responsible, and sustainable organizational development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is defined as a continuous, forward-looking process in which employees are integrated into the organization's strategic success, long-term thinking is prioritized, and the multi-dimensional well-being of employees, the organization, and its broader social-environmental context are structurally respected (Aguinis, 2019). Within the rapidly changing, high-innovation-demand context of the global hospitality industry, traditional performance appraisal systems that rely solely on retrospective financial indicators, rigid assessment cycles, and guest satisfaction scores are increasingly insufficient. In contrast, an SPM framework shifts the focus toward continuous employee development, reflective behavior-based feedback, perceived procedural fairness, and a high level of value-driven alignment (Brown et al., 2019). This strategic evolution is vital for hospitality firms to remain agile, reduce high turnover rates, and sustain competitive advantages in premium service delivery.

Grounding this relationship in Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory, the system-level characteristics of SPM serve as powerful signals of organizational care and investment. Among the most critical behavioral outcomes triggered by this high-investment HRM climate is employee voice behavior, which manifests as the discretionary communication of ideas, operational concerns, or constructive suggestions to improve overall organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline employees serve as the critical interface between the brand and the consumer, the willingness to exhibit voice behavior is heavily contingent upon the design of the appraisal system. Previous literature demonstrates that when performance management systems are perceived as transparent, developmental, and structurally ethical, they significantly enhance employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation to actively speak up (Wilkinson et al., 2020).

Empirical evidence consistently verifies that sustainable, supportive HR practices positively predict proactive behaviors across diverse service touchpoints (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Incorporating sustainability metrics—such as rewarding green initiatives, ethical service recovery, and collaborative teamwork—builds deep organizational trust, which encourages frontline staff to voice both helpful service innovations and early warnings about operational vulnerabilities (Ashiru et al., 2022). This dynamic is particularly indispensable in the people-centric hospitality industry, where the spontaneous insights and discretionary behaviors of employees directly determine service quality, agility, and operational excellence. Consequently, contemporary hospitality literature suggests that SPM must be viewed as an strategic enabler of proactive performance rather than a mere punitive measurement tool,

tightly linked to broad corporate sustainability and long-term service growth (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2022). Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, it is argued that a well-implemented SPM system will structurally foster a safe environment that drives hospitality staff to actively articulate constructive inputs. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.2. Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is a proactive organizational approach aimed at enhancing the traditional performance appraisal architecture through continuous, transparent feedback, structured employee development, and equitable evaluation systems that balance long-term sustainability objectives with individual employee welfare (Brown et al., 2019). Grounded in Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory, SPM fundamentally deviates from conventional, compliance-driven performance appraisals by shifting the structural focus from rigid, retrospective metrics to iterative processes and ethical values that foster workplace fairness and continuous competency development (Aguinis, 2019). Within the hospitality industry, where emotional labor is intense and frontline service delivery is highly interdependent, such inclusive and growth-oriented appraisal frameworks are crucial. When hospitality organizations move away from punitive, guest-complaint-centric metrics and instead implement SPM, they cultivate a high-involvement service culture where employees feel genuinely valued, organizationally supported, and intrinsically motivated.

Consequently, psychological empowerment emerges as a critical psychological and motivational consequence of a well-perceived SPM framework. Psychological empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional motivational construct manifested in four distinct cognitive perceptions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact regarding one's organizational role (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Performance management systems that are structurally designed and perceived by frontline hospitality staff as socially just, highly participative, and developmental serve to reinforce these four cognitive dimensions. Specifically, by involving hospitality personnel in collaborative goal-setting and providing constructive, future-oriented feedback, SPM clarifies how individual service roles contribute to the establishment's broader sustainability and service-quality goals, thereby enhancing the perception of *meaning* and *impact* (Zainal et al., 2023). Furthermore, the developmental and supportive nature of SPM bolsters employees' beliefs in their own service capabilities (*competence*) and grants them operational autonomy in service recovery scenarios (*self-determination*).

This structural relationship is strongly supported by empirical findings in organizational behavior and social sciences. For instance, Van Waeyenberg & Decramer (2018) demonstrated that developmental performance appraisals significantly enhance employees' perceptions of autonomy and competence, which subsequently drives intrinsic motivation through the expanded operational discretion afforded by the appraisal process. Similarly, Singh et al. (2022) verified that when performance rules are procedurally fair and evaluation systems are resilient, ongoing transparent feedback engenders deep organizational trust and facilitates rich, proactive engagement among service employees.

Despite these insights, a distinct research gap persists within the hospitality and tourism literature. While general human resource practices have been linked to psychological outcomes, empirical studies exploring the direct structural impact of sustainable, eco-centric performance systems (SPM) on the psychological empowerment of frontline hospitality staff remain scarce, particularly within rapidly developing tourism hubs like Indonesia. In the fierce, highly competitive hospitality landscape of major urban tourist destinations, implementing SPM is no longer just an administrative tool to monitor service standards; it is a strategic necessity to unlock employee initiative and foster collaborative resilience among service and support staff to satisfy modern eco-conscious travelers. Based on these theoretical and empirical lines of argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Psychological Empowerment among hospitality industry employees.

2.3. *Psychological Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior*

Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional motivational construct defined by four distinct cognitive dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Cognitive Theory, a strong sense of empowerment cognitively reorients employees toward both their in-role and extra-role task behaviors, as they perceive themselves to be highly competent, self-determined, and influential within the organizational structure. In the high-pressure environment of the hospitality industry, these psychological resources are vital drivers of proactive employee behaviors. When frontline hospitality staff—such as guest relations, food and beverage personnel, or housekeeping crews—possess these psychological strengths, they exhibit higher levels of job performance, service satisfaction, and discretionary behaviors like employee voice, which entails the voluntary communication of ideas, concerns, or innovative suggestions to optimize service delivery and organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023; Bakker & Wang, 2020).

Theoretically, psychologically empowered employees are more equipped to express their voice because they believe their insights possess genuine value (*meaning*), feel capable of articulating them effectively (*competence*), enjoy the professional autonomy to act (*self-determination*), and trust that their suggestions can positively reshape institutional practices (*impact*) (Chen & Treviño, 2022). In hotel operations, this psychological state transcends passive compliance, creating a profound culture of psychological ownership. This cognitive ownership holds frontline staff internally accountable for bringing forth service-recovery ideas, highlighting hidden operational defects, and taking an active role in problem resolution. For instance, empirical research by Makwetta et al. (2021) establishes that employees with elevated psychological empowerment are significantly more likely to engage in both promotive voice—offering innovative solutions for growth—and prohibitive voice—warning against practices that could harm service quality. Similarly, empowerment serves as a vital psychological buffer that facilitates a psychologically safe work environment, releasing frontline hospitality staff from the fear of negative reprisals and fostering open communication and creative service orientation (Liu et al., 2023).

Within the hospitality sector, these socio-psychological dynamics are highly critical yet distinct. Frontline service workers are often the first to notice service failures, safety hazards, or gaps in environmental sustainability practices, such as food waste or energy inefficiencies. Empowered hospitality personnel are more likely to participate actively in service governance, engage in conversations related to operational continuous improvement, and openly voice concerns regarding emerging challenges that directly affect hospitality service quality. Despite these linkages, a notable research gap exists concerning the specific structural relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice within the Indonesian hospitality landscape. Given that unique local hospitality work cultures, strict service hierarchies, and evolving sustainable HRM practices can heavily influence this dynamic, exploring this path is essential. Unlocking these mechanisms will determine how individual cognitive empowerment can be leveraged to drive constructive employee voice within sustainability-focused hospitality brands. Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological Empowerment has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.4. *The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment*

Within contemporary organizational behavior and management literature, psychological empowerment is widely recognized as a pivotal mediating mechanism through which macro-level macro-organizational practices are translated into micro-level employee behaviors. Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Social Exchange Theory, psychological empowerment functions as an intrinsic form of task motivation manifested through four distinct cognitive states: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Extensive empirical research demonstrates that psychological empowerment effectively bridges the gap between structured contextual resources—such as progressive leadership styles, strategic performance frameworks, or

constructive work climates—and critical behavioral outcomes, including service innovation, organizational engagement, and employee voice behavior (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2022). Sustainable performance management systems (SPMS) that systematically prioritize future-oriented feedback, individualized developmental appraisal, and transparent procedural justice cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel intrinsically valued, structurally trusted, and organizationally supported (Parker & Grote, 2022; Schermuly et al., 2022). These institutional support systems serve as critical signaling mechanisms that clarify role expectations while simultaneously elevating frontline workers' perceived autonomy and professional competence (Chen & Treviño, 2022).

In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline service employees regularly navigate diverse guest interactions and unpredictable operational demands, this indirect psychological pathway is uniquely critical. The structural features of an SPM framework do not automatically trigger proactive service behaviors; rather, they operate by reshaping the psychological state of the workforce. When hospitality personnel perceive that their performance appraisal system is designed to sustain their long-term well-being and professional growth, it fosters a profound sense of workplace credibility and psychological safety. This cognitive shift provides the precise motivational mechanism required for sustainable performance management to influence employee voice behavior, as frontline staff feel cognitively secure and organizationally driven to articulate innovative ideas or highlight latent service failures without fear of negative repercussions (McCarthy et al., 2020).

This structural mediating pathway is robustly supported by empirical evidence across the broader service literature. For instance, Farid et al. (2019) verified that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee advocacy behaviors within complex service-driven organizations. In a dynamic service market like Indonesia, hospitality brands face intense competition and rising demands for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Frontline hotel staff are often the first to recognize operational bottlenecks, environmental waste, or service recovery opportunities; however, their willingness to speak up remains heavily dependent on whether they feel structurally empowered by their firm's appraisal architecture. Despite its practical urgency, there remains a notable research gap in the hospitality literature regarding how this psychological mediation mechanism functions within developing Southeast Asian service sectors. Bridging this theoretical gap is essential to clarify how institutional sustainable human resource frameworks can be leveraged to drive open, proactive communication and continuous quality improvement in tourism operations. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Psychological Empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.5. The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership

An indispensable contextual boundary condition that structurally reshapes the behavior of organizational members and dictates service dynamics is ethical leadership. Grounded in Social Learning Theory, ethical leadership is conceptualized as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, combined with the active promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and balanced decision-making (Brown et al., 2019). Ethical leaders cultivate an environment anchored in deep organizational trust and operational transparency. Supported by a rigorous moral compass, these leaders serve as critical behavioral role models, systematically setting clear expectations, adhering to strict fairness standards, and providing continuous reassurance that hospitality employees can articulate creative ideas or voice operational concerns without suffering negative career reprisals or social retaliation (Abu Bakar & Connaughton, 2023).

Within organizational behavior literature, extensive empirical studies support the notion that ethical leadership acts as an essential moderator that amplifies the positive impact of structural organizational systems on employee attitudes and psychological states. For instance, empirical research verifies that ethical leadership significantly moderates the relationship between high-involvement work systems and proactive employee outcomes, including organizational citizenship behavior and constructive voice

(Jeong et al., 2025; Ajmal et al., 2025). When an authentic sense of psychological safety is actively fostered by ethical managers, employees are structurally more likely to perceive systemic human resource practices as genuinely developmental and supportive rather than punitive or disciplinary.

In the high-touch hospitality industry, where operations are characterized by intense emotional labor, low employee retention, and traditionally rigid operational hierarchies, the interplay between systems and leadership is uniquely critical. Ethical leadership in the context of sustainable performance management (SPMS)—which structurally focuses on procedural justice, workplace inclusivity, and continuous feedback—is highly significant because it helps transform abstract corporate sustainability principles from mere paper compliance blueprints into lived daily service routines (O’Keefe et al., 2019; Hameed et al., 2020).

Theoretically, ethical leadership acts as a catalyst that activates the empowerment potential of SPMS. While an SPM framework provides the formal structure for fair evaluation and long-term well-being, it requires the contextual support of an ethical manager to truly elevate an employee's psychological state. When hotel department heads or general managers lead ethically, the structural benefits of SPMS are magnified, drastically increasing the frontline staff's sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and overall impact.

Notwithstanding these compelling theoretical and empirical underpinnings, a significant research gap persists regarding how the moderating mechanism of ethical leadership operates at the intersection of sustainable human resource systems and employee psychological states within the developing Indonesian hospitality sector. Understanding this boundary condition is essential to clarify how hospitality brands can prevent their sustainability appraisal tools from becoming dead administrative weight, ensuring instead that they structurally unlock employee psychological empowerment and drive proactive service excellence. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical linkages, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Ethical Leadership significantly moderates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment within the hospitality industry.

The integrated research model proposed in this study is built upon the comprehensive literature review conducted earlier, mapping the structural pathways that dictate proactive organizational behaviors within the hospitality sector. Specifically, the framework posits that a Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) system, which incorporates adaptive and eco-centric performance criteria, can significantly enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). Within this structural mechanism, Psychological Empowerment (PE) operates as a critical cognitive mediator, while Ethical Leadership (EL) serves as an essential contextual boundary condition and moderator. Methodologically, SPM is hypothesized to drive employee voice behavior by elevating frontline hospitality staff's psychological empowerment, as heightened cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, and self-determination structurally enable them to feel more impactful and secure at work. Furthermore, ethical leadership is expected to strengthen the positive effect of SPM on psychological empowerment, as ethical leaders actively cultivate a workplace atmosphere anchored in procedural justice, honesty, and high-involvement service dynamics. These structural relationships—comprising direct effects, mediating pathways, and moderating interactions—are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which represents the comprehensive conceptual framework of this study.

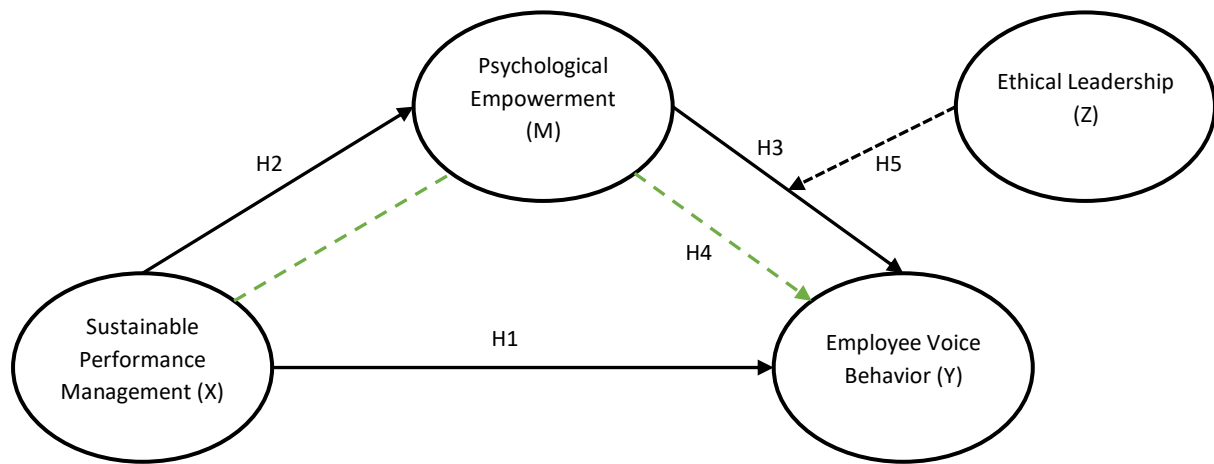


Figure 1. Research Framework
Source: Primary data processed by authors (2026)

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative research design. This approach is highly suitable for the verification of hypotheses and the confirmation of theoretical models through empirical data, enabling the statistical analysis of relationships between sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, and employee voice behavior. A quantitative strategy was preferred since it makes use of a standardized *modus operandi*, thereby ensuring clear-cut ways to measure and test initial effects systematically (Hair et al., 2019), which aligns with the structural requirement of testing both complex mediation and moderation paths simultaneously. Within this methodological framework, individual frontline employees from selected hotels and hospitality establishments serve as the primary unit of analysis, while the unit of observation consists of the operational service and administrative staff members who participate actively in performance-related processes and daily service deliveries within their institutions.

3.2. Population and sample

The target population for this study includes 1,200 active employees from selected star-rated hotels and hospitality establishments in the Greater Bandung area. To determine the minimum required sample size for rigorous empirical testing, Slovin's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a representative sample size of 300 respondents to ensure adequate statistical power. In order to guarantee a proportional representation of respondents across different functional lines within each hotel department, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. The target population was explicitly divided into two major operational strata: frontline service staff (including food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office personnel) and administrative-managerial support staff. Respondents were then randomly selected from each strategic stratum. This sampling design effectively minimizes sampling bias, accounts for the structural heterogeneity of the hospitality workforce, and enhances the external validity of the empirical findings.

To provide a comprehensive and transparent overview of the sampling framework, the precise distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample allocation within each operational stratum has been systematically mapped. This structured breakdown details the proportional weight of both frontline service and administrative-managerial staff across the selected 4-star and 5-star hotel segments. Accordingly, the detailed distribution of the population and the final research sample used for subsequent empirical testing is explicitly presented in Table 1 below.

Tabel 1. Population and Sample Distribution

No	Hotel Classification	Operational Stratum	Target Population (N)	Percentage (%)	Calculated Sample Size (n)
1	4-Star Hotels (<i>Selected</i>)		720	60	180
		Frontline Service Staff (<i>F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office</i>)	540	45	130
		Administrative Support Staff (<i>HR, Finance, Back Office</i>)	180	15	45
2	5-Star Hotels (<i>Selected</i>)		480	40	120
		Frontline Service Staff (<i>F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office</i>)	360	30	90
		Administrative Support Staff (<i>HR, Finance, Back Office</i>)	120	10	30
All Selected Establishments		Combined Strata	1,200	100	300

Source: Selected 4-star and 5-star hotels in Greater Bandung, Primary Data Processed (2026)

3.3. Measurement and Instruments

A structured, self-administered questionnaire was utilized for data collection by adopting validated measurement instruments from established previous studies to fit the service dynamics of the hospitality sector. For the sustainable performance management variable, the eco-centric and developmental performance indicators were adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2023) and de Waal (2020), focusing on sustainable service standards and resource stewardship. Psychological empowerment was measured using the four-dimensional scale developed by Pradhan & Panda (2021), which evaluates frontline staff's cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their service roles. Furthermore, employee voice behavior was evaluated using the measurement items developed by Jada & Mukhopadhyay (2019) to capture proactive suggestions and constructive service recovery inputs. Finally, ethical leadership was constructed based on the scale by Brown et al. (2019), assessing the moral and supportive behaviors of hotel supervisors and general managers. All questionnaire items were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to ensure robust interval-level data for subsequent statistical processing via structural equation modeling.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

To guarantee the clarity, reliability, and validity of the research instrument within a high-touch service environment, a pilot test was performed with 30 hospitality respondents prior to full deployment. Following the successful validation of the pilot assessment, the final surveys were administered using a hybrid deployment approach designed to accommodate the diverse shift schedules of hotel staff. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously in a traditional paper-and-pencil format directly at the properties and electronically via mobile-friendly online forms. This dual approach was critical to secure maximal geographical coverage and optimize overall response rates across the selected hospitality institutions without disrupting daily service operations.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was deployed for data analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS version 4.0 software application. This approach was chosen because it is highly appropriate for complex structural models that simultaneously include mediation and moderation paths, accommodates non-normal data distributions without distorting results, and shows robust performance in moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). Following standard statistical protocols, the

analysis process followed a strict two-step approach, beginning with the measurement model assessment to evaluate convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability of the latent variables, followed by the structural model testing to analyze path coefficients and significance levels using the bootstrapping method, alongside the evaluation of the model's explanatory power through R^2 values. This rigorous quantitative approach ensures a thorough empirical exploration of how sustainable performance management, coupled with psychological mechanisms and leadership behaviors, structurally supports employee voice behaviors among frontline staff and support personnel within the hospitality industry.

4. RESULT

4.1. Outer Model Assessment

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), an outer model assessment is recommended to assess the measurement properties of each construct in the research model. Specifically, this process involves checking outer loadings to measure the reliability of indicators; composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for assessing construct reliability and convergent validity; and discriminant validity, which determines that the constructs are empirically different (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). In addition, the other loadings should be higher than 0.70 for each indicator to ensure that they indicate their latent constructs strongly (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability (CR) above 0.70 and an average variance extracted (AVE) over 0.50 indicate that both measures were adequate in terms of their estimated values on the respective indicators of convergent validity. We used the rooting of the AVE approach that suggests that each construct should be significantly higher from its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), or we looked at the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, which needs to have a value lower than 0.90 according to (Henseler et al., 2015). The results of the outer model evaluation are provided in Supplementary Figures & Tables: Figure 2, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4.

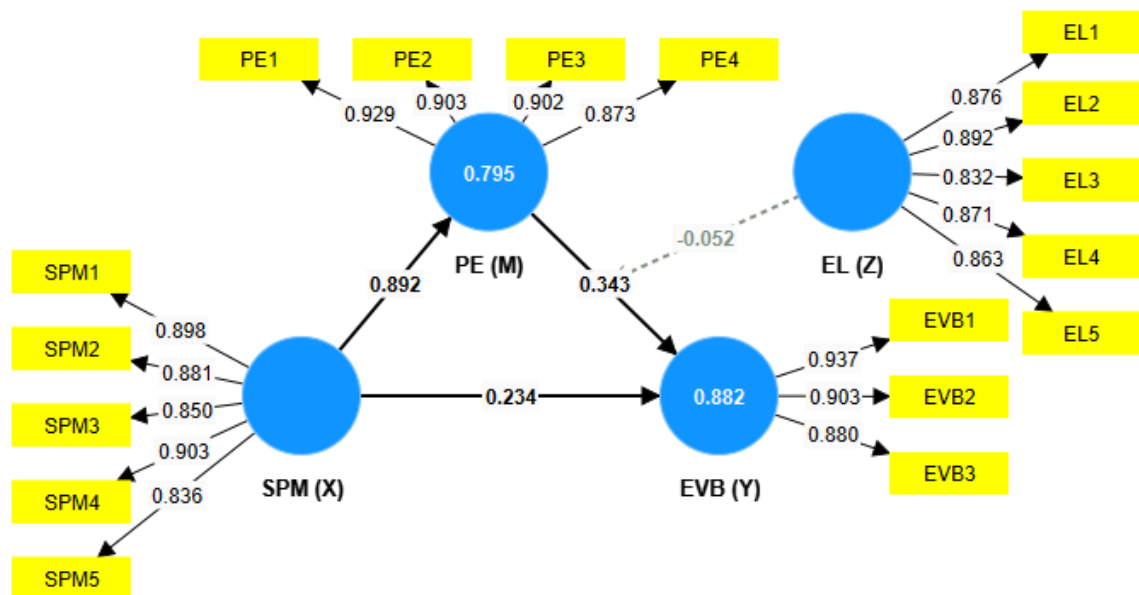


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

This is a visual representation of the outer model analysis (indicator loadings) for each construct in the study as displayed in Figure 2. As can be seen, all indicators have outer loading values above the recommended cut-off limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), thus indicating high reliability of the indicator variables. For instance, the CRI ranges from 0.873 to 0.929 for Psychological Empowerment (PE), from 0.836 to 0.903 for Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), from 0.832 to 0.892 for Ethical Leadership (EL), and from 0.880 to 0.937 for Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). These findings indicate

that the items consistently assess their respective latent variable. The values on the latent variable scores included in blue circles also suggest moderate to high levels of construct contribution. This estimation stands for the measurement model before a structural testing that demonstrates its reliability and validity.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicators	Item Code	Loading Factor
Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) (X)	Goal Alignment	SPM1	0.898
	Continuous Feedback	SPM2	0.881
	Participation	SPM3	0.850
	Development Focus	SPM4	0.903
	Fair Evaluation	SPM5	0.836
Psychological Empowerment (PE) (M)	Meaning	PE1	0.929
	Competence	PE2	0.903
	Self-determination	PE3	0.902
	Impact	PE4	0.873
Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) (Y)	Promotive Voice	EVB1	0.937
	Prohibitive Voice	EVB2	0.903
	Supportive Voice	EVB3	0.880
Ethical Leadership (EL) (Z)	Integrity	EL1	0.876
	Fairness	EL2	0.892
	Role Modeling	EL3	0.832
	Accountability	EL4	0.871
	People Orientation	EL5	0.863

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 2, therefore, presents the outer loading values for each indicator within the four constructs: Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), Employee Voice Behavior (EVB), and Ethical Leadership (EL). As described above, all indicators present strong loading factors over the standard cut-off point of 0.70, suggesting high reliability when it comes to measuring their respective latent variable (Hair et al., 2019). The highest loading is associated with the PE1 (meaning 0.929), and the lowest is SPM5 (fair evaluation, 0.836), but even a much smaller loading ratio still seems to meet acceptable requirements. Overall, the results are consistent with acceptable indicator reliability within the measurement model and provide empirical support for each of the constructs delineated in the study.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
SPM (X)	0.923	0.926	0.942	0.764
PE (M)	0.924	0.925	0.946	0.814
EVB (Y)	0.892	0.893	0.933	0.822
EL (Z)	0.917	0.922	0.938	0.752

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 3 presents the results of the construct reliability and validity tests for the four research constructs, namely SPM, PE, EVB, and EL. All constructs display respectably high Cronbach's Alpha values (≥ 0.892), which implies excellent internal consistency. Nearly all constructs achieve a composite reliability (rho_c) value greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, therefore indicating strong construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, all constructs also have the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.50, which indicates that more than half of each construct's variance is explained by its indicators, thus meeting convergent validity requirements for factor analysis. These results suggest that all latent variable constructs utilized in the model are measurable with reliability and validity for further exploration of structural relationships.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	EL (Z)	EVB (Y)	PE (M)	SPM (X)
EL (Z)	0.867	0.740	0.710	0.800
EVB (Y)	0.740	0.907	0.780	0.860
PE (M)	0.710	0.780	0.902	0.840
SPM (X)	0.800	0.860	0.840	0.874

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which checks for discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE with correlations between constructs. The diagonal value elements (in bold) correspond to the square root of the AVE, and they are greater than their correlation values with other constructs in that same row and column. This implies that each of the constructs has decent discriminant validity—it is unique and cannot be mistaken for other constructs. So, the model of this study fulfilled the necessary criteria for discriminant validity to go through the further analysis.

4.2. Inner Model Assessment

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) involves the inner model evaluation, which is used to understand the relationships among latent constructs evaluated through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Path coefficients show the strength and direction of the hypothesized paths, while R^2 values explain how much variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables—values close to 1 indicate stronger prediction (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the Q^2 values are used to assess how well these models predicted by using the blindfolding economy explanation; a Q^2 above 0 ensures that the model has predictive value (Shmueli et al., 2019). Inner model assessment the results described in the inner model assessment are shown in Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7.

Table 5. Path coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.234	0.220	0.112	2.079	0.038
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 5. Conclusion of Path Coefficients All path relationships in the structural model are significant. SPM in this study has an effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) with a coefficient of 0.234 ($p < 0.05$), and the effect of SPM on Psychological Empowerment (PE) is very strong & significant ($\beta = 0.892$, $p = 0.000$). Next, PE also significantly influences EVB ($\beta = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$), as does Ethical Leadership (EL) towards EVB ($\beta = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$). Surprisingly, the interaction of EL and PE about EVB is negatively significant ($\beta = -0.052$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the moderating effect of EL may reduce the impact of PE on the employee voice behavior attitude. These results indicate that all the paths in the model under test are statistically meaningful and have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 6. R-squared (R^2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EVB (Y)	0.882	0.881
PE (M)	0.795	0.795

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 6. If the value of R-squared (R^2) is greater than 0.5, this shows that there is a substantial explanation about the structural model. The R^2 value of Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is 0.882, which indicates that SPM, PE, and EL (interacted with PE) have the ability to explain more than 88.2% of the variance in EVB. Second, SPM accounts for 79.5% of the variance in PE ($R^2 = 0.795$). The adjusted R^2 values (which are virtually the same as the original R^2 values) say that our model is both stable and robust. According to Hair et al. (2019), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, which implies both the constructs endogenously linked in this model can be powerfully predicted with the help of exogenous variables.

Table 7. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SPM (X)	1500.000	547.087	0.635
PE (M)	1200.000	396.255	0.670
EVB (Y)	900.000	353.159	0.608
EL (Z)	1500.000	571.736	0.619

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 7 displays the results for different sets of data. We also present Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs in the model that indicate good predictive relevance to our data. In this context, PE ($Q^2 = 0.670$), SPM ($Q^2 = 0.635$), EL ($Q^2 = 0.619$), and EVB ($Q^2 = 0.608$) have higher predictive relevance according to the Q^2 values. According to Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values > 0.35 at the very least suggest that the model can predict such an endogenous construct and are often indicative of good predictive performance (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, a high extent of prognostic accuracy regarding all constructs was provided as evidence confirming the ability of the structural model to reliably predict observed outcomes.

4.3. Testing Mediation Effects

Mediation testing is an important step within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine whether and how much of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable follows through a mediator. Factor mediation typically involves the Total Effects (TE) and Specific Indirect Effects (IE) (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which clarify whether the mediation effect is partial or full, as well as if the indirect effects are statistically significant. The indirect effect reflects the path through the mediator, and the total effect covers both direct and indirect effects. When using regression, bootstrapping is encouraged to determine whether these effects are significantly different than zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020). The importance of mediation can be justified if the indirect effect is significant and the confidence interval does not contain zero. The mediation testing results for this study are displayed in Table 8 and Table 9 below.

Table 8. Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.540	0.529	0.099	5.433	0.000
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Results Table 8 shows the outcome. Total Effects showcases that all the relationships between the variables are statistically significant. The maximum total effect appears between SPM (X) and PE (M), with a coefficient of 0.892, $t=47.566$, and $p<0.000$, which means the significant effect of SPM on PE. The SPM(X) also has a significant total effect on EVB(Y) ($\gamma=0.540$, $t=5.433$, $p<0.001$), which underscores the

involvement of SPM in improving employee voluntary behavior directly and indirectly as well. The significant effect of PE (M) on EVB (Y) (0.343, $t = 4.354$, $p < 0.05$) implies the mediating role of PE in the relationship between SNPs and EVB. In addition, EL (Z) has a positive and significant direct effect on EVB (Y) (0.354, $t = 3.601$, $p = 0.000$), while the interaction effect of EL (Z) x PE (M) on EVB (Y), which is negative but still significant (-0.052; $t = -3.343$, $p = 0.001$), acts as a moderating variable that may attenuate somewhat the strength of the positive effect in a specific sub-region of data space. Drawing on the hierarchical theory of motivation, structural strategic management research is apparently unwavering in recognizing cross-level effects between managerial strategy and individual employee behavior, although our study suggests a number of networked pathways in which strategic management influences voluntary employee behavior via empowerment.

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.306	0.309	0.073	4.203	0.000

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings in Table 9, Key Indirect Effects, show that Strategic Performance Management (SPM) also has a statistically significant indirect effect on Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB) through Psychological Empowerment (PE). The path coefficient of the indirect relationship is 0.306 ($p = 0.000$), with a t-value of 4.203, being significant too. The results suggest that SPM affects EVB directly and indirectly, with the stronger effect of SPM on psychological empowerment leading to more voluntary, proactive behavior in the workplace. This confirms the earlier suggestion that empowerment mediates between SHRM practices and employee behavior facets.

4.4. Testing Moderation Effects

Central to the process of moderation effects is assessing whether how strongly or in which direction one thing relates to another varies as a consequence of being at some level of a third thing, which is called a moderator. In SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), moderation is usually tested by employing an interaction term, which is the outcome of multiplication between predictor and moderator variables (Hair et al., 2019). It enables researchers to test whether the moderator has a significant impact on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2015). In Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a significant interaction effect signals that moderation is at work, and this interaction term lends interpretation as per the sign-magnitude-significance of the related coefficient (Sarstedt et al., 2022). These kinds of analyses are especially valuable when it comes to determining conditional effects within more elaborate behavioral models. Table 10 below shows the results of the moderation tests.

Table 10. Interaction Term Moderating Effect

Moderating Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
EL (Z) x PE (M) → EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results in Table 10. Results of Interaction Term Moderating Effect interactions indicated that the variable Environmental Leadership (EL) had a significant moderation effect on the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB). The value of the original sample, 0.052, means that as environmental leadership increases, psychological empowerment decreases in voluntary employee behavior; this suggests that the moderating effect was negative. The moderating effect is that the T-statistic value is 3.343 (>1.96) and the P-value is 0.001 (<0.05). The results suggest that environmental leadership serves as a moderator on the association between PE and EVB, although with a negative direction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer strong empirical evidence on the seminal roles of Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), and Ethical Leadership (EL) in affecting Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) within the hospitality industry. These findings point to the profound beneficial effects of SPM, supporting the view that sustainable performance management—characterized by procedural fairness, transparent criteria, a high extent of forward-looking developmental feedback, and a strategic linkage with long-term environmental and social goals—drives constructive communication tendencies among hospitality staff. This is consistent with the established results of Jia et al. (2023); Ajmal et al. (2025) and Chen & Treviño, (2022) which emphasize that sustainable human resource frameworks foster deep psychological safety and organizational justice, thereby encouraging frontline service employees to voice innovative ideas or operational concerns without fear of management retaliation.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that SPM substantially increases psychological empowerment, tightly aligning with the theoretical arguments made by Pradhan & Panda (2021), where empowerment structurally occurs when an individual perceives meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. By integrating sustainable performance practices with a core commitment to the environment and the local community (Aguinis, 2019; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021), hospitality firms can successfully nurture frontline personnel who feel psychologically empowered and intrinsically motivated to deliver exceptional service. This highlights the dual function of SPM, which acts not merely as a traditional performance evaluation system to monitor occupancy and service metrics, but also as a vital strategic leverage for human capital development and proactive organizational change toward comprehensive corporate sustainability.

The positive association between psychological empowerment (PE) and employee voice behavior (EVB) substantiates the established organizational behavior perspective, which posits that empowered service employees are significantly more inclined to participate in proactive voice behaviors (Pradhan & Panda, 2021; Morrison, 2023). Within the fast-paced and emotionally demanding hospitality sector, the resilience of frontline employees and their propensity to contribute toward operational and structural improvement stem directly from feeling that their insights are genuinely heard, their professional autonomy is respected, and their presence is valued (Ajmal et al., 2025). This relationship becomes even more critical for sustainability-driven hospitality brands, as psychologically empowered workers frequently transition into active change agents who willingly align their daily service behaviors with global environmental goals and corporate social responsibility objectives, such as green lodging initiatives and sustainable waste management (Burhan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the empirical findings of this study strongly support the role of psychological empowerment as a vital cognitive mediator between sustainable performance management (SPM) and employee voice behavior. This structural pathway is highly consistent with the earlier empirical evidence presented by Vu et al. (2021) and Burhan et al. (2023), confirming the theoretical proposition that individual empowerment acts as a core psychological mechanism connecting macro-level sustainable HRM frameworks to micro-level positive behavioral responses. In practice, these insights imply that hospitality organizations must avoid treating performance appraisal systems as mere bureaucratic or administrative compliance tools. Instead, hotel management and HR executives need to strategically embed these performance frameworks within the organizational culture to actively foster a sense of individual capability, meaningfulness, and self-determination, which ultimately drives frontline staff to speak up and innovate for long-term hospitality sustainability.

Although the moderating influence of ethical leadership (EL) on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior seems nuanced, the discussion in light of the empirical findings reveals a complex behavioral dynamic. While EL is traditionally paired with fostering ethical climates and providing explicit support for organizational openness (Brown et al., 2020), the results observed in this study present a compelling boundary condition. This paradoxical result, which aligns with the recent findings of Ajmal et al. (2025), indicates that when hospitality leadership highly institutionalizes ethical norms and establishes deeply trusted, open communication channels, frontline workers may actually perceive less structural necessity to engage their separate, individual voice. These results are highly consistent with Zainal et al. (2023), suggesting that in a mature ethical climate, formal

ethical leadership should not replace employee-driven initiatives but must supplement and safeguard them instead, ensuring that the existing psychological safety is leveraged for continuous service improvement.

The findings of this study promote significant implications across theoretical, practical, and macro-policy dimensions within the tourism and hospitality sectors. From a theoretical perspective, this study deepens the organizational behavior literature by successfully synthesizing macro-level systems like Sustainable Performance Management with micro-level psychological mechanisms and contingency behaviors. It provides a robust cognitive framework explaining how and why sustainable human resource architectures translate into proactive service recovery actions. Consequently, these findings offer a clear conceptual baseline for future researchers who are developing academic roadmaps in Green HRM and sustainable service science.

For hospitality practitioners, general managers, and HR executives, the practical implications of these insights are immediate and actionable. The results demonstrate that hotel appraisal systems must urgently move beyond traditional, short-term financial metrics and occupancy rates. Hotel management needs to strategically design evaluation frameworks that psychologically enable employees, ensuring that corporate green lodging and sustainability goals are directly integrated into individual KPIs. This integration is essential to actively foster a sense of individual capability, operational meaningfulness, and self-determination among frontline service staff.

On a broader scale, the synthesis of these results serves as a vital reference for tourism ministries, regional governments, and industry policymakers who are responsible for shaping corporate social responsibility standards. Government bodies can leverage this empirical model to design regional certification programs or sustainable tourism guidelines that encourage hospitality brands to adopt sustainable performance structures. By doing so, decision-makers can systematically promote an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem that elevates national service standards while simultaneously safeguarding workforce well-being.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully accomplishes its core research objectives by empirically validating the structural paths that drive proactive communication within the hospitality sector. Based on the structural analysis, it is concluded that Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) exerts a significant and positive direct effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) among hotel employees. When hospitality institutions transition from traditional appraisal models to systems grounded in sustainability principles—such as procedural fairness, operational transparency, and continuous developmental feedback—they successfully foster a safe work environment that encourages frontline staff to proactively voice service innovations and constructive operational inputs.

Furthermore, the empirical testing confirms that Psychological Empowerment (PE) functions as a central and vital mediating mechanism that bridges the relationship between SPM and employee voice behavior. The macro-level structural benefits of an SPM framework effectively elevate frontline staff's micro-level cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. These heightened psychological resources subsequently act as the internal motivational driver that triggers independent voice behavior. Crucially, the structural integration of sustainable performance systems does not merely serve as an administrative compliance tool, but acts as a powerful strategic catalyst that fundamentally reshapes the employee's psychological state, ultimately driving continuous organizational learning and service innovation across hospitality operations.

6.1. Recommendations

Hospitality managers and HR practitioners should integrate multidimensional sustainability principles into formal performance evaluation architectures, moving beyond short-term financial and occupancy metrics toward procedural fairness and long-term developmental feedback. Hotel organizations need to design leadership development programs that train department heads to balance ethical stewardship with high employee autonomy. To build a culture of active service recovery and collaborative innovation, leaders must encourage independence of thought and establish trusted

communication channels that eliminate frontline staff's fear of career reprisals. Ultimately, utilizing these results supports the development of an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem.

6.2. Limitations and Further Study

This study possesses several inherent limitations that present valuable directions for future inquiry. First, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to definitively infer long-term causality; future research should employ longitudinal designs to monitor behavioral evolution over time. Second, the empirical scope was geographically confined to a single urban center, meaning future studies should expand the sampling frame to include diverse resort destinations and various hotel classifications to enhance generalizability. Finally, future agendas should integrate supplementary contextual variables—such as organizational culture, governance structures, and the influence of external stakeholders like guests and eco-tourism partners—to construct a holistic, 360-degree view of sustainable hospitality management.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Yayan Sugiarto: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft.

Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury: Data curation, Investigation, Project administration, Writing – review & editing.

Dewi Fitriana: Validation, Supervision, Resources, Writing – review & editing.

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication and declare that this work has not been published elsewhere.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Research Paper

Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact

ABSTRACT

Amidst growing demands for corporate social responsibility in the tourism sector, establishing a resilient and proactive workforce is vital for organizational learning. This study examines the structural mechanisms driving proactive communication within the hospitality industry by evaluating whether Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) enhances Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), under the moderating condition of Ethical Leadership (EL). A quantitative, cross-sectional design was conducted utilizing a sample of 300 frontline hotel employees in Greater Bandung selected via stratified random sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The empirical findings demonstrate that SPM significantly and positively affects both PE and EVB, confirming that sustainable evaluation systems grounded in fairness and developmental feedback encourage staff to voice innovative service ideas without fear of retaliation. Moreover, PE successfully functions as a vital cognitive mediator bridging the relationship between macro-level human resource practices and micro-level voice behavior. However, strong EL introduces a nuanced boundary condition, where highly institutionalized ethical norms slightly reduce the perceived necessity for independent employee-driven interventions. In conclusion, building a sustainable hospitality brand requires the strategic design of performance frameworks that psychologically enable employees while balancing ethical stewardship with workplace autonomy, ultimately enhancing long-term operational sustainability and service innovation.

Keywords: Sustainable performance management; Psychological empowerment; Employee voice behavior; Ethical leadership; Hospitality industry.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management systems (SPMS) are a new category of increasingly important human resource management (HRM) practices for organizations seeking to align business performance with their broader social, environmental, and ethical goals (Aguinis, 2019). Within the global tourism and hospitality industry, where service quality is tightly linked to human capital, SPMS differs significantly from traditional performance management. While traditional approaches focus heavily on short-term financial outcomes and occupancy rates, SPMS concentrates on continuous development driven by value-based outcomes and sustainable hospitality practices (Paulet et al., 2021). This modern approach has profound implications for corporate sustainability, particularly in creating a high-involvement workplace climate where frontline hospitality employees feel secure and motivated to exhibit employee voice behavior.

Employee voice behavior is defined as the discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In highly dynamic service environments such as hotels, resorts, and tourism agencies, the practice of voice is central to service innovation, service recovery, and operational process enhancement. This is especially vital for hospitality firms pursuing sustainability-related strategies, such as green lodging, waste reduction, or eco-tourism operations. Nevertheless, the willingness of frontline hospitality staff—who interact directly with guests—to voice their constructive opinions is structurally influenced by the overarching performance management design and their immediate psychological setting (Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019). Psychological empowerment, therefore, acts as one of the vital mediating mechanisms for transforming sustainable performance systems into actual voice behavior. Attempting to deploy sustainable initiatives is bound to fail if hospitality employees lack the confidence, perceived competence, and self-determination to share insights regarding service improvements (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024). Key dimensions of psychological empowerment—meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact—can exert a powerful influence over employees' proactive behaviors in service delivery (Al Harbi et al., 2019).

Simultaneously, ethical leadership has become a recognized management tool in moderating the relationship between performance frameworks and employee outcomes. Hospitality leaders who operate in a fair, conscientious, and communal manner are most likely to provide the psychological safety required for staff to speak up (Brown et al., 2019). In the hospitality sector, where hierarchies are traditionally rigid, this demonstration of ethical support from upper management improves employee trust in the evaluation system, thereby mitigating the fear of negative reprisals when suggestions or operational bottlenecks are brought to light (Amory et al., 2024). Recent empirical studies focusing on sustainability-driven firms indicate the importance of SPMS as an antecedent of high-involvement work climates that facilitate voice (Paulet et al., 2021). Similar patterns have been observed across complex organizational settings, where participatory management systems serve to mediate the relationship between empowerment and innovative behaviors (Alwali, 2024). Furthermore, empirical research within the Indonesian service and hospitality sectors underscores the indispensable role of ethical leadership in encouraging voice behaviors to correct unethical or ineffective field practices (Zainal et al., 2023).

Despite these initial insights, a significant research gap persists in the tourism and hospitality literature. While existing studies have separately looked at the relationship between general performance management and employee voice (Morrison, 2023; Paulet et al., 2021), rarely has empirical research integrated SPMS, psychological empowerment as a mediator, and the moderated mediating effect of ethical leadership into a single, comprehensive structural framework. Compounding this issue is the pressure faced by modern hospitality organizations to satisfy both strict service-delivery metrics and non-financial sustainability outcomes, such as social responsibility and ethical governance. This dual objective creates an operational challenge regarding how to design appraisal systems that encourage staff involvement without undermining corporate sustainability efforts, which consequently drives this study to address the direct effects of SPMS on employee voice behavior within a sustainability-oriented hospitality context, the extent to which psychological empowerment mediates

this structural link, and how ethical leadership moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior among hospitality staff.

Based on this problem formulation, this study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable performance management systems on employee voice behavior, while analyzing the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of ethical leadership within the same model. To fulfill these objectives and ensure methodological rigor, this study utilizes a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Moving away from restrictive single convenience-sample surveys, data was gathered from a rigorous stratified random sampling process involving active respondents across service-oriented hospitality institutions. The structural relationships and complex moderated-mediating paths were systematically evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software.

This paper makes three distinct contributions to the literature. Theoretically, it introduces a novel integrative model combining system-level (SPMS), individual-level (psychological empowerment), and leadership-level (ethical leadership) factors to predict voice behavior. Contextually, it expands the empirical boundaries of SPMS research within the rapidly developing Indonesian hospitality and tourism sector. Finally, it offers practical recommendations for hotel general managers, HR practitioners, and destination managers to successfully reorient performance management systems toward ethical, responsible, and sustainable organizational development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is defined as a continuous, forward-looking process in which employees are integrated into the organization's strategic success, long-term thinking is prioritized, and the multi-dimensional well-being of employees, the organization, and its broader social-environmental context are structurally respected (Aguinis, 2019). Within the rapidly changing, high-innovation-demand context of the global hospitality industry, traditional performance appraisal systems that rely solely on retrospective financial indicators, rigid assessment cycles, and guest satisfaction scores are increasingly insufficient. In contrast, an SPM framework shifts the focus toward continuous employee development, reflective behavior-based feedback, perceived procedural fairness, and a high level of value-driven alignment (Brown et al., 2019). This strategic evolution is vital for hospitality firms to remain agile, reduce high turnover rates, and sustain competitive advantages in premium service delivery.

Grounding this relationship in Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory, the system-level characteristics of SPM serve as powerful signals of organizational care and investment. Among the most critical behavioral outcomes triggered by this high-investment HRM climate is employee voice behavior, which manifests as the discretionary communication of ideas, operational concerns, or constructive suggestions to improve overall organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline employees serve as the critical interface between the brand and the consumer, the willingness to exhibit voice behavior is heavily contingent upon the design of the appraisal system. Previous literature demonstrates that when performance management systems are perceived as transparent, developmental, and structurally ethical, they significantly enhance employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation to actively speak up (Wilkinson et al., 2020).

Empirical evidence consistently verifies that sustainable, supportive HR practices positively predict proactive behaviors across diverse service touchpoints (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Incorporating sustainability metrics—such as rewarding green initiatives, ethical service recovery, and collaborative teamwork—builds deep organizational trust, which encourages frontline staff to voice both helpful service innovations and early warnings about operational vulnerabilities (Ashiru et al., 2022). This dynamic is particularly indispensable in the people-centric hospitality industry, where the spontaneous insights and discretionary behaviors of employees directly determine service quality, agility, and operational excellence. Consequently, contemporary hospitality literature suggests that SPM must be viewed as an strategic enabler of proactive performance rather than a mere punitive measurement tool,

Commented [A1]: The paragraph addressing the research gap (the fourth paragraph of the introduction) attempts to identify the gap in the existing literature; however, the articulation remains general and insufficiently precise. The assertion that "rarely has empirical research integrated SPMS, psychological empowerment... into a single, comprehensive structural framework" requires support from bibliometric evidence or a more systematic literature mapping exercise.

Commented [A2]: Please provide a more substantive explanation of Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory as referenced in the third paragraph. Specifically, please briefly elaborate on how each theory justifies the hypothesized relationships among the study's variables.

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tightly linked to broad corporate sustainability and long-term service growth (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2022). Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, it is argued that a well-implemented SPM system will structurally foster a safe environment that drives hospitality staff to actively articulate constructive inputs. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.2. Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is a proactive organizational approach aimed at enhancing the traditional performance appraisal architecture through continuous, transparent feedback, structured employee development, and equitable evaluation systems that balance long-term sustainability objectives with individual employee welfare (Brown et al., 2019). Grounded in Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory, SPM fundamentally deviates from conventional, compliance-driven performance appraisals by shifting the structural focus from rigid, retrospective metrics to iterative processes and ethical values that foster workplace fairness and continuous competency development (Aguinis, 2019). Within the hospitality industry, where emotional labor is intense and frontline service delivery is highly interdependent, such inclusive and growth-oriented appraisal frameworks are crucial. When hospitality organizations move away from punitive, guest-complaint-centric metrics and instead implement SPM, they cultivate a high-involvement service culture where employees feel genuinely valued, organizationally supported, and intrinsically motivated.

Consequently, psychological empowerment emerges as a critical psychological and motivational consequence of a well-perceived SPM framework. Psychological empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional motivational construct manifested in four distinct cognitive perceptions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact regarding one's organizational role (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Performance management systems that are structurally designed and perceived by frontline hospitality staff as socially just, highly participative, and developmental serve to reinforce these four cognitive dimensions. Specifically, by involving hospitality personnel in collaborative goal-setting and providing constructive, future-oriented feedback, SPM clarifies how individual service roles contribute to the establishment's broader sustainability and service-quality goals, thereby enhancing the perception of *meaning* and *impact* (Zainal et al., 2023). Furthermore, the developmental and supportive nature of SPM bolsters employees' beliefs in their own service capabilities (*competence*) and grants them operational autonomy in service recovery scenarios (*self-determination*).

This structural relationship is strongly supported by empirical findings in organizational behavior and social sciences. For instance, Van Waeyenberg & Decramer (2018) demonstrated that developmental performance appraisals significantly enhance employees' perceptions of autonomy and competence, which subsequently drives intrinsic motivation through the expanded operational discretion afforded by the appraisal process. Similarly, Singh et al. (2022) verified that when performance rules are procedurally fair and evaluation systems are resilient, ongoing transparent feedback engenders deep organizational trust and facilitates rich, proactive engagement among service employees.

Despite these insights, a distinct research gap persists within the hospitality and tourism literature. While general human resource practices have been linked to psychological outcomes, empirical studies exploring the direct structural impact of sustainable, eco-centric performance systems (SPM) on the psychological empowerment of frontline hospitality staff remain scarce, particularly within rapidly developing tourism hubs like Indonesia. In the fierce, highly competitive hospitality landscape of major urban tourist destinations, implementing SPM is no longer just an administrative tool to monitor service standards; it is a strategic necessity to unlock employee initiative and foster collaborative resilience among service and support staff to satisfy modern eco-conscious travelers. Based on these theoretical and empirical lines of argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Psychological Empowerment among hospitality industry employees.

Commented [A4]: In the subsection on Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior, the authors anchor their arguments in Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory. However, in the subsection on Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment, the authors abruptly invoke Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory to explain the same variable (SPM). The use of divergent theoretical frameworks to explain the same construct without clear justification constitutes a serious weakness that undermines the overall coherence of the theoretical argumentation. The authors are required to establish one consistent primary theoretical framework and explicitly justify its selection.

2.3. Psychological Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior

Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional motivational construct defined by four distinct cognitive dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Cognitive Theory, a strong sense of empowerment cognitively reorients employees toward both their in-role and extra-role task behaviors, as they perceive themselves to be highly competent, self-determined, and influential within the organizational structure. In the high-pressure environment of the hospitality industry, these psychological resources are vital drivers of proactive employee behaviors. When frontline hospitality staff—such as guest relations, food and beverage personnel, or housekeeping crews—possess these psychological strengths, they exhibit higher levels of job performance, service satisfaction, and discretionary behaviors like employee voice, which entails the voluntary communication of ideas, concerns, or innovative suggestions to optimize service delivery and organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023; Bakker & Wang, 2020).

Theoretically, psychologically empowered employees are more equipped to express their voice because they believe their insights possess genuine value (*meaning*), feel capable of articulating them effectively (*competence*), enjoy the professional autonomy to act (*self-determination*), and trust that their suggestions can positively reshape institutional practices (*impact*) (Chen & Treviño, 2022). In hotel operations, this psychological state transcends passive compliance, creating a profound culture of psychological ownership. This cognitive ownership holds frontline staff internally accountable for bringing forth service-recovery ideas, highlighting hidden operational defects, and taking an active role in problem resolution. For instance, empirical research by Makwetta et al. (2021) establishes that employees with elevated psychological empowerment are significantly more likely to engage in both promotive voice—offering innovative solutions for growth—and prohibitive voice—warning against practices that could harm service quality. Similarly, empowerment serves as a vital psychological buffer that facilitates a psychologically safe work environment, releasing frontline hospitality staff from the fear of negative reprisals and fostering open communication and creative service orientation (Liu et al., 2023).

Within the hospitality sector, these socio-psychological dynamics are highly critical yet distinct. Frontline service workers are often the first to notice service failures, safety hazards, or gaps in environmental sustainability practices, such as food waste or energy inefficiencies. Empowered hospitality personnel are more likely to participate actively in service governance, engage in conversations related to operational continuous improvement, and openly voice concerns regarding emerging challenges that directly affect hospitality service quality. Despite these linkages, a notable research gap exists concerning the specific structural relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice within the Indonesian hospitality landscape. Given that unique local hospitality work cultures, strict service hierarchies, and evolving sustainable HRM practices can heavily influence this dynamic, exploring this path is essential. Unlocking these mechanisms will determine how individual cognitive empowerment can be leveraged to drive constructive employee voice within sustainability-focused hospitality brands. Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological Empowerment has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.4. The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Within contemporary organizational behavior and management literature, psychological empowerment is widely recognized as a pivotal mediating mechanism through which macro-level macro-organizational practices are translated into micro-level employee behaviors. Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Social Exchange Theory, psychological empowerment functions as an intrinsic form of task motivation manifested through four distinct cognitive states: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Extensive empirical research demonstrates that psychological empowerment effectively bridges the gap between structured contextual resources—such as progressive leadership styles, strategic performance frameworks, or

constructive work climates—and critical behavioral outcomes, including service innovation, organizational engagement, and employee voice behavior (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2022). Sustainable performance management systems (SPMS) that systematically prioritize future-oriented feedback, individualized developmental appraisal, and transparent procedural justice cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel intrinsically valued, structurally trusted, and organizationally supported (Parker & Grote, 2022; Schermuly et al., 2022). These institutional support systems serve as critical signaling mechanisms that clarify role expectations while simultaneously elevating frontline workers' perceived autonomy and professional competence (Chen & Treviño, 2022).

In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline service employees regularly navigate diverse guest interactions and unpredictable operational demands, this indirect psychological pathway is uniquely critical. The structural features of an SPM framework do not automatically trigger proactive service behaviors; rather, they operate by reshaping the psychological state of the workforce. When hospitality personnel perceive that their performance appraisal system is designed to sustain their long-term well-being and professional growth, it fosters a profound sense of workplace credibility and psychological safety. This cognitive shift provides the precise motivational mechanism required for sustainable performance management to influence employee voice behavior, as frontline staff feel cognitively secure and organizationally driven to articulate innovative ideas or highlight latent service failures without fear of negative repercussions (McCarthy et al., 2020).

This structural mediating pathway is robustly supported by empirical evidence across the broader service literature. For instance, Farid et al. (2019) verified that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee advocacy behaviors within complex service-driven organizations. In a dynamic service market like Indonesia, hospitality brands face intense competition and rising demands for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Frontline hotel staff are often the first to recognize operational bottlenecks, environmental waste, or service recovery opportunities; however, their willingness to speak up remains heavily dependent on whether they feel structurally empowered by their firm's appraisal architecture. Despite its practical urgency, there remains a notable research gap in the hospitality literature regarding how this psychological mediation mechanism functions within developing Southeast Asian service sectors. Bridging this theoretical gap is essential to clarify how institutional sustainable human resource frameworks can be leveraged to drive open, proactive communication and continuous quality improvement in tourism operations. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Psychological Empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.5. The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership

An indispensable contextual boundary condition that structurally reshapes the behavior of organizational members and dictates service dynamics is ethical leadership. Grounded in Social Learning Theory, ethical leadership is conceptualized as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, combined with the active promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and balanced decision-making (Brown et al., 2019). Ethical leaders cultivate an environment anchored in deep organizational trust and operational transparency. Supported by a rigorous moral compass, these leaders serve as critical behavioral role models, systematically setting clear expectations, adhering to strict fairness standards, and providing continuous reassurance that hospitality employees can articulate creative ideas or voice operational concerns without suffering negative career reprisals or social retaliation (Abu Bakar & Connaughton, 2023).

Within organizational behavior literature, extensive empirical studies support the notion that ethical leadership acts as an essential moderator that amplifies the positive impact of structural organizational systems on employee attitudes and psychological states. For instance, empirical research verifies that ethical leadership significantly moderates the relationship between high-involvement work systems and proactive employee outcomes, including organizational citizenship behavior and constructive voice

(Jeong et al., 2025; Ajmal et al., 2025). When an authentic sense of psychological safety is actively fostered by ethical managers, employees are structurally more likely to perceive systemic human resource practices as genuinely developmental and supportive rather than punitive or disciplinary.

In the high-touch hospitality industry, where operations are characterized by intense emotional labor, low employee retention, and traditionally rigid operational hierarchies, the interplay between systems and leadership is uniquely critical. Ethical leadership in the context of sustainable performance management (SPMS)—which structurally focuses on procedural justice, workplace inclusivity, and continuous feedback—is highly significant because it helps transform abstract corporate sustainability principles from mere paper compliance blueprints into lived daily service routines (O’Keefe et al., 2019; Hameed et al., 2020).

Theoretically, ethical leadership acts as a catalyst that activates the empowerment potential of SPMS. While an SPM framework provides the formal structure for fair evaluation and long-term well-being, it requires the contextual support of an ethical manager to truly elevate an employee’s psychological state. When hotel department heads or general managers lead ethically, the structural benefits of SPMS are magnified, drastically increasing the frontline staff’s sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and overall impact.

Notwithstanding these compelling theoretical and empirical underpinnings, a significant research gap persists regarding how the moderating mechanism of ethical leadership operates at the intersection of sustainable human resource systems and employee psychological states within the developing Indonesian hospitality sector. Understanding this boundary condition is essential to clarify how hospitality brands can prevent their sustainability appraisal tools from becoming dead administrative weight, ensuring instead that they structurally unlock employee psychological empowerment and drive proactive service excellence. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical linkages, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Ethical Leadership significantly moderates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment within the hospitality industry.

The integrated research model proposed in this study is built upon the comprehensive literature review conducted earlier, mapping the structural pathways that dictate proactive organizational behaviors within the hospitality sector. Specifically, the framework posits that a Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) system, which incorporates adaptive and eco-centric performance criteria, can significantly enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). Within this structural mechanism, Psychological Empowerment (PE) operates as a critical cognitive mediator, while Ethical Leadership (EL) serves as an essential contextual boundary condition and moderator. Methodologically, SPM is hypothesized to drive employee voice behavior by elevating frontline hospitality staff’s psychological empowerment, as heightened cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, and self-determination structurally enable them to feel more impactful and secure at work. Furthermore, ethical leadership is expected to strengthen the positive effect of SPM on psychological empowerment, as ethical leaders actively cultivate a workplace atmosphere anchored in procedural justice, honesty, and high-involvement service dynamics. These structural relationships—comprising direct effects, mediating pathways, and moderating interactions—are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which represents the comprehensive conceptual framework of this study.

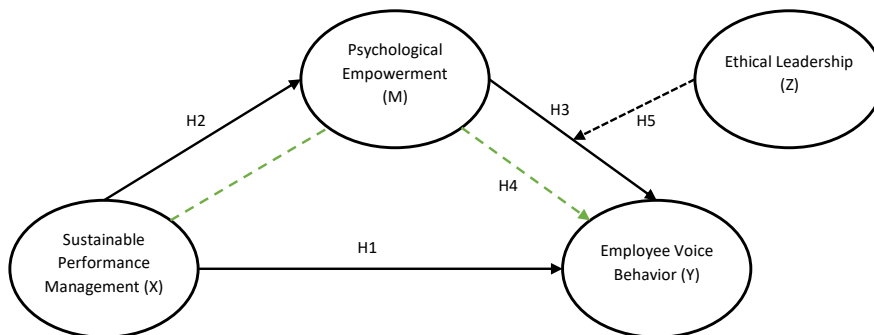


Figure 1. Research Framework
Source: Primary data processed by authors (2026)

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative research design. This approach is highly suitable for the verification of hypotheses and the confirmation of theoretical models through empirical data, enabling the statistical analysis of relationships between sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, and employee voice behavior. A quantitative strategy was preferred since it makes use of a standardized *modus operandi*, thereby ensuring clear-cut ways to measure and test initial effects systematically (Hair et al., 2019), which aligns with the structural requirement of testing both complex mediation and moderation paths simultaneously. Within this methodological framework, individual frontline employees from selected hotels and hospitality establishments serve as the primary unit of analysis, while the unit of observation consists of the operational service and administrative staff members who participate actively in performance-related processes and daily service deliveries within their institutions.

3.2. Population and sample

The target population for this study includes 1,200 active employees from selected star-rated hotels and hospitality establishments in the Greater Bandung area. To determine the minimum required sample size for rigorous empirical testing, Slovin's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a representative sample size of 300 respondents to ensure adequate statistical power. In order to guarantee a proportional representation of respondents across different functional lines within each hotel department, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. The target population was explicitly divided into two major operational strata: frontline service staff (including food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office personnel) and administrative-managerial support staff. Respondents were then randomly selected from each strategic stratum. This sampling design effectively minimizes sampling bias, accounts for the structural heterogeneity of the hospitality workforce, and enhances the external validity of the empirical findings.

To provide a comprehensive and transparent overview of the sampling framework, the precise distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample allocation within each operational stratum has been systematically mapped. This structured breakdown details the proportional weight of both frontline service and administrative-managerial staff across the selected 4-star and 5-star hotel segments. Accordingly, the detailed distribution of the population and the final research sample used for subsequent empirical testing is explicitly presented in Table 1 below.

Tabel 1. Population and Sample Distribution

No	Hotel Classification	Operational Stratum	Target Population (N)	Percentage (%)	Calculated Sample Size (n)
1	4-Star Hotels (Selected)		720	60	180
		Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	540	45	130
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	180	15	45
2	5-Star Hotels (Selected)		480	40	120
		Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	360	30	90
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	120	10	30
All Selected Establishments		Combined Strata	1,200	100	300

Source: Selected 4-star and 5-star hotels in Greater Bandung, Primary Data Processed (2026)

3.3. Measurement and Instruments

A structured, self-administered questionnaire was utilized for data collection by adopting validated measurement instruments from established previous studies to fit the service dynamics of the hospitality sector. For the sustainable performance management variable, the eco-centric and developmental performance indicators were adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2023) and de Waal (2020), focusing on sustainable service standards and resource stewardship. Psychological empowerment was measured using the four-dimensional scale developed by Pradhan & Panda (2021), which evaluates frontline staff's cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their service roles. Furthermore, employee voice behavior was evaluated using the measurement items developed by Jada & Mukhopadhyay (2019) to capture proactive suggestions and constructive service recovery inputs. Finally, ethical leadership was constructed based on the scale by Brown et al. (2019), assessing the moral and supportive behaviors of hotel supervisors and general managers. All questionnaire items were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to ensure robust interval-level data for subsequent statistical processing via structural equation modeling.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

To guarantee the clarity, reliability, and validity of the research instrument within a high-touch service environment, a pilot test was performed with 30 hospitality respondents prior to full deployment. Following the successful validation of the pilot assessment, the final surveys were administered using a hybrid deployment approach designed to accommodate the diverse shift schedules of hotel staff. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously in a traditional paper-and-pencil format directly at the properties and electronically via mobile-friendly online forms. This dual approach was critical to secure maximal geographical coverage and optimize overall response rates across the selected hospitality institutions without disrupting daily service operations.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was deployed for data analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS version 4.0 software application. This approach was chosen because it is highly appropriate for complex structural models that simultaneously include mediation and moderation paths, accommodates non-normal data distributions without distorting results, and shows robust performance in moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). Following standard statistical protocols, the

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analysis process followed a strict two-step approach, beginning with the measurement model assessment to evaluate convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability of the latent variables, followed by the structural model testing to analyze path coefficients and significance levels using the bootstrapping method, alongside the evaluation of the model's explanatory power through R^2 values. This rigorous quantitative approach ensures a thorough empirical exploration of how sustainable performance management, coupled with psychological mechanisms and leadership behaviors, structurally supports employee voice behaviors among frontline staff and support personnel within the hospitality industry.

4. RESULT

4.1. Outer Model Assessment

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), an outer model assessment is recommended to assess the measurement properties of each construct in the research model. Specifically, this process involves checking outer loadings to measure the reliability of indicators; composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for assessing construct reliability and convergent validity; and discriminant validity, which determines that the constructs are empirically different (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). In addition, the other loadings should be higher than 0.70 for each indicator to ensure that they indicate their latent constructs strongly (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability (CR) above 0.70 and an average variance extracted (AVE) over 0.50 indicate that both measures were adequate in terms of their estimated values on the respective indicators of convergent validity. We used the rooting of the AVE approach that suggests that each construct should be significantly higher from its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), or we looked at the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, which needs to have a value lower than 0.90 according to (Henseler et al., 2015). The results of the outer model evaluation are provided in Supplementary Figures & Tables: Figure 2, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4.

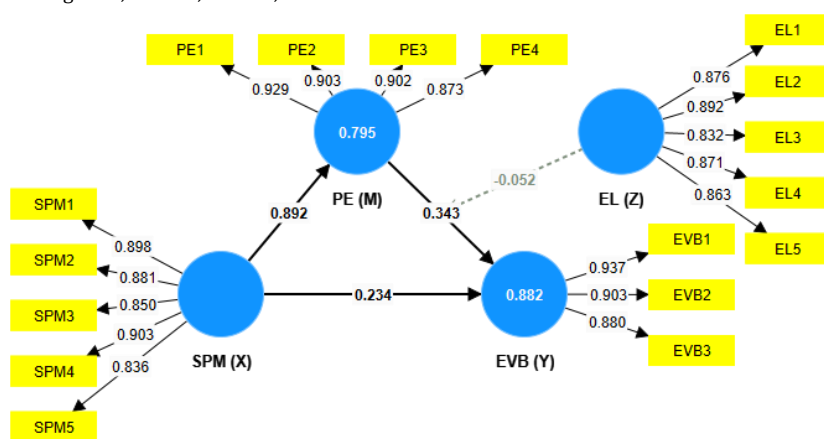


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

This is a visual representation of the outer model analysis (indicator loadings) for each construct in the study as displayed in Figure 2. As can be seen, all indicators have outer loading values above the recommended cut-off limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), thus indicating high reliability of the indicator variables. For instance, the CRI ranges from 0.873 to 0.929 for Psychological Empowerment (PE), from 0.836 to 0.903 for Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), from 0.832 to 0.892 for Ethical Leadership (EL), and from 0.880 to 0.937 for Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). These findings indicate

that the items consistently assess their respective latent variable. The values on the latent variable scores included in blue circles also suggest moderate to high levels of construct contribution. This estimation stands for the measurement model before a structural testing that demonstrates its reliability and validity.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicators	Item Code	Loading Factor
Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) (X)	Goal Alignment	SPM1	0.898
	Continuous Feedback	SPM2	0.881
	Participation	SPM3	0.850
	Development Focus	SPM4	0.903
	Fair Evaluation	SPM5	0.836
Psychological Empowerment (PE) (M)	Meaning	PE1	0.929
	Competence	PE2	0.903
	Self-determination	PE3	0.902
	Impact	PE4	0.873
Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) (Y)	Promotive Voice	EVB1	0.937
	Prohibitive Voice	EVB2	0.903
	Supportive Voice	EVB3	0.880
Ethical Leadership (EL) (Z)	Integrity	EL1	0.876
	Fairness	EL2	0.892
	Role Modeling	EL3	0.832
	Accountability	EL4	0.871
	People Orientation	EL5	0.863

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 2, therefore, presents the outer loading values for each indicator within the four constructs: Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), Employee Voice Behavior (EVB), and Ethical Leadership (EL). As described above, all indicators present strong loading factors over the standard cut-off point of 0.70, suggesting high reliability when it comes to measuring their respective latent variable (Hair et al., 2019). The highest loading is associated with the PE1 (meaning 0.929), and the lowest is SPM5 (fair evaluation, 0.836), but even a much smaller loading ratio still seems to meet acceptable requirements. Overall, the results are consistent with acceptable indicator reliability within the measurement model and provide empirical support for each of the constructs delineated in the study.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
SPM (X)	0.923	0.926	0.942	0.764
PE (M)	0.924	0.925	0.946	0.814
EVB (Y)	0.892	0.893	0.933	0.822
EL (Z)	0.917	0.922	0.938	0.752

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 3 presents the results of the construct reliability and validity tests for the four research constructs, namely SPM, PE, EVB, and EL. All constructs display respectably high Cronbach's Alpha values (≥ 0.892), which implies excellent internal consistency. Nearly all constructs achieve a composite reliability (rho_c) value greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, therefore indicating strong construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, all constructs also have the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.50, which indicates that more than half of each construct's variance is explained by its indicators, thus meeting convergent validity requirements for factor analysis. These results suggest that all latent variable constructs utilized in the model are measurable with reliability and validity for further exploration of structural relationships.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	EL (Z)	EVB (Y)	PE (M)	SPM (X)
EL (Z)	0.867	0.740	0.710	0.800
EVB (Y)	0.740	0.907	0.780	0.860
PE (M)	0.710	0.780	0.902	0.840
SPM (X)	0.800	0.860	0.840	0.874

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which checks for discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE with correlations between constructs. The diagonal value elements (in bold) correspond to the square root of the AVE, and they are greater than their correlation values with other constructs in that same row and column. This implies that each of the constructs has decent discriminant validity—it is unique and cannot be mistaken for other constructs. So, the model of this study fulfilled the necessary criteria for discriminant validity to go through the further analysis.

4.2. Inner Model Assessment

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) involves the inner model evaluation, which is used to understand the relationships among latent constructs evaluated through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Path coefficients show the strength and direction of the hypothesized paths, while R^2 values explain how much variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables—values close to 1 indicate stronger prediction (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the Q^2 values are used to assess how well these models predicted by using the blindfolding economy explanation; a Q^2 above 0 ensures that the model has predictive value (Shmueli et al., 2019). Inner model assessment the results described in the inner model assessment are shown in Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7.

Table 5. Path coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.234	0.220	0.112	2.079	0.038
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 5. Conclusion of Path Coefficients All path relationships in the structural model are significant. SPM in this study has an effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) with a coefficient of 0.234 ($p < 0.05$), and the effect of SPM on Psychological Empowerment (PE) is very strong & significant ($\beta = 0.892$, $p = 0.000$). Next, PE also significantly influences EVB ($\beta = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$), as does Ethical Leadership (EL) towards EVB ($\beta = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$). Surprisingly, the interaction of EL and PE about EVB is negatively significant ($\beta = -0.052$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the moderating effect of EL may reduce the impact of PE on the employee voice behavior attitude. These results indicate that all the paths in the model under test are statistically meaningful and have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 6. R-squared (R^2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EVB (Y)	0.882	0.881
PE (M)	0.795	0.795

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 6. If the value of R-squared (R^2) is greater than 0.5, this shows that there is a substantial explanation about the structural model. The R^2 value of Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is 0.882, which indicates that SPM, PE, and EL (interacted with PE) have the ability to explain more than 88.2% of the variance in EVB. Second, SPM accounts for 79.5% of the variance in PE ($R^2 = 0.795$). The adjusted R^2 values (which are virtually the same as the original R^2 values) say that our model is both stable and robust. According to Hair et al. (2019), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, which implies both the constructs endogenously linked in this model can be powerfully predicted with the help of exogenous variables.

Table 7. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SPM (X)	1500.000	547.087	0.635
PE (M)	1200.000	396.255	0.670
EVB (Y)	900.000	353.159	0.608
EL (Z)	1500.000	571.736	0.619

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 7 displays the results for different sets of data. We also present Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs in the model that indicate good predictive relevance to our data. In this context, PE ($Q^2 = 0.670$), SPM ($Q^2 = 0.635$), EL ($Q^2 = 0.619$), and EVB ($Q^2 = 0.608$) have higher predictive relevance according to the Q^2 values. According to Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values > 0.35 at the very least suggest that the model can predict such an endogenous construct and are often indicative of good predictive performance (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, a high extent of prognostic accuracy regarding all constructs was provided as evidence confirming the ability of the structural model to reliably predict observed outcomes.

4.3. Testing Mediation Effects

Mediation testing is an important step within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine whether and how much of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable follows through a mediator. Factor mediation typically involves the Total Effects (TE) and Specific Indirect Effects (IE) (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which clarify whether the mediation effect is partial or full, as well as if the indirect effects are statistically significant. The indirect effect reflects the path through the mediator, and the total effect covers both direct and indirect effects. When using regression, bootstrapping is encouraged to determine whether these effects are significantly different than zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020). The importance of mediation can be justified if the indirect effect is significant and the confidence interval does not contain zero. The mediation testing results for this study are displayed in Table 8 and Table 9 below.

Table 8. Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.540	0.529	0.099	5.433	0.000
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Results Table 8 shows the outcome. Total Effects showcases that all the relationships between the variables are statistically significant. The maximum total effect appears between SPM (X) and PE (M), with a coefficient of 0.892, $t=47.566$, and $p<0.000$, which means the significant effect of SPM on PE. The SPM(X) also has a significant total effect on EVB(Y) ($\gamma=0.540$, $t=5.433$, $p<0.001$), which underscores the

involvement of SPM in improving employee voluntary behavior directly and indirectly as well. The significant effect of PE (M) on EVB (Y) (0.343, $t = 4.354$, $p < 0.05$) implies the mediating role of PE in the relationship between SNPs and EVB. In addition, EL (Z) has a positive and significant direct effect on EVB (Y) (0.354, $t = 3.601$, $p = 0.000$), while the interaction effect of EL (Z) x PE (M) on EVB (Y), which is negative but still significant (-0.052; $t = -3.343$, $p = 0.001$), acts as a moderating variable that may attenuate somewhat the strength of the positive effect in a specific sub-region of data space. Drawing on the hierarchical theory of motivation, structural strategic management research is apparently unwavering in recognizing cross-level effects between managerial strategy and individual employee behavior, although our study suggests a number of networked pathways in which strategic management influences voluntary employee behavior via empowerment.

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) → PE (M) → EVB (Y)	0.306	0.309	0.073	4.203	0.000

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings in Table 9, Key Indirect Effects, show that Strategic Performance Management (SPM) also has a statistically significant indirect effect on Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB) through Psychological Empowerment (PE). The path coefficient of the indirect relationship is 0.306 ($p = 0.000$), with a t -value of 4.203, being significant too. The results suggest that SPM affects EVB directly and indirectly, with the stronger effect of SPM on psychological empowerment leading to more voluntary, proactive behavior in the workplace. This confirms the earlier suggestion that empowerment mediates between SHRM practices and employee behavior facets.

4.4. Testing Moderation Effects

Central to the process of moderation effects is assessing whether how strongly or in which direction one thing relates to another varies as a consequence of being at some level of a third thing, which is called a moderator. In SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), moderation is usually tested by employing an interaction term, which is the outcome of multiplication between predictor and moderator variables (Hair et al., 2019). It enables researchers to test whether the moderator has a significant impact on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2015). In Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a significant interaction effect signals that moderation is at work, and this interaction term lends interpretation as per the sign-magnitude-significance of the related coefficient (Sarstedt et al., 2022). These kinds of analyses are especially valuable when it comes to determining conditional effects within more elaborate behavioral models. Table 10 below shows the results of the moderation tests.

Table 10. Interaction Term Moderating Effect

Moderating Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
EL (Z) × PE (M) → EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results in Table 10. Results of Interaction Term Moderating Effect interactions indicated that the variable Environmental Leadership (EL) had a significant moderation effect on the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB). The value of the original sample, 0.052, means that as environmental leadership increases, psychological empowerment decreases in voluntary employee behavior; this suggests that the moderating effect was negative. The moderating effect is that the T -statistic value is 3.343 (>1.96) and the P -value is 0.001 (<0.05). The results suggest that environmental leadership serves as a moderator on the association between PE and EVB, although with a negative direction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer strong empirical evidence on the seminal roles of Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), and Ethical Leadership (EL) in affecting Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) within the hospitality industry. These findings point to the profound beneficial effects of SPM, supporting the view that sustainable performance management—characterized by procedural fairness, transparent criteria, a high extent of forward-looking developmental feedback, and a strategic linkage with long-term environmental and social goals—drives constructive communication tendencies among hospitality staff. This is consistent with the established results of Jia et al. (2023); Ajmal et al. (2025) and Chen & Treviño, (2022) which emphasize that sustainable human resource frameworks foster deep psychological safety and organizational justice, thereby encouraging frontline service employees to voice innovative ideas or operational concerns without fear of management retaliation.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that SPM substantially increases psychological empowerment, tightly aligning with the theoretical arguments made by Pradhan & Panda (2021), where empowerment structurally occurs when an individual perceives meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. By integrating sustainable performance practices with a core commitment to the environment and the local community (Aguinis, 2019; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021), hospitality firms can successfully nurture frontline personnel who feel psychologically empowered and intrinsically motivated to deliver exceptional service. This highlights the dual function of SPM, which acts not merely as a traditional performance evaluation system to monitor occupancy and service metrics, but also as a vital strategic leverage for human capital development and proactive organizational change toward comprehensive corporate sustainability.

The positive association between psychological empowerment (PE) and employee voice behavior (EVB) substantiates the established organizational behavior perspective, which posits that empowered service employees are significantly more inclined to participate in proactive voice behaviors (Pradhan & Panda, 2021; Morrison, 2023). Within the fast-paced and emotionally demanding hospitality sector, the resilience of frontline employees and their propensity to contribute toward operational and structural improvement stem directly from feeling that their insights are genuinely heard, their professional autonomy is respected, and their presence is valued (Ajmal et al., 2025). This relationship becomes even more critical for sustainability-driven hospitality brands, as psychologically empowered workers frequently transition into active change agents who willingly align their daily service behaviors with global environmental goals and corporate social responsibility objectives, such as green lodging initiatives and sustainable waste management (Burhan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the empirical findings of this study strongly support the role of psychological empowerment as a vital cognitive mediator between sustainable performance management (SPM) and employee voice behavior. This structural pathway is highly consistent with the earlier empirical evidence presented by Vu et al. (2021) and Burhan et al. (2023), confirming the theoretical proposition that individual empowerment acts as a core psychological mechanism connecting macro-level sustainable HRM frameworks to micro-level positive behavioral responses. In practice, these insights imply that hospitality organizations must avoid treating performance appraisal systems as mere bureaucratic or administrative compliance tools. Instead, hotel management and HR executives need to strategically embed these performance frameworks within the organizational culture to actively foster a sense of individual capability, meaningfulness, and self-determination, which ultimately drives frontline staff to speak up and innovate for long-term hospitality sustainability.

Although the moderating influence of ethical leadership (EL) on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior seems nuanced, the discussion in light of the empirical findings reveals a complex behavioral dynamic. While EL is traditionally paired with fostering ethical climates and providing explicit support for organizational openness (Brown et al., 2020), the results observed in this study present a compelling boundary condition. This paradoxical result, which aligns with the recent findings of Ajmal et al. (2025), indicates that when hospitality leadership highly institutionalizes ethical norms and establishes deeply trusted, open communication channels, frontline workers may actually perceive less structural necessity to engage their separate, individual voice. These results are highly consistent with Zainal et al. (2023), suggesting that in a mature ethical climate, formal

ethical leadership should not replace employee-driven initiatives but must supplement and safeguard them instead, ensuring that the existing psychological safety is leveraged for continuous service improvement.

The findings of this study promote significant implications across theoretical, practical, and macro-policy dimensions within the tourism and hospitality sectors. From a theoretical perspective, this study deepens the organizational behavior literature by successfully synthesizing macro-level systems like Sustainable Performance Management with micro-level psychological mechanisms and contingency behaviors. It provides a robust cognitive framework explaining how and why sustainable human resource architectures translate into proactive service recovery actions. Consequently, these findings offer a clear conceptual baseline for future researchers who are developing academic roadmaps in Green HRM and sustainable service science.

For hospitality practitioners, general managers, and HR executives, the practical implications of these insights are immediate and actionable. The results demonstrate that hotel appraisal systems must urgently move beyond traditional, short-term financial metrics and occupancy rates. Hotel management needs to strategically design evaluation frameworks that psychologically enable employees, ensuring that corporate green lodging and sustainability goals are directly integrated into individual KPIs. This integration is essential to actively foster a sense of individual capability, operational meaningfulness, and self-determination among frontline service staff.

On a broader scale, the synthesis of these results serves as a vital reference for tourism ministries, regional governments, and industry policymakers who are responsible for shaping corporate social responsibility standards. Government bodies can leverage this empirical model to design regional certification programs or sustainable tourism guidelines that encourage hospitality brands to adopt sustainable performance structures. By doing so, decision-makers can systematically promote an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem that elevates national service standards while simultaneously safeguarding workforce well-being.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully accomplishes its core research objectives by empirically validating the structural paths that drive proactive communication within the hospitality sector. Based on the structural analysis, it is concluded that Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) exerts a significant and positive direct effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) among hotel employees. When hospitality institutions transition from traditional appraisal models to systems grounded in sustainability principles—such as procedural fairness, operational transparency, and continuous developmental feedback—they successfully foster a safe work environment that encourages frontline staff to proactively voice service innovations and constructive operational inputs.

Furthermore, the empirical testing confirms that Psychological Empowerment (PE) functions as a central and vital mediating mechanism that bridges the relationship between SPM and employee voice behavior. The macro-level structural benefits of an SPM framework effectively elevate frontline staff's micro-level cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. These heightened psychological resources subsequently act as the internal motivational driver that triggers independent voice behavior. Crucially, the structural integration of sustainable performance systems does not merely serve as an administrative compliance tool, but acts as a powerful strategic catalyst that fundamentally reshapes the employee's psychological state, ultimately driving continuous organizational learning and service innovation across hospitality operations.

6.1. Recommendations

Hospitality managers and HR practitioners should integrate multidimensional sustainability principles into formal performance evaluation architectures, moving beyond short-term financial and occupancy metrics toward procedural fairness and long-term developmental feedback. Hotel organizations need to design leadership development programs that train department heads to balance ethical stewardship with high employee autonomy. To build a culture of active service recovery and collaborative innovation, leaders must encourage independence of thought and establish trusted

communication channels that eliminate frontline staff's fear of career reprisals. Ultimately, utilizing these results supports the development of an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem.

6.2. Limitations and Further Study

This study possesses several inherent limitations that present valuable directions for future inquiry. First, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to definitively infer long-term causality; future research should employ longitudinal designs to monitor behavioral evolution over time. Second, the empirical scope was geographically confined to a single urban center, meaning future studies should expand the sampling frame to include diverse resort destinations and various hotel classifications to enhance generalizability. Finally, future agendas should integrate supplementary contextual variables—such as organizational culture, governance structures, and the influence of external stakeholders like guests and eco-tourism partners—to construct a holistic, 360-degree view of sustainable hospitality management.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication and declare that this work has not been published elsewhere.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Research Paper

Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact

ABSTRACT

Amidst growing demands for corporate social responsibility in the tourism sector, establishing a resilient and proactive workforce is vital for organizational learning. This study examines the structural mechanisms driving proactive communication within the hospitality industry by evaluating whether Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) enhances Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), under the moderating condition of Ethical Leadership (EL). A quantitative, cross-sectional design was conducted utilizing a sample of 300 frontline hotel employees in Greater Bandung selected via stratified random sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The empirical findings demonstrate that SPM significantly and positively affects both PE and EVB, confirming that sustainable evaluation systems grounded in fairness and developmental feedback encourage staff to voice innovative service ideas without fear of retaliation. Moreover, PE successfully functions as a vital cognitive mediator bridging the relationship between macro-level human resource practices and micro-level voice behavior. However, strong EL introduces a nuanced boundary condition, where highly institutionalized ethical norms slightly reduce the perceived necessity for independent employee-driven interventions. In conclusion, building a sustainable hospitality brand requires the strategic design of performance frameworks that psychologically enable employees while balancing ethical stewardship with workplace autonomy, ultimately enhancing long-term operational sustainability and service innovation.

Keywords: Sustainable performance management; Psychological empowerment; Employee voice behavior; Ethical leadership; Hospitality industry.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management systems (SPMS) are a new category of increasingly important human resource management (HRM) practices for organizations seeking to align business performance with their broader social, environmental, and ethical goals (Aguinis, 2019). Within the global tourism and hospitality industry, where service quality is tightly linked to human capital, SPMS differs significantly from traditional performance management. While traditional approaches focus heavily on short-term financial outcomes and occupancy rates, SPMS concentrates on continuous development driven by value-based outcomes and sustainable hospitality practices (Paulet et al., 2021). This modern approach has profound implications for corporate sustainability, particularly in creating a high-involvement workplace climate where frontline hospitality employees feel secure and motivated to exhibit employee voice behavior.

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Employee voice behavior is defined as the discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In highly dynamic service environments such as hotels, resorts, and tourism agencies, the practice of voice is central to service innovation, service recovery, and operational process enhancement. This is especially vital for hospitality firms pursuing sustainability-related strategies, such as green lodging, waste reduction, or eco-tourism operations. Nevertheless, the willingness of frontline hospitality staff—who interact directly with guests—to voice their constructive opinions is structurally influenced by the overarching performance management design and their immediate psychological setting (Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019). Psychological empowerment, therefore, acts as one of the vital mediating mechanisms for transforming sustainable performance systems into actual voice behavior. Attempting to deploy sustainable initiatives is bound to fail if hospitality employees lack the confidence, perceived competence, and self-determination to share insights regarding service improvements (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024). Key dimensions of psychological empowerment—meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact—can exert a powerful influence over employees' proactive behaviors in service delivery (Al Harbi et al., 2019).

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Simultaneously, ethical leadership has become a recognized management tool in moderating the relationship between performance frameworks and employee outcomes. Hospitality leaders who operate in a fair, conscientious, and communal manner are most likely to provide the psychological safety required for staff to speak up (Brown et al., 2019). In the hospitality sector, where hierarchies are traditionally rigid, this demonstration of ethical support from upper management improves employee trust in the evaluation system, thereby mitigating the fear of negative reprisals when suggestions or operational bottlenecks are brought to light (Amory et al., 2024). Recent empirical studies focusing on sustainability-driven firms indicate the importance of SPMS as an antecedent of high-involvement work climates that facilitate voice (Paulet et al., 2021). Similar patterns have been observed across complex organizational settings, where participatory management systems serve to mediate the relationship between empowerment and innovative behaviors (Alwali, 2024). Furthermore, empirical research within the Indonesian service and hospitality sectors underscores the indispensable role of ethical leadership in encouraging voice behaviors to correct unethical or ineffective field practices (Zainal et al., 2023).

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Despite these initial insights, a significant research gap persists in the tourism and hospitality literature. While existing studies have separately looked at the relationship between general performance management and employee voice (Morrison, 2023; Paulet et al., 2021), rarely has empirical research integrated SPMS, psychological empowerment as a mediator, and the moderated mediating effect of ethical leadership into a single, comprehensive structural framework. Compounding this issue is the pressure faced by modern hospitality organizations to satisfy both strict service-delivery metrics and non-financial sustainability outcomes, such as social responsibility and ethical governance. This dual objective creates an operational challenge regarding how to design appraisal systems that encourage staff involvement without undermining corporate sustainability efforts, which consequently drives this study to address the direct effects of SPMS on employee voice behavior within a sustainability-oriented hospitality context, the extent to which psychological empowerment mediates

this structural link, and how ethical leadership moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior among hospitality staff.

Based on this problem formulation, this study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable performance management systems on employee voice behavior, while analyzing the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of ethical leadership within the same model. To fulfill these objectives and ensure methodological rigor, this study utilizes a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Moving away from restrictive single convenience-sample surveys, data was gathered from a rigorous stratified random sampling process involving active respondents across service-oriented hospitality institutions. The structural relationships and complex moderated-mediating paths were systematically evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software.

This paper makes three distinct contributions to the literature. Theoretically, it introduces a novel integrative model combining system-level (SPMS), individual-level (psychological empowerment), and leadership-level (ethical leadership) factors to predict voice behavior. Contextually, it expands the empirical boundaries of SPMS research within the rapidly developing Indonesian hospitality and tourism sector. Finally, it offers practical recommendations for hotel general managers, HR practitioners, and destination managers to successfully reorient performance management systems toward ethical, responsible, and sustainable organizational development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is defined as a continuous, forward-looking process in which employees are integrated into the organization's strategic success, long-term thinking is prioritized, and the multi-dimensional well-being of employees, the organization, and its broader social-environmental context are structurally respected (Aguinis, 2019). Within the rapidly changing, high-innovation-demand context of the global hospitality industry, traditional performance appraisal systems that rely solely on retrospective financial indicators, rigid assessment cycles, and guest satisfaction scores are increasingly insufficient. In contrast, an SPM framework shifts the focus toward continuous employee development, reflective behavior-based feedback, perceived procedural fairness, and a high level of value-driven alignment (Brown et al., 2019). This strategic evolution is vital for hospitality firms to remain agile, reduce high turnover rates, and sustain competitive advantages in premium service delivery.

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Grounding this relationship in Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory, the system-level characteristics of SPM serve as powerful signals of organizational care and investment. Among the most critical behavioral outcomes triggered by this high-investment HRM climate is employee voice behavior, which manifests as the discretionary communication of ideas, operational concerns, or constructive suggestions to improve overall organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline employees serve as the critical interface between the brand and the consumer, the willingness to exhibit voice behavior is heavily contingent upon the design of the appraisal system. Previous literature demonstrates that when performance management systems are perceived as transparent, developmental, and structurally ethical, they significantly enhance employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation to actively speak up (Wilkinson et al., 2020).

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Empirical evidence consistently verifies that sustainable, supportive HR practices positively predict proactive behaviors across diverse service touchpoints (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Incorporating sustainability metrics—such as rewarding green initiatives, ethical service recovery, and collaborative teamwork—builds deep organizational trust, which encourages frontline staff to voice both helpful service innovations and early warnings about operational vulnerabilities (Ashiru et al., 2022). This dynamic is particularly indispensable in the people-centric hospitality industry, where the spontaneous insights and discretionary behaviors of employees directly determine service quality, agility, and operational excellence. Consequently, contemporary hospitality literature suggests that SPM must be viewed as an strategic enabler of proactive performance rather than a mere punitive measurement tool,

tightly linked to broad corporate sustainability and long-term service growth (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2022). Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, it is argued that a well-implemented SPM system will structurally foster a safe environment that drives hospitality staff to actively articulate constructive inputs. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.2. Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is a proactive organizational approach aimed at enhancing the traditional performance appraisal architecture through continuous, transparent feedback, structured employee development, and equitable evaluation systems that balance long-term sustainability objectives with individual employee welfare (Brown et al., 2019). Grounded in Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory, SPM fundamentally deviates from conventional, compliance-driven performance appraisals by shifting the structural focus from rigid, retrospective metrics to iterative processes and ethical values that foster workplace fairness and continuous competency development (Aguinis, 2019). Within the hospitality industry, where emotional labor is intense and frontline service delivery is highly interdependent, such inclusive and growth-oriented appraisal frameworks are crucial. When hospitality organizations move away from punitive, guest-complaint-centric metrics and instead implement SPM, they cultivate a high-involvement service culture where employees feel genuinely valued, organizationally supported, and intrinsically motivated.

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Consequently, psychological empowerment emerges as a critical psychological and motivational consequence of a well-perceived SPM framework. Psychological empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional motivational construct manifested in four distinct cognitive perceptions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact regarding one's organizational role (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Performance management systems that are structurally designed and perceived by frontline hospitality staff as socially just, highly participative, and developmental serve to reinforce these four cognitive dimensions. Specifically, by involving hospitality personnel in collaborative goal-setting and providing constructive, future-oriented feedback, SPM clarifies how individual service roles contribute to the establishment's broader sustainability and service-quality goals, thereby enhancing the perception of *meaning* and *impact* (Zainal et al., 2023). Furthermore, the developmental and supportive nature of SPM bolsters employees' beliefs in their own service capabilities (*competence*) and grants them operational autonomy in service recovery scenarios (*self-determination*).

This structural relationship is strongly supported by empirical findings in organizational behavior and social sciences. For instance, Van Waeyenberg & Decramer (2018) demonstrated that developmental performance appraisals significantly enhance employees' perceptions of autonomy and competence, which subsequently drives intrinsic motivation through the expanded operational discretion afforded by the appraisal process. Similarly, Singh et al. (2022) verified that when performance rules are procedurally fair and evaluation systems are resilient, ongoing transparent feedback engenders deep organizational trust and facilitates rich, proactive engagement among service employees.

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Despite these insights, a distinct research gap persists within the hospitality and tourism literature. While general human resource practices have been linked to psychological outcomes, empirical studies exploring the direct structural impact of sustainable, eco-centric performance systems (SPM) on the psychological empowerment of frontline hospitality staff remain scarce, particularly within rapidly developing tourism hubs like Indonesia. In the fierce, highly competitive hospitality landscape of major urban tourist destinations, implementing SPM is no longer just an administrative tool to monitor service standards; it is a strategic necessity to unlock employee initiative and foster collaborative resilience among service and support staff to satisfy modern eco-conscious travelers. Based on these theoretical and empirical lines of argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Psychological Empowerment among hospitality industry employees.

2.3. Psychological Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior

Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional motivational construct defined by four distinct cognitive dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Cognitive Theory, a strong sense of empowerment cognitively reorients employees toward both their in-role and extra-role task behaviors, as they perceive themselves to be highly competent, self-determined, and influential within the organizational structure. In the high-pressure environment of the hospitality industry, these psychological resources are vital drivers of proactive employee behaviors. When frontline hospitality staff—such as guest relations, food and beverage personnel, or housekeeping crews—possess these psychological strengths, they exhibit higher levels of job performance, service satisfaction, and discretionary behaviors like employee voice, which entails the voluntary communication of ideas, concerns, or innovative suggestions to optimize service delivery and organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023; Bakker & Wang, 2020).

Theoretically, psychologically empowered employees are more equipped to express their voice because they believe their insights possess genuine value (*meaning*), feel capable of articulating them effectively (*competence*), enjoy the professional autonomy to act (*self-determination*), and trust that their suggestions can positively reshape institutional practices (*impact*) (Chen & Treviño, 2022). In hotel operations, this psychological state transcends passive compliance, creating a profound culture of psychological ownership. This cognitive ownership holds frontline staff internally accountable for bringing forth service-recovery ideas, highlighting hidden operational defects, and taking an active role in problem resolution. For instance, empirical research by Makwetta et al. (2021) establishes that employees with elevated psychological empowerment are significantly more likely to engage in both promotive voice—offering innovative solutions for growth—and prohibitive voice—warning against practices that could harm service quality. Similarly, empowerment serves as a vital psychological buffer that facilitates a psychologically safe work environment, releasing frontline hospitality staff from the fear of negative reprisals and fostering open communication and creative service orientation (Liu et al., 2023).

Within the hospitality sector, these socio-psychological dynamics are highly critical yet distinct. Frontline service workers are often the first to notice service failures, safety hazards, or gaps in environmental sustainability practices, such as food waste or energy inefficiencies. Empowered hospitality personnel are more likely to participate actively in service governance, engage in conversations related to operational continuous improvement, and openly voice concerns regarding emerging challenges that directly affect hospitality service quality. Despite these linkages, a notable research gap exists concerning the specific structural relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice within the Indonesian hospitality landscape. Given that unique local hospitality work cultures, strict service hierarchies, and evolving sustainable HRM practices can heavily influence this dynamic, exploring this path is essential. Unlocking these mechanisms will determine how individual cognitive empowerment can be leveraged to drive constructive employee voice within sustainability-focused hospitality brands. Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological Empowerment has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.4. The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Within contemporary organizational behavior and management literature, psychological empowerment is widely recognized as a pivotal mediating mechanism through which macro-level macro-organizational practices are translated into micro-level employee behaviors. Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Social Exchange Theory, psychological empowerment functions as an intrinsic form of task motivation manifested through four distinct cognitive states: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Extensive empirical research demonstrates that psychological empowerment effectively bridges the gap between structured contextual resources—such as progressive leadership styles, strategic performance frameworks, or

constructive work climates—and critical behavioral outcomes, including service innovation, organizational engagement, and employee voice behavior (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2022). Sustainable performance management systems (SPMS) that systematically prioritize future-oriented feedback, individualized developmental appraisal, and transparent procedural justice cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel intrinsically valued, structurally trusted, and organizationally supported (Parker & Grote, 2022; Schermuly et al., 2022). These institutional support systems serve as critical signaling mechanisms that clarify role expectations while simultaneously elevating frontline workers' perceived autonomy and professional competence (Chen & Treviño, 2022).

In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline service employees regularly navigate diverse guest interactions and unpredictable operational demands, this indirect psychological pathway is uniquely critical. The structural features of an SPM framework do not automatically trigger proactive service behaviors; rather, they operate by reshaping the psychological state of the workforce. When hospitality personnel perceive that their performance appraisal system is designed to sustain their long-term well-being and professional growth, it fosters a profound sense of workplace credibility and psychological safety. This cognitive shift provides the precise motivational mechanism required for sustainable performance management to influence employee voice behavior, as frontline staff feel cognitively secure and organizationally driven to articulate innovative ideas or highlight latent service failures without fear of negative repercussions (McCarthy et al., 2020).

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This structural mediating pathway is robustly supported by empirical evidence across the broader service literature. For instance, Farid et al. (2019) verified that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee advocacy behaviors within complex service-driven organizations. In a dynamic service market like Indonesia, hospitality brands face intense competition and rising demands for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Frontline hotel staff are often the first to recognize operational bottlenecks, environmental waste, or service recovery opportunities; however, their willingness to speak up remains heavily dependent on whether they feel structurally empowered by their firm's appraisal architecture. Despite its practical urgency, there remains a notable research gap in the hospitality literature regarding how this psychological mediation mechanism functions within developing Southeast Asian service sectors. Bridging this theoretical gap is essential to clarify how institutional sustainable human resource frameworks can be leveraged to drive open, proactive communication and continuous quality improvement in tourism operations. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

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H4: Psychological Empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.5. The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership

An indispensable contextual boundary condition that structurally reshapes the behavior of organizational members and dictates service dynamics is ethical leadership. Grounded in Social Learning Theory, ethical leadership is conceptualized as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, combined with the active promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and balanced decision-making (Brown et al., 2019). Ethical leaders cultivate an environment anchored in deep organizational trust and operational transparency. Supported by a rigorous moral compass, these leaders serve as critical behavioral role models, systematically setting clear expectations, adhering to strict fairness standards, and providing continuous reassurance that hospitality employees can articulate creative ideas or voice operational concerns without suffering negative career reprisals or social retaliation (Abu Bakar & Connaughton, 2023).

Within organizational behavior literature, extensive empirical studies support the notion that ethical leadership acts as an essential moderator that amplifies the positive impact of structural organizational systems on employee attitudes and psychological states. For instance, empirical research verifies that ethical leadership significantly moderates the relationship between high-involvement work systems and proactive employee outcomes, including organizational citizenship behavior and constructive voice

(Jeong et al., 2025; Ajmal et al., 2025). When an authentic sense of psychological safety is actively fostered by ethical managers, employees are structurally more likely to perceive systemic human resource practices as genuinely developmental and supportive rather than punitive or disciplinary.

In the high-touch hospitality industry, where operations are characterized by intense emotional labor, low employee retention, and traditionally rigid operational hierarchies, the interplay between systems and leadership is uniquely critical. Ethical leadership in the context of sustainable performance management (SPMS)—which structurally focuses on procedural justice, workplace inclusivity, and continuous feedback—is highly significant because it helps transform abstract corporate sustainability principles from mere paper compliance blueprints into lived daily service routines (O’Keefe et al., 2019; Hameed et al., 2020).

Theoretically, ethical leadership acts as a catalyst that activates the empowerment potential of SPMS. While an SPM framework provides the formal structure for fair evaluation and long-term well-being, it requires the contextual support of an ethical manager to truly elevate an employee’s psychological state. When hotel department heads or general managers lead ethically, the structural benefits of SPMS are magnified, drastically increasing the frontline staff’s sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and overall impact.

Notwithstanding these compelling theoretical and empirical underpinnings, a significant research gap persists regarding how the moderating mechanism of ethical leadership operates at the intersection of sustainable human resource systems and employee psychological states within the developing Indonesian hospitality sector. Understanding this boundary condition is essential to clarify how hospitality brands can prevent their sustainability appraisal tools from becoming dead administrative weight, ensuring instead that they structurally unlock employee psychological empowerment and drive proactive service excellence. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical linkages, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Ethical Leadership significantly moderates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment within the hospitality industry.

The integrated research model proposed in this study is built upon the comprehensive literature review conducted earlier, mapping the structural pathways that dictate proactive organizational behaviors within the hospitality sector. Specifically, the framework posits that a Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) system, which incorporates adaptive and eco-centric performance criteria, can significantly enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). Within this structural mechanism, Psychological Empowerment (PE) operates as a critical cognitive mediator, while Ethical Leadership (EL) serves as an essential contextual boundary condition and moderator. Methodologically, SPM is hypothesized to drive employee voice behavior by elevating frontline hospitality staff’s psychological empowerment, as heightened cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, and self-determination structurally enable them to feel more impactful and secure at work. Furthermore, ethical leadership is expected to strengthen the positive effect of SPM on psychological empowerment, as ethical leaders actively cultivate a workplace atmosphere anchored in procedural justice, honesty, and high-involvement service dynamics. These structural relationships—comprising direct effects, mediating pathways, and moderating interactions—are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which represents the comprehensive conceptual framework of this study.

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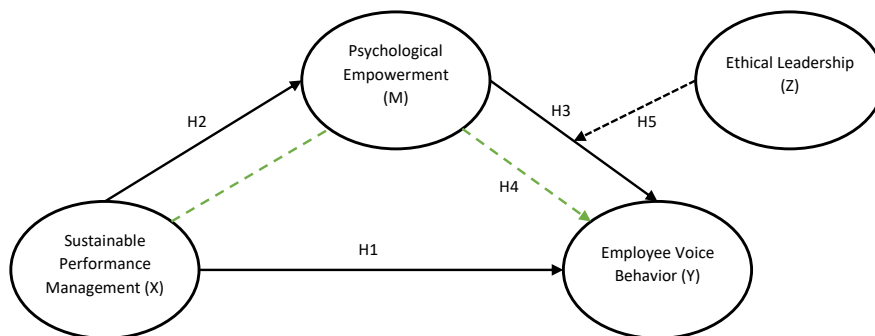


Figure 1. Research Framework
Source: Primary data processed by authors (2026)

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative research design. This approach is highly suitable for the verification of hypotheses and the confirmation of theoretical models through empirical data, enabling the statistical analysis of relationships between sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, and employee voice behavior. A quantitative strategy was preferred since it makes use of a standardized modus operandi, thereby ensuring clear-cut ways to measure and test initial effects systematically (Hair et al., 2019), which aligns with the structural requirement of testing both complex mediation and moderation paths simultaneously. Within this methodological framework, individual frontline employees from selected hotels and hospitality establishments serve as the primary unit of analysis, while the unit of observation consists of the operational service and administrative staff members who participate actively in performance-related processes and daily service deliveries within their institutions.

3.2. Population and sample

The target population for this study includes 1,200 active employees from selected star-rated hotels and hospitality establishments in the Greater Bandung area. To determine the minimum required sample size for rigorous empirical testing, Slovin's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a representative sample size of 300 respondents to ensure adequate statistical power. In order to guarantee a proportional representation of respondents across different functional lines within each hotel department, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. The target population was explicitly divided into two major operational strata: frontline service staff (including food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office personnel) and administrative-managerial support staff. Respondents were then randomly selected from each strategic stratum. This sampling design effectively minimizes sampling bias, accounts for the structural heterogeneity of the hospitality workforce, and enhances the external validity of the empirical findings.

To provide a comprehensive and transparent overview of the sampling framework, the precise distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample allocation within each operational stratum has been systematically mapped. This structured breakdown details the proportional weight of both frontline service and administrative-managerial staff across the selected 4-star and 5-star hotel segments. Accordingly, the detailed distribution of the population and the final research sample used for subsequent empirical testing is explicitly presented in Table 1 below.

Tabel 1. Population and Sample Distribution

No	Hotel Classification	Operational Stratum	Target Population (N)	Percentage (%)	Calculated Sample Size (n)
1	4-Star Hotels (Selected)	Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	720	60	180
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	540	45	130
2	5-Star Hotels (Selected)	Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	480	40	120
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	360	30	90
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	120	10	30
All Selected Establishments		Combined Strata	1,200	100	300

Source: Selected 4-star and 5-star hotels in Greater Bandung, Primary Data Processed (2026)

3.3. Measurement and Instruments

A structured, self-administered questionnaire was utilized for data collection by adopting validated measurement instruments from established previous studies to fit the service dynamics of the hospitality sector. For the sustainable performance management variable, the eco-centric and developmental performance indicators were adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2023) and de Waal (2020), focusing on sustainable service standards and resource stewardship. Psychological empowerment was measured using the four-dimensional scale developed by Pradhan & Panda (2021), which evaluates frontline staff's cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their service roles. Furthermore, employee voice behavior was evaluated using the measurement items developed by Jada & Mukhopadhyay (2019) to capture proactive suggestions and constructive service recovery inputs. Finally, ethical leadership was constructed based on the scale by Brown et al. (2019), assessing the moral and supportive behaviors of hotel supervisors and general managers. All questionnaire items were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to ensure robust interval-level data for subsequent statistical processing via structural equation modeling.

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3.4. Data Collection Procedure

To guarantee the clarity, reliability, and validity of the research instrument within a high-touch service environment, a pilot test was performed with 30 hospitality respondents prior to full deployment. Following the successful validation of the pilot assessment, the final surveys were administered using a hybrid deployment approach designed to accommodate the diverse shift schedules of hotel staff. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously in a traditional paper-and-pencil format directly at the properties and electronically via mobile-friendly online forms. This dual approach was critical to secure maximal geographical coverage and optimize overall response rates across the selected hospitality institutions without disrupting daily service operations.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was deployed for data analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS version 4.0 software application. This approach was chosen because it is highly appropriate for complex structural models that simultaneously include mediation and moderation paths, accommodates non-normal data distributions without distorting results, and shows robust performance in moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). Following standard statistical protocols, the

analysis process followed a strict two-step approach, beginning with the measurement model assessment to evaluate convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability of the latent variables, followed by the structural model testing to analyze path coefficients and significance levels using the bootstrapping method, alongside the evaluation of the model's explanatory power through R^2 values. This rigorous quantitative approach ensures a thorough empirical exploration of how sustainable performance management, coupled with psychological mechanisms and leadership behaviors, structurally supports employee voice behaviors among frontline staff and support personnel within the hospitality industry.

4. RESULT

4.1. Outer Model Assessment

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), an outer model assessment is recommended to assess the measurement properties of each construct in the research model. Specifically, this process involves checking outer loadings to measure the reliability of indicators; composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for assessing construct reliability and convergent validity; and discriminant validity, which determines that the constructs are empirically different (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). In addition, the other loadings should be higher than 0.70 for each indicator to ensure that they indicate their latent constructs strongly (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability (CR) above 0.70 and an average variance extracted (AVE) over 0.50 indicate that both measures were adequate in terms of their estimated values on the respective indicators of convergent validity. We used the rooting of the AVE approach that suggests that each construct should be significantly higher from its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), or we looked at the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, which needs to have a value lower than 0.90 according to (Henseler et al., 2015). The results of the outer model evaluation are provided in Supplementary Figures & Tables: Figure 2, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4.

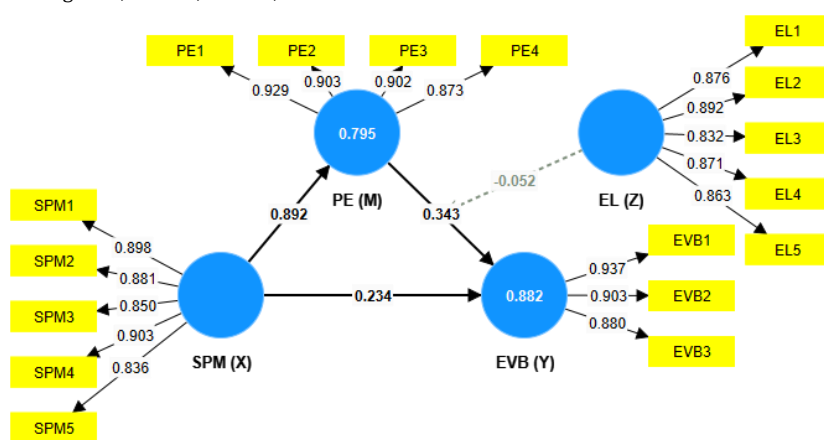


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

This is a visual representation of the outer model analysis (indicator loadings) for each construct in the study as displayed in Figure 2. As can be seen, all indicators have outer loading values above the recommended cut-off limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), thus indicating high reliability of the indicator variables. For instance, the CRI ranges from 0.873 to 0.929 for Psychological Empowerment (PE), from 0.836 to 0.903 for Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), from 0.832 to 0.892 for Ethical Leadership (EL), and from 0.880 to 0.937 for Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). These findings indicate

that the items consistently assess their respective latent variable. The values on the latent variable scores included in blue circles also suggest moderate to high levels of construct contribution. This estimation stands for the measurement model before a structural testing that demonstrates its reliability and validity.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicators	Item Code	Loading Factor
Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) (X)	Goal Alignment	SPM1	0.898
	Continuous Feedback	SPM2	0.881
	Participation	SPM3	0.850
	Development Focus	SPM4	0.903
	Fair Evaluation	SPM5	0.836
Psychological Empowerment (PE) (M)	Meaning	PE1	0.929
	Competence	PE2	0.903
	Self-determination	PE3	0.902
	Impact	PE4	0.873
	Promotive Voice	EVB1	0.937
Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) (Y)	Prohibitive Voice	EVB2	0.903
	Supportive Voice	EVB3	0.880
Ethical Leadership (EL) (Z)	Integrity	EL1	0.876
	Fairness	EL2	0.892
	Role Modeling	EL3	0.832
	Accountability	EL4	0.871
	People Orientation	EL5	0.863

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 2, therefore, presents the outer loading values for each indicator within the four constructs: Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), Employee Voice Behavior (EVB), and Ethical Leadership (EL). As described above, all indicators present strong loading factors over the standard cut-off point of 0.70, suggesting high reliability when it comes to measuring their respective latent variable (Hair et al., 2019). The highest loading is associated with the PE1 (meaning 0.929), and the lowest is SPM5 (fair evaluation, 0.836), but even a much smaller loading ratio still seems to meet acceptable requirements. Overall, the results are consistent with acceptable indicator reliability within the measurement model and provide empirical support for each of the constructs delineated in the study.

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Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
SPM (X)	0.923	0.926	0.942	0.764
PE (M)	0.924	0.925	0.946	0.814
EVB (Y)	0.892	0.893	0.933	0.822
EL (Z)	0.917	0.922	0.938	0.752

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 3 presents the results of the construct reliability and validity tests for the four research constructs, namely SPM, PE, EVB, and EL. All constructs display respectably high Cronbach's Alpha values (≥ 0.892), which implies excellent internal consistency. Nearly all constructs achieve a composite reliability (rho_c) value greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, therefore indicating strong construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, all constructs also have the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.50, which indicates that more than half of each construct's variance is explained by its indicators, thus meeting convergent validity requirements for factor analysis. These results suggest that all latent variable constructs utilized in the model are measurable with reliability and validity for further exploration of structural relationships.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	EL (Z)	EVB (Y)	PE (M)	SPM (X)
EL (Z)	0.867	0.740	0.710	0.800
EVB (Y)	0.740	0.907	0.780	0.860
PE (M)	0.710	0.780	0.902	0.840
SPM (X)	0.800	0.860	0.840	0.874

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which checks for discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE with correlations between constructs. The diagonal value elements (in bold) correspond to the square root of the AVE, and they are greater than their correlation values with other constructs in that same row and column. This implies that each of the constructs has decent discriminant validity—it is unique and cannot be mistaken for other constructs. So, the model of this study fulfilled the necessary criteria for discriminant validity to go through the further analysis.

4.2. Inner Model Assessment

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) involves the inner model evaluation, which is used to understand the relationships among latent constructs evaluated through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Path coefficients show the strength and direction of the hypothesized paths, while R^2 values explain how much variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables—values close to 1 indicate stronger prediction (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the Q^2 values are used to assess how well these models predicted by using the blindfolding economy explanation; a Q^2 above 0 ensures that the model has predictive value (Shmueli et al., 2019). Inner model assessment the results described in the inner model assessment are shown in Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7.

Table 5. Path coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.234	0.220	0.112	2.079	0.038
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 5. Conclusion of Path Coefficients All path relationships in the structural model are significant. SPM in this study has an effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) with a coefficient of 0.234 ($p < 0.05$), and the effect of SPM on Psychological Empowerment (PE) is very strong & significant ($\beta = 0.892$, $p = 0.000$). Next, PE also significantly influences EVB ($\beta = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$), as does Ethical Leadership (EL) towards EVB ($\beta = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$). Surprisingly, the interaction of EL and PE about EVB is negatively significant ($\beta = -0.052$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the moderating effect of EL may reduce the impact of PE on the employee voice behavior attitude. These results indicate that all the paths in the model under test are statistically meaningful and have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 6. R-squared (R^2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EVB (Y)	0.882	0.881
PE (M)	0.795	0.795

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 6. If the value of R-squared (R^2) is greater than 0.5, this shows that there is a substantial explanation about the structural model. The R^2 value of Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is 0.882, which indicates that SPM, PE, and EL (interacted with PE) have the ability to explain more than 88.2% of the variance in EVB. Second, SPM accounts for 79.5% of the variance in PE ($R^2 = 0.795$). The adjusted R^2 values (which are virtually the same as the original R^2 values) say that our model is both stable and robust. According to Hair et al. (2019), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, which implies both the constructs endogenously linked in this model can be powerfully predicted with the help of exogenous variables.

Table 7. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SPM (X)	1500.000	547.087	0.635
PE (M)	1200.000	396.255	0.670
EVB (Y)	900.000	353.159	0.608
EL (Z)	1500.000	571.736	0.619

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 7 displays the results for different sets of data. We also present Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs in the model that indicate good predictive relevance to our data. In this context, PE ($Q^2 = 0.670$), SPM ($Q^2 = 0.635$), EL ($Q^2 = 0.619$), and EVB ($Q^2 = 0.608$) have higher predictive relevance according to the Q^2 values. According to Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values > 0.35 at the very least suggest that the model can predict such an endogenous construct and are often indicative of good predictive performance (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, a high extent of prognostic accuracy regarding all constructs was provided as evidence confirming the ability of the structural model to reliably predict observed outcomes.

4.3. Testing Mediation Effects

Mediation testing is an important step within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine whether and how much of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable follows through a mediator. Factor mediation typically involves the Total Effects (TE) and Specific Indirect Effects (IE) (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which clarify whether the mediation effect is partial or full, as well as if the indirect effects are statistically significant. The indirect effect reflects the path through the mediator, and the total effect covers both direct and indirect effects. When using regression, bootstrapping is encouraged to determine whether these effects are significantly different than zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020). The importance of mediation can be justified if the indirect effect is significant and the confidence interval does not contain zero. The mediation testing results for this study are displayed in Table 8 and Table 9 below.

Table 8. Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.540	0.529	0.099	5.433	0.000
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Results Table 8 shows the outcome. Total Effects showcases that all the relationships between the variables are statistically significant. The maximum total effect appears between SPM (X) and PE (M), with a coefficient of 0.892, $t=47.566$, and $p<0.000$, which means the significant effect of SPM on PE. The SPM(X) also has a significant total effect on EVB(Y) ($\gamma=0.540$, $t=5.433$, $p<0.001$), which underscores the

involvement of SPM in improving employee voluntary behavior directly and indirectly as well. The significant effect of PE (M) on EVB (Y) (0.343, $t = 4.354$, $p < 0.05$) implies the mediating role of PE in the relationship between SNPs and EVB. In addition, EL (Z) has a positive and significant direct effect on EVB (Y) (0.354, $t = 3.601$, $p = 0.000$), while the interaction effect of EL (Z) $\times$ PE (M) on EVB (Y), which is negative but still significant (-0.052 ; $t = -3.343$, $p = 0.001$), acts as a moderating variable that may attenuate somewhat the strength of the positive effect in a specific sub-region of data space. Drawing on the hierarchical theory of motivation, structural strategic management research is apparently unwavering in recognizing cross-level effects between managerial strategy and individual employee behavior, although our study suggests a number of networked pathways in which strategic management influences voluntary employee behavior via empowerment.

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) $\rightarrow$ PE (M) $\rightarrow$ EVB (Y)	0.306	0.309	0.073	4.203	0.000

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings in Table 9, Key Indirect Effects, show that Strategic Performance Management (SPM) also has a statistically significant indirect effect on Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB) through Psychological Empowerment (PE). The path coefficient of the indirect relationship is 0.306 ($p = 0.000$), with a t -value of 4.203, being significant too. The results suggest that SPM affects EVB directly and indirectly, with the stronger effect of SPM on psychological empowerment leading to more voluntary, proactive behavior in the workplace. This confirms the earlier suggestion that empowerment mediates between SHRM practices and employee behavior facets.

4.4. Testing Moderation Effects

Central to the process of moderation effects is assessing whether how strongly or in which direction one thing relates to another varies as a consequence of being at some level of a third thing, which is called a moderator. In SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), moderation is usually tested by employing an interaction term, which is the outcome of multiplication between predictor and moderator variables (Hair et al., 2019). It enables researchers to test whether the moderator has a significant impact on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2015). In Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a significant interaction effect signals that moderation is at work, and this interaction term lends interpretation as per the sign-magnitude-significance of the related coefficient (Sarstedt et al., 2022). These kinds of analyses are especially valuable when it comes to determining conditional effects within more elaborate behavioral models. Table 10 below shows the results of the moderation tests.

Table 10. Interaction Term Moderating Effect

Moderating Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
EL (Z) $\times$ PE (M) $\rightarrow$ EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results in Table 10. Results of Interaction Term Moderating Effect interactions indicated that the variable Environmental Leadership (EL) had a significant moderation effect on the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB). The value of the original sample, 0.052, means that as environmental leadership increases, psychological empowerment decreases in voluntary employee behavior; this suggests that the moderating effect was negative. The moderating effect is that the T -statistic value is 3.343 (> 1.96) and the P -value is 0.001 (< 0.05). The results suggest that environmental leadership serves as a moderator on the association between PE and EVB, although with a negative direction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer strong empirical evidence on the seminal roles of Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), and Ethical Leadership (EL) in affecting Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) within the hospitality industry. These findings point to the profound beneficial effects of SPM, supporting the view that sustainable performance management—characterized by procedural fairness, transparent criteria, a high extent of forward-looking developmental feedback, and a strategic linkage with long-term environmental and social goals—drives constructive communication tendencies among hospitality staff. This is consistent with the established results of Jia et al. (2023); Ajmal et al. (2025) and Chen & Treviño, (2022) which emphasize that sustainable human resource frameworks foster deep psychological safety and organizational justice, thereby encouraging frontline service employees to voice innovative ideas or operational concerns without fear of management retaliation.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that SPM substantially increases psychological empowerment, tightly aligning with the theoretical arguments made by Pradhan & Panda (2021), where empowerment structurally occurs when an individual perceives meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. By integrating sustainable performance practices with a core commitment to the environment and the local community (Aguinis, 2019; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021), hospitality firms can successfully nurture frontline personnel who feel psychologically empowered and intrinsically motivated to deliver exceptional service. This highlights the dual function of SPM, which acts not merely as a traditional performance evaluation system to monitor occupancy and service metrics, but also as a vital strategic leverage for human capital development and proactive organizational change toward comprehensive corporate sustainability.

The positive association between psychological empowerment (PE) and employee voice behavior (EVB) substantiates the established organizational behavior perspective, which posits that empowered service employees are significantly more inclined to participate in proactive voice behaviors (Pradhan & Panda, 2021; Morrison, 2023). Within the fast-paced and emotionally demanding hospitality sector, the resilience of frontline employees and their propensity to contribute toward operational and structural improvement stem directly from feeling that their insights are genuinely heard, their professional autonomy is respected, and their presence is valued (Ajmal et al., 2025). This relationship becomes even more critical for sustainability-driven hospitality brands, as psychologically empowered workers frequently transition into active change agents who willingly align their daily service behaviors with global environmental goals and corporate social responsibility objectives, such as green lodging initiatives and sustainable waste management (Burhan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the empirical findings of this study strongly support the role of psychological empowerment as a vital cognitive mediator between sustainable performance management (SPM) and employee voice behavior. This structural pathway is highly consistent with the earlier empirical evidence presented by Vu et al. (2021) and Burhan et al. (2023), confirming the theoretical proposition that individual empowerment acts as a core psychological mechanism connecting macro-level sustainable HRM frameworks to micro-level positive behavioral responses. In practice, these insights imply that hospitality organizations must avoid treating performance appraisal systems as mere bureaucratic or administrative compliance tools. Instead, hotel management and HR executives need to strategically embed these performance frameworks within the organizational culture to actively foster a sense of individual capability, meaningfulness, and self-determination, which ultimately drives frontline staff to speak up and innovate for long-term hospitality sustainability.

Although the moderating influence of ethical leadership (EL) on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior seems nuanced, the discussion in light of the empirical findings reveals a complex behavioral dynamic. While EL is traditionally paired with fostering ethical climates and providing explicit support for organizational openness (Brown et al., 2020), the results observed in this study present a compelling boundary condition. This paradoxical result, which aligns with the recent findings of Ajmal et al. (2025), indicates that when hospitality leadership highly institutionalizes ethical norms and establishes deeply trusted, open communication channels, frontline workers may actually perceive less structural necessity to engage their separate, individual voice. These results are highly consistent with Zainal et al. (2023), suggesting that in a mature ethical climate, formal

ethical leadership should not replace employee-driven initiatives but must supplement and safeguard them instead, ensuring that the existing psychological safety is leveraged for continuous service improvement.

The findings of this study promote significant implications across theoretical, practical, and macro-policy dimensions within the tourism and hospitality sectors. From a theoretical perspective, this study deepens the organizational behavior literature by successfully synthesizing macro-level systems like Sustainable Performance Management with micro-level psychological mechanisms and contingency behaviors. It provides a robust cognitive framework explaining how and why sustainable human resource architectures translate into proactive service recovery actions. Consequently, these findings offer a clear conceptual baseline for future researchers who are developing academic roadmaps in Green HRM and sustainable service science.

For hospitality practitioners, general managers, and HR executives, the practical implications of these insights are immediate and actionable. The results demonstrate that hotel appraisal systems must urgently move beyond traditional, short-term financial metrics and occupancy rates. Hotel management needs to strategically design evaluation frameworks that psychologically enable employees, ensuring that corporate green lodging and sustainability goals are directly integrated into individual KPIs. This integration is essential to actively foster a sense of individual capability, operational meaningfulness, and self-determination among frontline service staff.

On a broader scale, the synthesis of these results serves as a vital reference for tourism ministries, regional governments, and industry policymakers who are responsible for shaping corporate social responsibility standards. Government bodies can leverage this empirical model to design regional certification programs or sustainable tourism guidelines that encourage hospitality brands to adopt sustainable performance structures. By doing so, decision-makers can systematically promote an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem that elevates national service standards while simultaneously safeguarding workforce well-being.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully accomplishes its core research objectives by empirically validating the structural paths that drive proactive communication within the hospitality sector. Based on the structural analysis, it is concluded that Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) exerts a significant and positive direct effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) among hotel employees. When hospitality institutions transition from traditional appraisal models to systems grounded in sustainability principles—such as procedural fairness, operational transparency, and continuous developmental feedback—they successfully foster a safe work environment that encourages frontline staff to proactively voice service innovations and constructive operational inputs.

Furthermore, the empirical testing confirms that Psychological Empowerment (PE) functions as a central and vital mediating mechanism that bridges the relationship between SPM and employee voice behavior. The macro-level structural benefits of an SPM framework effectively elevate frontline staff's micro-level cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. These heightened psychological resources subsequently act as the internal motivational driver that triggers independent voice behavior. Crucially, the structural integration of sustainable performance systems does not merely serve as an administrative compliance tool, but acts as a powerful strategic catalyst that fundamentally reshapes the employee's psychological state, ultimately driving continuous organizational learning and service innovation across hospitality operations.

6.1. Recommendations

Hospitality managers and HR practitioners should integrate multidimensional sustainability principles into formal performance evaluation architectures, moving beyond short-term financial and occupancy metrics toward procedural fairness and long-term developmental feedback. Hotel organizations need to design leadership development programs that train department heads to balance ethical stewardship with high employee autonomy. To build a culture of active service recovery and collaborative innovation, leaders must encourage independence of thought and establish trusted

Commented [VY20]: The negative moderating effect of Ethical Leadership is one of the most interesting findings of the study. However, the discussion only provides a brief explanation

communication channels that eliminate frontline staff's fear of career reprisals. Ultimately, utilizing these results supports the development of an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem.

6.2. Limitations and Further Study

This study possesses several inherent limitations that present valuable directions for future inquiry. First, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to definitively infer long-term causality; future research should employ longitudinal designs to monitor behavioral evolution over time. Second, the empirical scope was geographically confined to a single urban center, meaning future studies should expand the sampling frame to include diverse resort destinations and various hotel classifications to enhance generalizability. Finally, future agendas should integrate supplementary contextual variables—such as organizational culture, governance structures, and the influence of external stakeholders like guests and eco-tourism partners—to construct a holistic, 360-degree view of sustainable hospitality management.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication and declare that this work has not been published elsewhere.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Research Paper

Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact

ABSTRACT

Amidst tourism sustainability demands, hospitality literature remains fragmented regarding how sustainable appraisals interact with psychological states and leadership boundaries to drive proactivity. To address this gap, this study examines if Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), moderated by Ethical Leadership (EL). This integrated framework extends previous research by unveiling mechanisms that translate sustainable tools into staff voice. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was conducted utilizing a sample of 300 frontline hotel employees in Greater Bandung selected via stratified random sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The empirical findings reveal that SPMS exerts a significant, positive direct effect on both PE and EVB, thereby supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. Moreover, mediation analysis confirms that PE significantly bridges the relationship between SPMS and EVB, establishing its role as a statistical mediator. Finally, the moderated-mediation interaction effect of EL is negative and significant, demonstrating that higher ethical leadership levels statistically attenuate the magnitude of the positive relationship between PE and EVB. In conclusion, building a sustainable hospitality brand requires the strategic design of performance frameworks that psychologically enable employees while balancing ethical stewardship with workplace autonomy, ultimately enhancing long-term operational sustainability and service innovation.

Keywords: Sustainable performance management; Psychological empowerment; Employee voice behavior; Ethical leadership; Hospitality industry.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Commented [A1]: Following this recommendation, we have revised the abstract narrative to explicitly articulate the research gap and the study's unique theoretical contribution. Specifically, we have added sentences clarifying that prior research has left the integration of sustainable appraisals, internal psychological states, and leadership boundaries fragmented, and explicitly stated how our comprehensive framework extends current hospitality literature.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management systems (SPMS) are a new category of increasingly important human resource management (HRM) practices for organizations seeking to align business performance with their broader social, environmental, and ethical goals (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Within the global tourism and hospitality industry, where service quality is tightly linked to human capital, SPMS differs significantly from traditional performance management. While traditional approaches focus heavily on short-term financial outcomes and occupancy rates, SPMS concentrates on continuous development driven by value-based outcomes and sustainable hospitality practices (Paulet et al., 2021). This modern approach has profound implications for corporate sustainability, particularly in creating a high-involvement workplace climate where frontline hospitality employees feel secure and motivated to exhibit employee voice behavior.

Employee voice behavior is defined as the discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In highly dynamic service environments such as hotels, resorts, and tourism agencies, the practice of voice is central to service innovation, service recovery, and operational process enhancement. This is especially vital for hospitality firms pursuing sustainability-related strategies, such as green lodging, waste reduction, or eco-tourism operations. Nevertheless, the willingness of frontline hospitality staff—who interact directly with guests—to voice their constructive opinions is structurally influenced by the overarching performance management design and their immediate psychological setting (Mowbray et al., 2022). Psychological empowerment, therefore, acts as one of the vital mediating mechanisms for transforming sustainable performance systems into actual voice behavior. Attempting to deploy sustainable initiatives is bound to fail if hospitality employees lack the confidence, perceived competence, and self-determination to share insights regarding service improvements (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024). Key dimensions of psychological empowerment—meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact—can exert a powerful influence over employees' proactive behaviors in service delivery (Kim & Cho, 2024).

Simultaneously, ethical leadership has become a recognized management tool in moderating the relationship between performance frameworks and employee outcomes. Hospitality leaders who operate in a fair, conscientious, and communal manner are most likely to provide the psychological safety required for staff to speak up (Wen & Chi, 2023). In the hospitality sector, where hierarchies are traditionally rigid, this demonstration of ethical support from upper management improves employee trust in the evaluation system, thereby mitigating the fear of negative reprisals when suggestions or operational bottlenecks are brought to light (Amory et al., 2024). Recent empirical studies focusing on sustainability-driven firms indicate the importance of SPMS as an antecedent of high-involvement work climates that facilitate voice (Paulet et al., 2021). Similar patterns have been observed across complex organizational settings, where participatory management systems serve to mediate the relationship between empowerment and innovative behaviors (Alwali, 2024). Furthermore, empirical research within the Indonesian service and hospitality sectors underscores the indispensable role of ethical leadership in encouraging voice behaviors to correct unethical or ineffective field practices (Zainal et al., 2023).

Despite Prioritizing sustainable outcomes within hospitality human resource practices has gained traction, yet empirical consensus remains limited. For instance, Morrison (2023) and Paulet et al. (2021) investigated how standard performance appraisals stimulate employee voice, but their frameworks omitted sustainability-oriented metrics. Conversely, while scholars like Coun et al. (2023) demonstrated that psychological empowerment strongly drives frontline staff's voice behavior, their model treated empowerment as an isolated psychological state without linking it to formal institutional appraisal systems. This fragmentation underscores a critical omission highlighted in recent systematic literature reviews; Úbeda-García et al. (2025), in their meta-analysis of green HRM practices, explicitly noted that contemporary hospitality research frequently overlooks the intervening psychological mechanisms through which sustainable management tools translate into proactive behaviors, concluding that examining nuanced boundary conditions constitutes a vital future research direction.

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Commented [A4]: We have successfully removed the outdated reference (**Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019**) and updated it with a more recent citation from the last 5 years: (**Mowbray et al., 2022**).

Commented [A5]: We have updated the reference by replacing the outdated citation (**Al Harbi et al., 2019**) with a recent study published within the last 5 years: (**Kim & Cho, 2024**).

Commented [A6]: We have replaced the outdated reference (**Brown et al., 2019**) with a more recent publication from the last 5 years: (**Wen & Chi, 2023**).

Despite these initial insights, a significant research gap persists in the tourism and hospitality literature. While existing studies have separately looked at these dynamics, a systematic literature mapping of contemporary hospitality HR frameworks reveals that empirical evidence remains highly fragmented. Prior research has systematically overlooked how sustainability-driven appraisal mechanisms (SPMS) function when filtered through internal psychological states, such as psychological empowerment. Compounding this issue is the pressure faced by modern hospitality organizations to satisfy both strict service-delivery metrics and non-financial sustainability outcomes, such as social responsibility and ethical governance. This dual objective creates an operational challenge regarding how to design appraisal systems that encourage staff involvement without undermining corporate sustainability efforts. Consequently, this study addresses these critical omissions by examining the direct effects of SPMS on employee voice behavior within a sustainability-oriented hospitality context, evaluating the extent to which psychological empowerment mediates this structural link, and establishing how ethical leadership serves as a vital boundary condition that moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior among hospitality staff.

Based on this problem formulation, this study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable performance management systems on employee voice behavior, while analyzing the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of ethical leadership within the same model. To fulfill these objectives and ensure methodological rigor, this study utilizes a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Moving away from restrictive single convenience-sample surveys, data was gathered from a rigorous stratified random sampling process involving active respondents across service-oriented hospitality institutions. The structural relationships and complex moderated-mediating paths were systematically evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software.

This paper makes three distinct contributions to the literature. Theoretically, it introduces a novel integrative model combining system-level (SPMS), individual-level (psychological empowerment), and leadership-level (ethical leadership) factors to predict voice behavior. Contextually, it expands the empirical boundaries of SPMS research within the rapidly developing Indonesian hospitality and tourism sector. Finally, it offers practical recommendations for hotel general managers, HR practitioners, and destination managers to successfully reorient performance management systems toward ethical, responsible, and sustainable organizational development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is defined as a continuous, forward-looking process in which employees are integrated into the organization's strategic success, long-term thinking is prioritized, and the multi-dimensional well-being of employees, the organization, and its broader social-environmental context are structurally respected (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Within the rapidly changing, high-innovation-demand context of the global hospitality industry, traditional performance appraisal systems that rely solely on retrospective financial indicators, rigid assessment cycles, and guest satisfaction scores are increasingly insufficient. In contrast, an SPM framework shifts the focus toward continuous employee development, reflective behavior-based feedback, perceived procedural fairness, and a high level of value-driven alignment (Wen & Chi, 2023). This strategic evolution is vital for hospitality firms to remain agile, reduce high turnover rates, and sustain competitive advantages in premium service delivery.

Grounding this framework in Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) provides a robust dual-mechanism to explain these behavioral dynamics. Under SET, the system-level characteristics of Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) serve as powerful signals of organizational care and investment, fostering a sense of reciprocity where employees feel obligated to repay the organization through constructive behaviors. Concurrently, CET explains how the informative and developmental attributes of SPMS nurture employees' self-determination and intrinsic motivation, thereby enhancing their internal psychological states. Among the most critical behavioral outcomes

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Commented [A10]: We have replaced the outdated reference (Brown et al., 2019) with a more recent publication from the last 5 years: **(Wen & Chi, 2023)**.

Commented [A11]: Please provide a more substantive explanation of Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory as referenced in the third paragraph. Specifically, please briefly elaborate on how each theory justifies the hypothesized relationships among the study's variables.

Commented [A12R11]: We have significantly expanded the theoretical grounding of the framework by explicitly detailing how Social Exchange Theory (reciprocity mechanism) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (intrinsic motivation and self-determination mechanism) justify the structural relationships among SPMS, psychological empowerment, and employee voice.

Commented [A13]: A notable terminological inconsistency is observed throughout the introduction. The authors alternate between the acronyms SPMS (*Sustainable Performance Management Systems*) and SPM (*Sustainable Performance Management*) without adequate clarification or justification.

Commented [A14R13]: We have thoroughly audited the entire manuscript and standardized the terminology to SPMS (*Sustainable Performance Management Systems*) to ensure conceptual consistency throughout the paper

triggered by this high-investment HRM climate is employee voice behavior, which manifests as the discretionary communication of ideas, operational concerns, or constructive suggestions to improve overall organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline employees serve as the critical interface between the brand and the consumer, the willingness to exhibit voice behavior is heavily contingent upon the design of the appraisal system. Previous literature demonstrates that when SPMS are perceived as transparent, developmental, and structurally ethical, they significantly enhance employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation to actively speak up (Wilkinson et al., 2020).

Empirical evidence consistently verifies that sustainable, supportive HR practices positively predict proactive behaviors across diverse service touchpoints (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Incorporating sustainability metrics—such as rewarding green initiatives, ethical service recovery, and collaborative teamwork—builds deep organizational trust, which encourages frontline staff to voice both helpful service innovations and early warnings about operational vulnerabilities (Ashiru et al., 2022). This dynamic is particularly indispensable in the people-centric hospitality industry, where the spontaneous insights and discretionary behaviors of employees directly determine service quality, agility, and operational excellence. Consequently, contemporary hospitality literature suggests that SPM must be viewed as an strategic enabler of proactive performance rather than a mere punitive measurement tool, tightly linked to broad corporate sustainability and long-term service growth (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2022). Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, it is argued that a well-implemented SPM system will structurally foster a safe environment that drives hospitality staff to actively articulate constructive inputs. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.2. Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment

Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) constitute a proactive organizational approach aimed at enhancing the traditional performance appraisal architecture through continuous, transparent feedback, structured employee development, and equitable evaluation systems that balance long-term sustainability objectives with individual employee welfare (Wen & Chi, 2023). Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) as a primary theoretical lens, SPMS fundamentally deviates from conventional, compliance-driven performance appraisals by shifting the structural focus from rigid, retrospective metrics to iterative processes and ethical values that foster workplace fairness and continuous competency development (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Under CET, the informative and development-oriented nature of sustainable appraisals satisfies employees' intrinsic needs for competence and autonomy, thereby serving as a critical driver of psychological states. Within the hospitality industry, where emotional labor is intense and frontline service delivery is highly interdependent, such inclusive and growth-oriented appraisal frameworks are crucial. When hospitality organizations move away from punitive, guest-complaint-centric metrics and instead implement SPMS, they cultivate a high-involvement service culture where employees feel genuinely valued, organizationally supported, and intrinsically motivated.

Consequently, psychological empowerment emerges as a critical psychological and motivational consequence of a well-perceived SPM framework. Psychological empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional motivational construct manifested in four distinct cognitive perceptions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact regarding one's organizational role (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Performance management systems that are structurally designed and perceived by frontline hospitality staff as socially just, highly participative, and developmental serve to reinforce these four cognitive dimensions. Specifically, by involving hospitality personnel in collaborative goal-setting and providing constructive, future-oriented feedback, SPM clarifies how individual service roles contribute to the establishment's broader sustainability and service-quality goals, thereby enhancing the perception of *meaning* and *impact* (Zainal et al., 2023). Furthermore, the developmental and supportive nature of SPM bolsters employees' beliefs in their own service capabilities (*competence*) and grants them operational autonomy in service recovery scenarios (*self-determination*).

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Commented [A16]: In the subsection on Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior, the authors anchor their arguments in Social Exchange Theory and Cognitive Evaluation Theory. However, in the subsection on Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment, the authors abruptly invoke Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory to explain the same variable (SPM). The use of divergent theoretical frameworks to explain the same construct without clear justification constitutes a serious weakness that undermines the overall coherence of the theoretical argumentation. The authors are required to establish one consistent primary theoretical framework and explicitly justify its selection.

Commented [A17R16]: To enhance the conceptual coherence of the manuscript, we have streamlined the framework and abandoned the abrupt invocation of Social Cognitive Theory. Instead, we now consistently anchor our arguments throughout the subsections in Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET). Specifically, we have revised this section to explicitly demonstrate how the informative and autonomy-supportive features of SPMS align with CET to cultivate psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation among hospitality staff.

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This structural relationship is strongly supported by empirical findings in organizational behavior and social sciences. For instance, Lewandowski & Cirella (2023) demonstrated that developmental performance appraisals significantly enhance employees' perceptions of autonomy and competence, which subsequently drives intrinsic motivation through the expanded operational discretion afforded by the appraisal process. Similarly, Singh et al. (2022) verified that when performance rules are procedurally fair and evaluation systems are resilient, ongoing transparent feedback engenders deep organizational trust and facilitates rich, proactive engagement among service employees.

Despite these insights, a distinct research gap persists within the hospitality and tourism literature. While general human resource practices have been linked to psychological outcomes, empirical studies exploring the direct structural impact of sustainable, eco-centric performance systems (SPM) on the psychological empowerment of frontline hospitality staff remain scarce, particularly within rapidly developing tourism hubs like Indonesia. In the fierce, highly competitive hospitality landscape of major urban tourist destinations, implementing SPM is no longer just an administrative tool to monitor service standards; it is a strategic necessity to unlock employee initiative and foster collaborative resilience among service and support staff to satisfy modern eco-conscious travelers. Based on these theoretical and empirical lines of argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Psychological Empowerment among hospitality industry employees.

2.3. Psychological Empowerment and Employee Voice Behavior

Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional motivational construct defined by four distinct cognitive dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Cognitive Theory, a strong sense of empowerment cognitively reorients employees toward both their in-role and extra-role task behaviors, as they perceive themselves to be highly competent, self-determined, and influential within the organizational structure. In the high-pressure environment of the hospitality industry, these psychological resources are vital drivers of proactive employee behaviors. When frontline hospitality staff—such as guest relations, food and beverage personnel, or housekeeping crews—possess these psychological strengths, they exhibit higher levels of job performance, service satisfaction, and discretionary behaviors like employee voice, which entails the voluntary communication of ideas, concerns, or innovative suggestions to optimize service delivery and organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023; Bakker & Wang, 2020).

Theoretically, psychologically empowered employees are more equipped to express their voice because they believe their insights possess genuine value (*meaning*), feel capable of articulating them effectively (*competence*), enjoy the professional autonomy to act (*self-determination*), and trust that their suggestions can positively reshape institutional practices (*impact*) (Chen & Treviño, 2022). In hotel operations, this psychological state transcends passive compliance, creating a profound culture of psychological ownership. This cognitive ownership holds frontline staff internally accountable for bringing forth service-recovery ideas, highlighting hidden operational defects, and taking an active role in problem resolution. For instance, empirical research by Makwetta et al. (2021) establishes that employees with elevated psychological empowerment are significantly more likely to engage in both promotive voice—offering innovative solutions for growth—and prohibitive voice—warning against practices that could harm service quality. Similarly, empowerment serves as a vital psychological buffer that facilitates a psychologically safe work environment, releasing frontline hospitality staff from the fear of negative reprisals and fostering open communication and creative service orientation (Liu et al., 2023).

Within the hospitality sector, these socio-psychological dynamics are highly critical yet distinct. Frontline service workers are often the first to notice service failures, safety hazards, or gaps in environmental sustainability practices, such as food waste or energy inefficiencies. Empowered hospitality personnel are more likely to participate actively in service governance, engage in conversations related to operational continuous improvement, and openly voice concerns regarding emerging challenges that directly affect hospitality service quality. Despite these linkages, a notable

research gap exists concerning the specific structural relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice within the Indonesian hospitality landscape. Given that unique local hospitality work cultures, strict service hierarchies, and evolving sustainable HRM practices can heavily influence this dynamic, exploring this path is essential. Unlocking these mechanisms will determine how individual cognitive empowerment can be leveraged to drive constructive employee voice within sustainability-focused hospitality brands. Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological Empowerment has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.4. The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Within contemporary organizational behavior and management literature, psychological empowerment is widely recognized as a pivotal mediating mechanism through which macro-level macro-organizational practices are translated into micro-level employee behaviors. Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Social Exchange Theory, psychological empowerment functions as an intrinsic form of task motivation manifested through four distinct cognitive states: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Extensive empirical research demonstrates that psychological empowerment effectively bridges the gap between structured contextual resources—such as progressive leadership styles, strategic performance frameworks, or constructive work climates—and critical behavioral outcomes, including service innovation, organizational engagement, and employee voice behavior (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2022). Sustainable performance management systems (SPMS) that systematically prioritize future-oriented feedback, individualized developmental appraisal, and transparent procedural justice cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel intrinsically valued, structurally trusted, and organizationally supported (Parker & Grote, 2022; Schermuly et al., 2022). These institutional support systems serve as critical signaling mechanisms that clarify role expectations while simultaneously elevating frontline workers' perceived autonomy and professional competence (Chen & Treviño, 2022).

In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline service employees regularly navigate diverse guest interactions and unpredictable operational demands, this indirect psychological pathway is uniquely critical. The structural features of an SPMS framework do not automatically trigger proactive service behaviors; rather, they operate by reshaping the psychological state of the workforce (Wen & Chi, 2023). When hospitality personnel perceive that their performance appraisal system is designed to sustain their long-term well-being and professional growth, it fosters a profound sense of workplace credibility and psychological safety (Kim & Cho, 2024; Mowbray et al., 2022). This cognitive shift provides the precise motivational mechanism required for sustainable performance management to influence employee voice behavior, as frontline staff feel cognitively secure and organizationally driven to articulate innovative ideas or highlight latent service failures without fear of negative repercussions (McCarthy et al., 2020).

This structural mediating pathway is robustly supported by empirical evidence across the broader service literature. For instance, (Huang et al., 2023) verified that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee advocacy behaviors within complex service-driven organizations. In a dynamic service market like Indonesia, hospitality brands face intense competition and rising demands for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Frontline hotel staff are often the first to recognize operational bottlenecks, environmental waste, or service recovery opportunities; however, their willingness to speak up remains heavily dependent on whether they feel structurally empowered by their firm's appraisal architecture. Despite its practical urgency, there remains a notable research gap in the hospitality literature regarding how this psychological mediation mechanism functions within developing Southeast Asian service sectors. Bridging this theoretical gap is essential to clarify how institutional sustainable human resource frameworks can be leveraged to drive open, proactive communication and continuous quality improvement in tourism operations. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

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H4: Psychological Empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.5. The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership

An indispensable contextual boundary condition that structurally reshapes the behavior of organizational members and dictates service dynamics is ethical leadership. Grounded in Social Learning Theory, ethical leadership is conceptualized as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, combined with the active promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and balanced decision-making (Wen & Chi, 2023). Ethical leaders cultivate an environment anchored in deep organizational trust and operational transparency. Supported by a rigorous moral compass, these leaders serve as critical behavioral role models, systematically setting clear expectations, adhering to strict fairness standards, and providing continuous reassurance that hospitality employees can articulate creative ideas or voice operational concerns without suffering negative career reprisals or social retaliation (Abu Bakar & Connaughton, 2023).

Within organizational behavior literature, extensive empirical studies support the notion that ethical leadership acts as an essential moderator that amplifies the positive impact of structural organizational systems on employee attitudes and psychological states. For instance, empirical research verifies that ethical leadership significantly moderates the relationship between high-involvement work systems and proactive employee outcomes, including organizational citizenship behavior and constructive voice (Jeong et al., 2025; Ajmal et al., 2025). When an authentic sense of psychological safety is actively fostered by ethical managers, employees are structurally more likely to perceive systemic human resource practices as genuinely developmental and supportive rather than punitive or disciplinary.

In the high-touch hospitality industry, where operations are characterized by intense emotional labor, low employee retention, and traditionally rigid operational hierarchies, the interplay between systems and leadership is uniquely critical. Ethical leadership in the context of sustainable performance management (SPMS)—which structurally focuses on procedural justice, workplace inclusivity, and continuous feedback—is highly significant because it helps transform abstract corporate sustainability principles from mere paper compliance blueprints into lived daily service routines (Yang et al., 2023; Hoang et al., 2023).

Theoretically, ethical leadership acts as a catalyst that activates the empowerment potential of SPMS. While an SPMS framework provides the formal structure for fair evaluation and long-term well-being, it requires the contextual support of an ethical manager to truly elevate an employee's psychological state (Hoang et al., 2023). When hotel department heads or general managers lead ethically, the structural benefits of SPMS are magnified, drastically increasing the frontline staff's sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and overall impact (Yang et al., 2023).

Despite these theoretical insights, a critical research gap persists regarding how ethical leadership moderates the intersection between SPMS and psychological empowerment within the developing Indonesian hospitality sector. Unlocking this boundary condition clarifies how hospitality brands can leverage sustainability appraisals to structurally foster employee empowerment and proactive service excellence. Consequently, based on these theoretical foundations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Ethical Leadership significantly moderates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment within the hospitality industry.

The integrated research model proposed in this study is built upon the comprehensive literature review conducted earlier, mapping the structural pathways that dictate proactive organizational behaviors within the hospitality sector. Specifically, the framework posits that a Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) system, which incorporates adaptive and eco-centric performance criteria, can significantly enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). Within this structural mechanism, Psychological Empowerment (PE) operates as a critical cognitive mediator, while Ethical Leadership

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(EL) serves as an essential contextual boundary condition and moderator. Methodologically, SPM is hypothesized to drive employee voice behavior by elevating frontline hospitality staff's psychological empowerment, as heightened cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, and self-determination structurally enable them to feel more impactful and secure at work. Furthermore, ethical leadership is expected to strengthen the positive effect of SPM on psychological empowerment, as ethical leaders actively cultivate a workplace atmosphere anchored in procedural justice, honesty, and high-involvement service dynamics. These structural relationships—comprising direct effects, mediating pathways, and moderating interactions—are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which represents the comprehensive conceptual framework of this study.

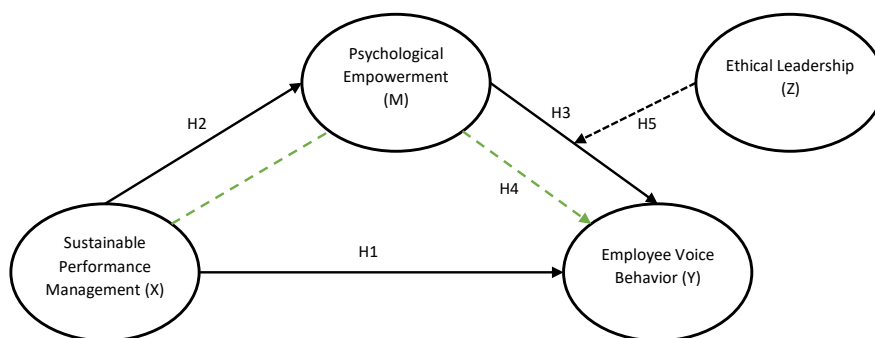


Figure 1. Research Framework
Source: Primary data processed by authors (2026)

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative research design. This approach is highly suitable for the verification of hypotheses and the confirmation of theoretical models through empirical data, enabling the statistical analysis of relationships between sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, and employee voice behavior. A quantitative strategy was preferred since it makes use of a standardized modus operandi, thereby ensuring clear-cut ways to measure and test initial effects systematically (Hair et al., 2019), which aligns with the structural requirement of testing both complex mediation and moderation paths simultaneously. Within this methodological framework, individual frontline employees from selected hotels and hospitality establishments serve as the primary unit of analysis, while the unit of observation consists of the operational service and administrative staff members who participate actively in performance-related processes and daily service deliveries within their institutions.

3.2. Population and sample

The target population for this study includes 1,200 active employees from selected star-rated hotels and hospitality establishments in the Greater Bandung area. To determine the minimum required sample size for rigorous empirical testing, Slovin's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a representative sample size of 300 respondents to ensure adequate statistical power. In order to guarantee a proportional representation of respondents across different functional lines within each hotel department, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. The target population was explicitly divided into two major operational strata: frontline service staff (including food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office personnel) and administrative-managerial support staff. Respondents were then randomly selected from each strategic stratum. This sampling design

effectively minimizes sampling bias, accounts for the structural heterogeneity of the hospitality workforce, and enhances the external validity of the empirical findings.

To provide a comprehensive and transparent overview of the sampling framework, the precise distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample allocation within each operational stratum has been systematically mapped. This structured breakdown details the proportional weight of both frontline service and administrative-managerial staff across the selected 4-star and 5-star hotel segments. Accordingly, the detailed distribution of the population and the final research sample used for subsequent empirical testing is explicitly presented in Table 1 below.

Tabel 1. Population and Sample Distribution

No	Hotel Classification	Operational Stratum	Target Population (N)	Percentage (%)	Calculated Sample Size (n)
1	4-Star Hotels (Selected)		720	60	180
		Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	540	45	130
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	180	15	45
2	5-Star Hotels (Selected)		480	40	120
		Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	360	30	90
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	120	10	30
All Selected Establishments		Combined Strata	1,200	100	300

Source: Selected 4-star and 5-star hotels in Greater Bandung, Primary Data Processed (2026)

3.3. Measurement and Instruments

A structured, self-administered questionnaire was utilized for data collection by adopting validated measurement instruments from established previous studies to fit the service dynamics of the hospitality sector. For the sustainable performance management variable, the eco-centric and developmental performance indicators were adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2023) and de Waal (2020), focusing on sustainable service standards and resource stewardship. Psychological empowerment was measured using the four-dimensional scale developed by Pradhan & Panda (2021), which evaluates frontline staff's cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their service roles. Furthermore, employee voice behavior was evaluated using the measurement items developed by Mowbray et al. (2022) to capture proactive suggestions and constructive service recovery inputs. Finally, ethical leadership was constructed based on the scale by Wen & Chi (2023), assessing the moral and supportive behaviors of hotel supervisors and general managers. All questionnaire items were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to ensure robust interval-level data for subsequent statistical processing via structural equation modeling.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

To guarantee the clarity, reliability, and validity of the research instrument within a high-touch service environment, a pilot test was performed with 30 hospitality respondents prior to full deployment. The internal consistency and construct validity of the scales were rigorously evaluated using confirmatory metrics; all targeted constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha

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α) coefficients well above the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Furthermore, the standardized outer loading factors for all measurement items across the constructs ranged from 0.832 to 0.937, significantly exceeding the stringent statistical benchmark of 0.70. This confirms excellent convergent validity and ensures that all indicator items possess strong explanatory power for their respective latent variables, requiring no deletions. Following the successful validation of the pilot assessment, the final surveys were administered using a hybrid deployment approach designed to accommodate the diverse shift schedules of hotel staff. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously in a traditional paper-and-pencil format directly at the properties and electronically via mobile-friendly online forms. This dual approach was critical to secure maximal geographical coverage and optimize overall response rates across the selected hospitality institutions without disrupting daily service operations.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was deployed for data analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS version 4.0 software application. This approach was chosen because it is highly appropriate for complex structural models that simultaneously include mediation and moderation paths, accommodates non-normal data distributions without distorting results, and shows robust performance in moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). Following standard statistical protocols, the analysis process followed a strict two-step approach, beginning with the measurement model assessment to evaluate convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability of the latent variables, followed by the structural model testing to analyze path coefficients and significance levels using the bootstrapping method, alongside the evaluation of the model's explanatory power through R^2 values. This rigorous quantitative approach ensures a thorough empirical exploration of how sustainable performance management, coupled with psychological mechanisms and leadership behaviors, structurally supports employee voice behaviors among frontline staff and support personnel within the hospitality industry.

4. RESULT

4.1. Outer Model Assessment

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), an outer model assessment is recommended to assess the measurement properties of each construct in the research model. Specifically, this process involves checking outer loadings to measure the reliability of indicators; composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for assessing construct reliability and convergent validity; and discriminant validity, which determines that the constructs are empirically different (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). In addition, the other loadings should be higher than 0.70 for each indicator to ensure that they indicate their latent constructs strongly (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability (CR) above 0.70 and an average variance extracted (AVE) over 0.50 indicate that both measures were adequate in terms of their estimated values on the respective indicators of convergent validity. We used the rooting of the AVE approach that suggests that each construct should be significantly higher from its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), or we looked at the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, which needs to have a value lower than 0.90 according to (Henseler et al., 2015). The results of the outer model evaluation are provided in Supplementary Figures & Tables: Figure 2, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4.

Commented [A27]: Please provide results of this pilot test. Without this reporting, the claim that the instrument was "successfully validated" cannot be independently verified by the reviewer.

Commented [A28R27]: Following this recommendation, we have revised the methodology narrative to explicitly report the statistical results of the pilot test. Specifically, we have added the empirical verification showing that all standardized outer loading factors for the measurement items ranged from 0.832 to 0.937, which significantly exceed the established threshold of 0.70, thereby confirming robust convergent validity and reliability before full deployment.

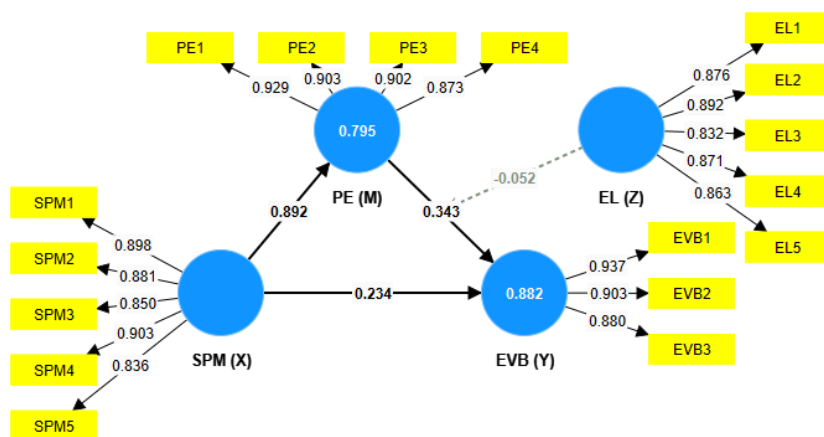


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

This is a visual representation of the outer model analysis (indicator loadings) for each construct in the study as displayed in Figure 2. As can be seen, all indicators have outer loading values above the recommended cut-off limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), thus indicating high reliability of the indicator variables. For instance, the CRI ranges from 0.873 to 0.929 for Psychological Empowerment (PE), from 0.836 to 0.903 for Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), from 0.832 to 0.892 for Ethical Leadership (EL), and from 0.880 to 0.937 for Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). These findings indicate that the items consistently assess their respective latent variable. The values on the latent variable scores included in blue circles also suggest moderate to high levels of construct contribution. This estimation stands for the measurement model before a structural testing that demonstrates its reliability and validity.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicators	Item Code	Loading Factor
Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) (X)	Goal Alignment	SPM1	0.898
	Continuous Feedback	SPM2	0.881
	Participation	SPM3	0.850
	Development Focus	SPM4	0.903
	Fair Evaluation	SPM5	0.836
Psychological Empowerment (PE) (M)	Meaning	PE1	0.929
	Competence	PE2	0.903
	Self-determination	PE3	0.902
	Impact	PE4	0.873
Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) (Y)	Promotive Voice	EVB1	0.937
	Prohibitive Voice	EVB2	0.903
	Supportive Voice	EVB3	0.880
Ethical Leadership (EL) (Z)	Integrity	EL1	0.876
	Fairness	EL2	0.892
	Role Modeling	EL3	0.832
	Accountability	EL4	0.871
	People Orientation	EL5	0.863

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The outer loading assessment presented in Table 2 confirms robust indicator reliability across all four latent constructs. Rather than merely reflecting acceptable statistical thresholds, the high magnitude of these loading factors—ranging from 0.832 to 0.937—demonstrates strong convergent

validity, indicating that more than 69% of the variance in each item is explained by its respective underlying construct (Hair et al., 2019). This uniform empirical strength ensures that the indicator items are highly representative measures of SPMS, PE, EVB, and EL within the hospitality context, providing a solid and statistically sound foundation for subsequent structural model estimation.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
SPM (X)	0.923	0.926	0.942	0.764
PE (M)	0.924	0.925	0.946	0.814
EVB (Y)	0.892	0.893	0.933	0.822
EL (Z)	0.917	0.922	0.938	0.752

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 3 presents the results of the construct reliability and validity tests for the four research constructs, namely SPM, PE, EVB, and EL. All constructs display respectably high Cronbach's Alpha values (≥ 0.892), which implies excellent internal consistency. Nearly all constructs achieve a composite reliability (rho_c) value greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, therefore indicating strong construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, all constructs also have the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.50, which indicates that more than half of each construct's variance is explained by its indicators, thus meeting convergent validity requirements for factor analysis. These results suggest that all latent variable constructs utilized in the model are measurable with reliability and validity for further exploration of structural relationships.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	EL (Z)	EVB (Y)	PE (M)	SPM (X)
EL (Z)	0.867	0.740	0.710	0.800
EVB (Y)	0.740	0.907	0.780	0.860
PE (M)	0.710	0.780	0.902	0.840
SPM (X)	0.800	0.860	0.840	0.874

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which checks for discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE with correlations between constructs. The diagonal value elements (in bold) correspond to the square root of the AVE, and they are greater than their correlation values with other constructs in that same row and column. This implies that each of the constructs has decent discriminant validity—it is unique and cannot be mistaken for other constructs. So, the model of this study fulfilled the necessary criteria for discriminant validity to go through the further analysis.

4.2. Inner Model Assessment

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) involves the inner model evaluation, which is used to understand the relationships among latent constructs evaluated through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Path coefficients show the strength and direction of the hypothesized paths, while R^2 values explain how much variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables—values close to 1 indicate stronger prediction (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the Q^2 values are used to assess how well these models predicted by using the blindfolding economy explanation; a Q^2 above 0 ensures that the model has predictive value (Shmueli et al., 2019). Inner model assessment the results described in the inner model assessment are shown in Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7.

Table 5. Path coefficients

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	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.234	0.220	0.112	2.079	0.038
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 5. Conclusion of Path Coefficients All path relationships in the structural model are significant. SPM in this study has an effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) with a coefficient of 0.234 ($p < 0.05$), and the effect of SPM on Psychological Empowerment (PE) is very strong & significant ($\beta = 0.892$, $p = 0.000$). Next, PE also significantly influences EVB ($\beta = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$), as does Ethical Leadership (EL) towards EVB ($\beta = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$). Surprisingly, the interaction of EL and PE about EVB is negatively significant ($\beta = -0.052$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the moderating effect of EL may reduce the impact of PE on the employee voice behavior attitude. These results indicate that all the paths in the model under test are statistically meaningful and have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 6. R-squared (R^2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EVB (Y)	0.882	0.881
PE (M)	0.795	0.795

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results of Table 6. If the value of R-squared (R^2) is greater than 0.5, this shows that there is a substantial explanation about the structural model. The R^2 value of Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is 0.882, which indicates that SPM, PE, and EL (interacted with PE) have the ability to explain more than 88.2% of the variance in EVB. Second, SPM accounts for 79.5% of the variance in PE ($R^2 = 0.795$). The adjusted R^2 values (which are virtually the same as the original R^2 values) say that our model is both stable and robust. According to Hair et al. (2019), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, which implies both the constructs endogenously linked in this model can be powerfully predicted with the help of exogenous variables.

Table 7. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SPM (X)	1500.000	547.087	0.635
PE (M)	1200.000	396.255	0.670
EVB (Y)	900.000	353.159	0.608
EL (Z)	1500.000	571.736	0.619

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 7 displays the results for different sets of data. We also present Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs in the model that indicate good predictive relevance to our data. In this context, PE ($Q^2 = 0.670$), SPM ($Q^2 = 0.635$), EL ($Q^2 = 0.619$), and EVB ($Q^2 = 0.608$) have higher predictive relevance according to the Q^2 values. According to Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values > 0.35 at the very least suggest that the model can predict such an endogenous construct and are often indicative of good predictive performance (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, a high extent of prognostic accuracy regarding all constructs was provided as evidence confirming the ability of the structural model to reliably predict observed outcomes.

4.3. Testing Mediation Effects

Mediation testing is an important step within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine whether and how much of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable follows through a mediator. Factor mediation typically involves the Total Effects (TE) and Specific Indirect Effects (IE) (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which clarify whether the mediation effect is partial or full, as well as if the indirect effects are statistically significant. The indirect effect reflects the path through the mediator, and the total effect covers both direct and indirect effects. When using regression, bootstrapping is encouraged to determine whether these effects are significantly different than zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020). The importance of mediation can be justified if the indirect effect is significant and the confidence interval does not contain zero. The mediation testing results for this study are displayed in Table 8 and Table 9 below.

Table 8. Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.540	0.529	0.099	5.433	0.000
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Results Table 8 shows the outcome. Total Effects showcases that all the relationships between the variables are statistically significant. The maximum total effect appears between SPM (X) and PE (M), with a coefficient of 0.892, $t=47.566$, and $p<0.000$, which means the significant effect of SPM on PE. The SPM(X) also has a significant total effect on EVB(Y) ($\gamma=0.540$, $t=5.433$, $p<0.001$), which underscores the involvement of SPM in improving employee voluntary behavior directly and indirectly as well. The significant effect of PE (M) on EVB (Y) (0.343 , $t = 4.354$, $p < 0.05$) implies the mediating role of PE in the relationship between SNPs and EVB. In addition, EL (Z) has a positive and significant direct effect on EVB (Y) (0.354 , $t = 3.601$, $p = 0.000$), while the interaction effect of EL (Z) x PE (M) on EVB (Y), which is negative but still significant (-0.052 ; $t = -3.343$, $p = 0.001$), acts as a moderating variable that may attenuate somewhat the strength of the positive effect in a specific sub-region of data space. Drawing on the hierarchical theory of motivation, structural strategic management research is apparently unwavering in recognizing cross-level effects between managerial strategy and individual employee behavior, although our study suggests a number of networked pathways in which strategic management influences voluntary employee behavior via empowerment.

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.306	0.309	0.073	4.203	0.000

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings in Table 9, Key Indirect Effects, show that Strategic Performance Management (SPM) also has a statistically significant indirect effect on Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB) through Psychological Empowerment (PE). The path coefficient of the indirect relationship is 0.306 ($p = 0.000$), with a t-value of 4.203, being significant too. The results suggest that SPM affects EVB directly and indirectly, with the stronger effect of SPM on psychological empowerment leading to more voluntary, proactive behavior in the workplace. This confirms the earlier suggestion that empowerment mediates between SHRM practices and employee behavior facets.

4.4. Testing Moderation Effects

Central to the process of moderation effects is assessing whether how strongly or in which direction one thing relates to another varies as a consequence of being at some level of a third thing, which is called a moderator. In SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), moderation is usually tested by employing an interaction term, which is the outcome of multiplication between predictor and moderator variables (Hair et al., 2019). It enables researchers to test whether the moderator has a significant impact on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2015). In Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a significant interaction effect signals that moderation is at work, and this interaction term lends interpretation as per the sign-magnitude-significance of the related coefficient (Sarstedt et al., 2022). These kinds of analyses are especially valuable when it comes to determining conditional effects within more elaborate behavioral models. Table 10 below shows the results of the moderation tests.

Table 10. Interaction Term Moderating Effect

Moderating Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
EL (Z) × PE (M) → EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results in Table 10. Results of Interaction Term Moderating Effect interactions indicated that the variable Environmental Leadership (EL) had a significant moderation effect on the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB). The value of the original sample, 0.052, means that as environmental leadership increases, psychological empowerment decreases in voluntary employee behavior; this suggests that the moderating effect was negative. The moderating effect is that the T-statistic value is 3.343 (>1.96) and the P-value is 0.001 (<0.05). The results suggest that environmental leadership serves as a moderator on the association between PE and EVB, although with a negative direction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer strong empirical evidence on the seminal roles of Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), and Ethical Leadership (EL) in affecting Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) within the hospitality industry. These findings point to the profound beneficial effects of SPM, supporting the view that sustainable performance management—characterized by procedural fairness, transparent criteria, a high extent of forward-looking developmental feedback, and a strategic linkage with long-term environmental and social goals—drives constructive communication tendencies among hospitality staff. This is consistent with the established results of Jia et al. (2023); Ajmal et al. (2025) and Chen & Treviño, (2022) which emphasize that sustainable human resource frameworks foster deep psychological safety and organizational justice, thereby encouraging frontline service employees to voice innovative ideas or operational concerns without fear of management retaliation.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that SPM substantially increases psychological empowerment, tightly aligning with the theoretical arguments made by Pradhan & Panda (2021), where empowerment structurally occurs when an individual perceives meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. By integrating sustainable performance practices with a core commitment to the environment and the local community (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021), hospitality firms can successfully nurture frontline personnel who feel psychologically empowered and intrinsically motivated to deliver exceptional service. This highlights the dual function of SPM, which acts not merely as a traditional performance evaluation system to monitor occupancy and service metrics, but also as a vital strategic leverage for human capital development and proactive organizational change toward comprehensive corporate sustainability.

The positive association between psychological empowerment (PE) and employee voice behavior (EVB) substantiates the established organizational behavior perspective, which posits that empowered service employees are significantly more inclined to participate in proactive voice behaviors (Pradhan & Panda, 2021; Morrison, 2023). Within the fast-paced and emotionally demanding hospitality sector,

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the resilience of frontline employees and their propensity to contribute toward operational and structural improvement stem directly from feeling that their insights are genuinely heard, their professional autonomy is respected, and their presence is valued (Ajmal et al., 2025). This relationship becomes even more critical for sustainability-driven hospitality brands, as psychologically empowered workers frequently transition into active change agents who willingly align their daily service behaviors with global environmental goals and corporate social responsibility objectives, such as green lodging initiatives and sustainable waste management (Burhan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the empirical findings of this study strongly support the role of psychological empowerment as a vital cognitive mediator between sustainable performance management (SPM) and employee voice behavior. This structural pathway is highly consistent with the earlier empirical evidence presented by Vu et al. (2021) and Burhan et al. (2023), confirming the theoretical proposition that individual empowerment acts as a core psychological mechanism connecting macro-level sustainable HRM frameworks to micro-level positive behavioral responses. In practice, these insights imply that hospitality organizations must avoid treating performance appraisal systems as mere bureaucratic or administrative compliance tools. Instead, hotel management and HR executives need to strategically embed these performance frameworks within the organizational culture to actively foster a sense of individual capability, meaningfulness, and self-determination, which ultimately drives frontline staff to speak up and innovate for long-term hospitality sustainability.

Although the moderating influence of ethical leadership on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior seems nuanced, the empirical findings reveal a complex behavioral dynamic that expands traditional leadership paradigms. While ethical leadership is conventionally celebrated for fostering organizational openness (Wen & Chi, 2023), this study uncovers a compelling boundary condition where highly institutionalized ethical norms statistically attenuate the positive impact of empowerment on voice. This paradoxical result, aligning with Ajmal et al. (2025), indicates that when hospitality leaders establish deeply trusted, psychologically safe environments and hyper-transparent communication channels, frontline workers may perceive that the system is already inherently fair and self-correcting.

Consequently, empowered employees feel less structural necessity or personal risk-bearing pressure to engage their independent, individual voice, as they trust that leaders will preemptively address operational anomalies. Rather than reflecting employee apathy, this negative interaction suggests a "comfort zone" effect unique to high-touch hospitality environments (Zainal et al., 2023). In a mature ethical climate, formal leadership actions can inadvertently substitute for employee-driven interventions. Therefore, to ensure that psychological safety translates into continuous service improvement rather than administrative reliance, hotel managers must explicitly signal that ethical leadership is not a replacement for proactive frontline initiative, but a protective safeguard designed to amplify it.

The findings of this study promote significant implications across theoretical, practical, and macro-policy dimensions within the tourism and hospitality sectors. From a theoretical perspective, this study deepens the organizational behavior literature by successfully synthesizing macro-level systems like Sustainable Performance Management with micro-level psychological mechanisms and contingency behaviors. It provides a robust cognitive framework explaining how and why sustainable human resource architectures translate into proactive service recovery actions. Consequently, these findings offer a clear conceptual baseline for future researchers who are developing academic roadmaps in Green HRM and sustainable service science.

For hospitality practitioners, general managers, and HR executives, the practical implications of these insights are immediate and actionable. The results demonstrate that hotel appraisal systems must urgently move beyond traditional, short-term financial metrics and occupancy rates. Hotel management needs to strategically design evaluation frameworks that psychologically enable employees, ensuring that corporate green lodging and sustainability goals are directly integrated into individual KPIs. This integration is essential to actively foster a sense of individual capability, operational meaningfulness, and self-determination among frontline service staff.

On a broader scale, the synthesis of these results serves as a vital reference for tourism ministries, regional governments, and industry policymakers who are responsible for shaping corporate social responsibility standards. Government bodies can leverage this empirical model to design regional

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certification programs or sustainable tourism guidelines that encourage hospitality brands to adopt sustainable performance structures. By doing so, decision-makers can systematically promote an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem that elevates national service standards while simultaneously safeguarding workforce well-being.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully accomplishes its core research objectives by empirically validating the structural paths that drive proactive communication within the hospitality sector. Based on the structural analysis, it is concluded that Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) exerts a significant and positive direct effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) among hotel employees. When hospitality institutions transition from traditional appraisal models to systems grounded in sustainability principles—such as procedural fairness, operational transparency, and continuous developmental feedback—they successfully foster a safe work environment that encourages frontline staff to proactively voice service innovations and constructive operational inputs.

Furthermore, the empirical testing confirms that Psychological Empowerment (PE) functions as a central and vital mediating mechanism that bridges the relationship between SPM and employee voice behavior. The macro-level structural benefits of an SPM framework effectively elevate frontline staff's micro-level cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. These heightened psychological resources subsequently act as the internal motivational driver that triggers independent voice behavior. Crucially, the structural integration of sustainable performance systems does not merely serve as an administrative compliance tool, but acts as a powerful strategic catalyst that fundamentally reshapes the employee's psychological state, ultimately driving continuous organizational learning and service innovation across hospitality operations.

6.1. Recommendations

Hospitality managers and HR practitioners should integrate multidimensional sustainability principles into formal performance evaluation architectures, moving beyond short-term financial and occupancy metrics toward procedural fairness and long-term developmental feedback. Hotel organizations need to design leadership development programs that train department heads to balance ethical stewardship with high employee autonomy. To build a culture of active service recovery and collaborative innovation, leaders must encourage independence of thought and establish trusted communication channels that eliminate frontline staff's fear of career reprisals. Ultimately, utilizing these results supports the development of an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem.

6.2. Limitations and Further Study

This study possesses several inherent limitations that present valuable directions for future inquiry. First, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to definitively infer long-term causality; future research should employ longitudinal designs to monitor behavioral evolution over time. Second, the empirical scope was geographically confined to a single urban center, meaning future studies should expand the sampling frame to include diverse resort destinations and various hotel classifications to enhance generalizability. Finally, future agendas should integrate supplementary contextual variables—such as organizational culture, governance structures, and the influence of external stakeholders like guests and eco-tourism partners—to construct a holistic, 360-degree view of sustainable hospitality management.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication and declare that this work has not been published elsewhere.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Research Paper

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Hospitality Employee Voice via Sustainable Performance Management: Empowerment and Ethical Leadership Impact

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ABSTRACT

This study examines if Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) through the mediating role of Psychological Empowerment (PE), moderated by Ethical Leadership (EL). This integrated framework extends previous research by unveiling mechanisms that translate sustainable tools into staff voice. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was conducted utilizing a sample of 300 frontline hotel employees in Greater Bandung selected via stratified random sampling, with data analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The empirical findings reveal that SPMS exerts a significant, positive direct effect on both PE and EVB, thereby supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. Moreover, mediation analysis confirms that PE significantly bridges the relationship between SPMS and EVB, establishing its role as a statistical mediator. Finally, the moderated-mediation interaction effect of EL is negative and significant, demonstrating that higher ethical leadership levels statistically attenuate the magnitude of the positive relationship between PE and EVB. In conclusion, building a sustainable hospitality brand requires the strategic design of performance frameworks that psychologically enable employees while balancing ethical stewardship with workplace autonomy, ultimately enhancing long-term operational sustainability and service innovation.

Keywords: Sustainable performance management, Psychological empowerment, Employee voice behavior, Ethical leadership, Hospitality industry.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management systems (SPMS) are a new category of increasingly important human resource management (HRM) practices for organizations seeking to align business performance with their broader social, environmental, and ethical goals (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Within the global tourism and hospitality industry, where service quality is tightly linked to human capital, SPMS differs significantly from traditional performance management. While traditional approaches focus heavily on short-term financial outcomes and occupancy rates, SPMS concentrates on continuous development driven by value-based outcomes and sustainable hospitality practices (Paulet et al., 2021). This modern approach has profound implications for corporate sustainability, particularly in creating a high-involvement workplace climate where frontline hospitality employees feel secure and motivated to exhibit employee voice behavior.

Employee voice behavior is defined as the discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, or concerns intended to improve organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In highly dynamic service environments such as hotels, resorts, and tourism agencies, the practice of voice is central to service innovation, service recovery, and operational process enhancement. This is especially vital for hospitality firms pursuing sustainability-related strategies, such as green lodging, waste reduction, or eco-tourism operations. Nevertheless, the willingness of frontline hospitality staff who interact directly with guests by voicing their constructive opinions is structurally influenced by the overarching performance management design and their immediate psychological setting (Mowbray et al., 2022). Psychological empowerment, therefore, acts as one of the vital mediating mechanisms for transforming sustainable performance systems into actual voice behavior. Attempting to deploy sustainable initiatives is bound to fail if hospitality employees lack the confidence, perceived competence, and self-determination to share insights regarding service improvements (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024). Key dimensions of psychological empowerment are meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact can exert a powerful influence over employees' proactive behaviors in service delivery (Kim & Cho, 2024).

Simultaneously, ethical leadership has become a recognized management tool in moderating the relationship between performance frameworks and employee outcomes. Hospitality leaders who operate in a fair, conscientious, and communal manner are most likely to provide the psychological safety required for staff to speak up (Wen & Chi, 2023). In the hospitality sector, where hierarchies are traditionally rigid, this demonstration of ethical support from upper management improves employee trust in the evaluation system, thereby mitigating the fear of negative reprisals when suggestions or operational bottlenecks are brought to light (Amory et al., 2024).

Recent empirical studies focusing on sustainability-driven firms indicate the importance of SPMS as an antecedent of high-involvement work climates that facilitate voice (Paulet et al., 2021). Similar patterns have been observed across complex organizational settings, where participatory management systems serve to mediate the relationship between empowerment and innovative behaviors (Alwali, 2024). Furthermore, empirical research within the Indonesian service and hospitality sectors underscores the indispensable role of ethical leadership in encouraging voice behaviors to correct unethical or ineffective field practices (Zainal et al., 2023).

Despite prioritizing sustainable outcomes within hospitality human resource practices has gained traction, yet empirical consensus remains limited. For instance, Morrison (2023) and Paulet et al. (2021) investigated how standard performance appraisals stimulate employee voice, but their frameworks omitted sustainability-oriented metrics. Conversely, while scholars like Coun et al. (2023) demonstrated that psychological empowerment strongly drives frontline staff's voice behavior, their model treated empowerment as an isolated psychological state without linking it to formal institutional

appraisal systems. This fragmentation underscores a critical omission highlighted in recent systematic literature reviews by Úbeda-García et al. (2025), in their meta-analysis of green HRM practices, explicitly noted that contemporary hospitality research frequently overlooks the intervening psychological mechanisms through which sustainable management tools translate into proactive behaviors, concluding that examining nuanced boundary conditions constitutes a vital future research direction.

Despite these initial insights, a significant research gap persists in the tourism and hospitality literature. While existing studies have separately looked at these dynamics, a systematic literature mapping of contemporary hospitality HR frameworks reveals that empirical evidence remains highly fragmented. Prior research has systematically overlooked how sustainability-driven appraisal mechanisms (SPMS) function when filtered through internal psychological states, such as psychological empowerment. Compounding this issue is the pressure faced by modern hospitality organizations to satisfy both strict service-delivery metrics and non-financial sustainability outcomes, such as social responsibility and ethical governance. This dual objective creates an operational challenge regarding how to design appraisal systems that encourage staff involvement without undermining corporate sustainability efforts. Consequently, this study addresses these critical omissions by examining the direct effects of SPMS on employee voice behavior within a sustainability-oriented hospitality context, evaluating the extent to which psychological empowerment mediates this structural link, and establishing how ethical leadership serves as a vital boundary condition that moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior among hospitality staff.

Based on this problem formulation, this study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable performance management systems on employee voice behavior, while analyzing the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of ethical leadership within the same model. To fulfill these objectives and ensure methodological rigor, this study utilizes a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Moving away from restrictive single convenience-sample surveys, data was gathered from a rigorous stratified random sampling process involving active respondents across service-oriented hospitality institutions. The structural relationships and complex moderated-mediating paths were systematically evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4.0 software.

This paper makes three distinct contributions to the literatures, first theoretically, it introduces a novel integrative model combining system-level (SPMS), individual-level (psychological empowerment), and leadership-level (ethical leadership) factors to predict voice behavior. Second, contextually, it expands the empirical boundaries of SPMS research within the rapidly developing Indonesian hospitality and tourism sector. Finally, it offers practical recommendations for hotel general managers, HR practitioners, and destination managers to successfully reorient performance management systems toward ethical, responsible, and sustainable organizational development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Sustainable performance management and employee voice behavior

Sustainable performance management (SPM) is defined as a continuous, forward-looking process in which employees are integrated into the organization's strategic success, long-term thinking is prioritized, and the multi-dimensional well-being of employees, the organization, and its broader social-environmental context are structurally respected (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Within the rapidly changing, high-innovation-demand context of the global hospitality industry, traditional performance appraisal systems that rely solely on retrospective financial indicators, rigid assessment cycles, and

guest satisfaction scores are increasingly insufficient. In contrast, an SPM framework shifts the focus toward continuous employee development, reflective behavior-based feedback, perceived procedural fairness, and a high level of value-driven alignment (Wen & Chi, 2023). This strategic evolution is vital for hospitality firms to remain agile, reduce high turnover rates, and sustain competitive advantages in premium service delivery.

Grounding this framework in Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) provides a robust dual-mechanism to explain these behavioral dynamics. Under SET, the system-level characteristics of Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) serve as powerful signals of organizational care and investment, fostering a sense of reciprocity where employees feel obligated to repay the organization through constructive behaviors. Concurrently, CET explains how the informative and developmental attributes of SPMS nurture employees' self-determination and intrinsic motivation, thereby enhancing their internal psychological states. Among the most critical behavioral outcomes triggered by this high-investment HRM climate is employee voice behavior, which manifests as the discretionary communication of ideas, operational concerns, or constructive suggestions to improve overall organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023). In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline employees serve as the critical interface between the brand and the consumer, the willingness to exhibit voice behavior is heavily contingent upon the design of the appraisal system. Previous literature demonstrates that when SPMS are perceived as transparent, developmental, and structurally ethical, they significantly enhance employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation to actively speak up (Wilkinson et al., 2020).

Empirical evidence consistently verifies that sustainable, supportive HR practices positively predict proactive behaviors across diverse service touchpoints (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Incorporating sustainability metrics such as rewarding green initiatives, ethical service recovery, and collaborative teamwork has builds deep organizational trust, which encourages frontline staff to voice both helpful service innovations and early warnings about operational vulnerabilities (Ashiru et al., 2022). This dynamic is particularly indispensable in the people-centric hospitality industry, where the spontaneous insights and discretionary behaviors of employees directly determine service quality, agility, and operational excellence. Consequently, contemporary hospitality literature suggests that SPM must be viewed as a strategic enabler of proactive performance rather than a mere punitive measurement tool, tightly linked to broad corporate sustainability and long-term service growth (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2022).

Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, it is argued that a well-implemented SPM system will structurally foster a safe environment that drives hospitality staff to actively articulate constructive inputs. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.2. Sustainable performance management and psychological empowerment

Sustainable Performance Management Systems (SPMS) constitute a proactive organizational approach aimed at enhancing the traditional performance appraisal architecture through continuous, transparent feedback, structured employee development, and equitable evaluation systems that balance long-term sustainability objectives with individual employee welfare (Wen & Chi, 2023). Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) as a primary theoretical lens, SPMS fundamentally deviates from conventional, compliance-driven performance appraisals by shifting the structural focus from rigid, retrospective metrics to iterative processes and ethical values that foster workplace fairness and continuous competency development, (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021). Under CET, the informative and development-oriented nature of sustainable appraisals satisfies employees' intrinsic needs for

competence and autonomy, thereby serving as a critical driver of psychological states. Within the hospitality industry, where emotional labor is intense and frontline service delivery is highly interdependent, such inclusive and growth-oriented appraisal frameworks are crucial. When hospitality organizations move away from punitive, guest-complaint-centric metrics and instead implement SPMS, they cultivate a high-involvement service culture where employees feel genuinely valued, organizationally supported, and intrinsically motivated.

Psychological empowerment emerges as a critical psychological and motivational consequence of a well-perceived SPM framework. Psychological empowerment is defined as a multi-dimensional motivational construct manifested in four distinct cognitive perceptions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact regarding one's organizational role (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Performance management systems that are structurally designed and perceived by frontline hospitality staff as socially just, highly participative, and developmental serve to reinforce these four cognitive dimensions. Specifically, by involving hospitality personnel in collaborative goal-setting and providing constructive, future-oriented feedback, SPM clarifies how individual service roles contribute to the establishment's broader sustainability and service-quality goals, thereby enhancing the perception of meaning and impact (Zainal et al., 2023). Furthermore, the developmental and supportive nature of SPM bolsters employees' beliefs in their own service capabilities (competence) and grants them operational autonomy in service recovery scenarios (self-determination).

This structural relationship is strongly supported by empirical findings in organizational behavior and social sciences. For instance, Lewandowski & Cirella (2023) demonstrated that developmental performance appraisals significantly enhance employees' perceptions of autonomy and competence, which subsequently drives intrinsic motivation through the expanded operational discretion afforded by the appraisal process. Similarly, Singh et al. (2022) verified that when performance rules are procedurally fair and evaluation systems are resilient, ongoing transparent feedback engenders deep organizational trust and facilitates rich, proactive engagement among service employees.

Despite these insights, a distinct research gap persists within the hospitality and tourism literature. While general human resource practices have been linked to psychological outcomes, empirical studies exploring the direct structural impact of sustainable, eco-centric performance systems (SPM) on the psychological empowerment of frontline hospitality staff remain scarce, particularly within rapidly developing tourism hubs like Indonesia.

In the fierce, highly competitive hospitality landscape of major urban tourist destinations, implementing SPM is no longer just an administrative tool to monitor service standards; it is a strategic necessity to unlock employee initiative and foster collaborative resilience among service and support staff to satisfy modern eco-conscious travelers. Based on these theoretical and empirical lines of argument, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sustainable Performance Management has a significant positive effect on Psychological Empowerment among hospitality industry employees.

2.3. Psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior

Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional motivational construct defined by four distinct cognitive dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Social Cognitive Theory, a strong sense of empowerment cognitively reorients employees toward both their in-role and extra-role task behaviors, as they perceive themselves to be highly competent, self-determined, and influential within the organizational structure. In the high-pressure environment of the hospitality industry, these psychological resources are vital drivers of proactive employee behaviors. When frontline hospitality staff such as guest relations, food and beverage personnel, or housekeeping crews possess these

psychological strengths, they exhibit higher levels of job performance, service satisfaction, and discretionary behaviors like employee voice, which entails the voluntary communication of ideas, concerns, or innovative suggestions to optimize service delivery and organizational functioning (Morrison, 2023; Bakker & Wang, 2020).

Theoretically, psychologically empowered employees are more equipped to express their voice because they believe their insights possess genuine value (meaning), feel capable of articulating them effectively (competence), enjoy the professional autonomy to act (self-determination), and trust that their suggestions can positively reshape institutional practices (impact) (Chen & Treviño, 2022). In hotel operations, this psychological state transcends passive compliance, creating a profound culture of psychological ownership. This cognitive ownership holds frontline staff internally accountable for bringing forth service-recovery ideas, highlighting hidden operational defects, and taking an active role in problem resolution. For instance, empirical research by Makwetta et al. (2021) showed that employees with elevated psychological empowerment are significantly more likely to engage in both promotive voices offering innovative solutions for growth and prohibitive voice warning against practices that could harm service quality. Similarly, empowerment serves as a vital psychological buffer that facilitates a psychologically safe work environment, releasing frontline hospitality staff from the fear of negative reprisals and fostering open communication and creative service orientation (Liu et al., 2023).

Within the hospitality sector, these socio-psychological dynamics are highly critical yet distinct. Frontline service workers are often the first to notice service failures, safety hazards, or gaps in environmental sustainability practices, such as food waste or energy inefficiencies. Empowered hospitality personnel are more likely to participate actively in-service governance, engage in conversations related to operational continuous improvement, and openly voice concerns regarding emerging challenges that directly affect hospitality service quality. Despite these linkages, a notable research gap exists concerning the specific structural relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice within the Indonesian hospitality landscape.

Given that unique local hospitality work cultures, strict service hierarchies, and evolving sustainable HRM practices can heavily influence this dynamic, exploring this path is essential. Unlocking these mechanisms will determine how individual cognitive empowerment can be leveraged to drive constructive employee voice within sustainability-focused hospitality brands. Based on these theoretical and empirical underpinnings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological Empowerment has a significant positive effect on Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.4. The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Within contemporary organizational behavior and management literature, psychological empowerment is widely recognized as a pivotal mediating mechanism through which macro-level macro-organizational practices are translated into micro-level employee behaviors. Grounded in Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Social Exchange Theory, psychological empowerment functions as an intrinsic form of task motivation manifested through four distinct cognitive states: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Pradhan & Panda, 2021). Previous researchers demonstrate that psychological empowerment effectively bridges the gap between structured contextual resources such as progressive leadership styles, strategic performance frameworks, or constructive work climates and critical behavioral outcomes, including service innovation, organizational engagement, and employee voice behavior (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2022).

Sustainable performance management systems (SPMS) that systematically prioritize future-oriented feedback, individualized developmental appraisal, and transparent procedural justice cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel intrinsically valued, structurally trusted, and organizationally supported (Parker & Grote, 2022; Schermuly et al., 2022). These institutional support systems serve as critical signaling mechanisms that clarify role expectations while simultaneously elevating frontline workers' perceived autonomy and professional competence (Chen & Treviño, 2022).

In the high-touch hospitality sector, where frontline service employees regularly navigate diverse guest interactions and unpredictable operational demands, this indirect psychological pathway is uniquely critical. The structural features of an SPMS framework do not automatically trigger proactive service behaviors; rather, they operate by reshaping the psychological state of the workforce (Wen & Chi, 2023). When hospitality personnel perceive that their performance appraisal system is designed to sustain their long-term well-being and professional growth, it fosters a profound sense of workplace credibility and psychological safety (Kim & Cho, 2024; Mowbray et al., 2022). This cognitive shift provides the precise motivational mechanism required for sustainable performance management to influence employee voice behavior, as frontline staff feel cognitively secure and organizationally driven to articulate innovative ideas or highlight latent service failures without fear of negative repercussions (McCarthy et al., 2020).

This structural mediating pathway is robustly supported by empirical evidence across the broader service literature. For instance, (Huang et al., 2023) verified that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee advocacy behaviors within complex service-driven organizations. In a dynamic service market like Indonesia, hospitality brands face intense competition and rising demands for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Frontline hotel staff are often the first to recognize operational bottlenecks, environmental waste, or service recovery opportunities; however, their willingness to speak up remains heavily dependent on whether they feel structurally empowered by their firm's appraisal architecture.

Despite its practical urgency, there remains a notable research gap in the hospitality literature regarding how this psychological mediation mechanism functions within developing Southeast Asian service sectors. Bridging this theoretical gap is essential to clarify how institutional sustainable human resource frameworks can be leveraged to drive open, proactive communication and continuous quality improvement in tourism operations. Based on these theoretical foundations and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Psychological Empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Employee Voice Behavior within the hospitality industry.

2.5. The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership

An indispensable contextual boundary condition that structurally reshapes the behavior of organizational members and dictates service dynamics is ethical leadership. Grounded in Social Learning Theory, ethical leadership is conceptualized as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, combined with the active promotion of such behavior to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and balanced decision-making (Wen & Chi, 2023). Ethical leaders cultivate an environment anchored in deep organizational trust and operational transparency. Supported by a rigorous moral compass, these leaders serve as critical behavioral role models, systematically setting clear expectations, adhering to strict fairness standards, and providing continuous reassurance that hospitality employees can articulate creative ideas or voice operational concerns without suffering negative career reprisals or social retaliation (Abu Bakar & Connaughton, 2023).

Within organizational behavior literature, extensive empirical studies support the notion that ethical leadership acts as an essential moderator that amplifies the positive impact of structural organizational systems on employee attitudes and psychological states. For instance, empirical research verifies that ethical leadership significantly moderates the relationship between high-involvement work systems and proactive employee outcomes, including organizational citizenship behavior and constructive voice (Jeong et al., 2025; Ajmal et al., 2025). When an authentic sense of psychological safety is actively fostered by ethical managers, employees are structurally more likely to perceive systemic human resource practices as genuinely developmental and supportive rather than punitive or disciplinary.

In the high-touch hospitality industry, where operations are characterized by intense emotional labor, low employee retention, and traditionally rigid operational hierarchies, the interplay between systems and leadership is uniquely critical. Ethical leadership in the context of sustainable performance management (SPMS) which structurally focuses on procedural justice, workplace inclusivity, and continuous feedback is highly significant because it helps transform abstract corporate sustainability principles from mere paper compliance blueprints into lived daily service routines (Yang et al., 2023; Hoang et al., 2023).

Theoretically, ethical leadership acts as a catalyst that activates the empowerment potential of SPMS. While an SPMS framework provides the formal structure for fair evaluation and long-term well-being, it requires the contextual support of an ethical manager to truly elevate an employee's psychological state (Hoang et al., 2023). When hotel department heads or general managers lead ethically, the structural benefits of SPMS are magnified, drastically increasing the frontline staff's sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and overall impact (Yang et al., 2023).

Despite these theoretical insights, a critical research gap persists regarding how ethical leadership moderates the intersection between SPMS and psychological empowerment within the developing Indonesian hospitality sector. Unlocking this boundary condition clarifies how hospitality brands can leverage sustainability appraisals to structurally foster employee empowerment and proactive service excellence. Consequently, based on these theoretical foundations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Ethical Leadership significantly moderates the relationship between Sustainable Performance Management and Psychological Empowerment within the hospitality industry.

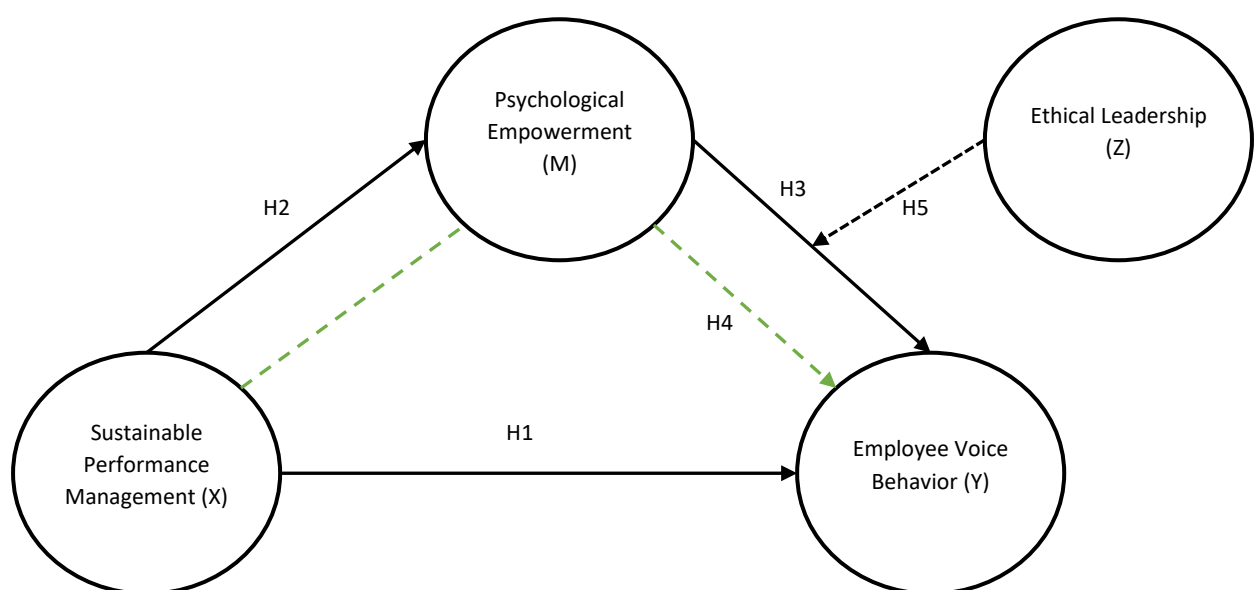


Figure 1. Research Framework
 Source: Authors own elaboration, (2026)

The integrated research model proposed in this study is built upon the comprehensive literature review conducted earlier, mapping the structural pathways that dictate proactive organizational behaviors within the hospitality sector. Specifically, the framework posits that a Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) system, which incorporates adaptive and eco-centric performance criteria, can significantly enhance Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). Within this structural mechanism, Psychological Empowerment (PE) operates as a critical cognitive mediator, while Ethical Leadership (EL) serves as an essential contextual boundary condition and moderator.

Methodologically, SPM is hypothesized to drive employee voice behavior by elevating frontline hospitality staff's psychological empowerment, as heightened cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, and self-determination structurally enable them to feel more impactful and secure at work. Furthermore, ethical leadership is expected to strengthen the positive effect of SPM on psychological empowerment, as ethical leaders actively cultivate a workplace atmosphere anchored in procedural justice, honesty, and high-involvement service dynamics. These structural relationships comprising direct effects, mediating pathways, and moderating interactions are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which represents the comprehensive conceptual framework of this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

The present study uses a quantitative research design. This approach is highly suitable for the verification of hypotheses and the confirmation of theoretical models through empirical data, enabling the statistical analysis of relationships between sustainable performance management, psychological empowerment, ethical leadership, and employee voice behavior. A quantitative strategy was preferred since it makes use of a standardized *modus operandi*, thereby ensuring clear-cut ways to measure and test initial effects systematically (Hair et al., 2019), which aligns with the structural requirement of testing both complex mediation and moderation paths simultaneously. Within this methodological framework, individual frontline employees from selected hotels and hospitality establishments serve as the primary unit of analysis, while the unit of observation consists of the operational service and administrative staff members who participate actively in performance-related processes and daily service deliveries within their institutions.

3.2. Population and sample

The target population for this study includes 1,200 active employees from selected star-rated hotels and hospitality establishments in the Greater Bandung area. To determine the minimum required sample size for rigorous empirical testing, Slovin's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a representative sample size of 300 respondents to ensure adequate statistical power. In order to guarantee a proportional representation of respondents across different functional lines within each hotel department, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. The target population was explicitly divided into two major operational strata: frontline service staff (including food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office personnel) and administrative-managerial support staff. Respondents were then randomly selected from each strategic stratum. This sampling design effectively minimizes sampling bias, accounts for the structural heterogeneity of the hospitality workforce, and enhances the external validity of the empirical findings.

To provide a comprehensive and transparent overview of the sampling framework, the precise distribution of the target population and the corresponding sample allocation within each operational stratum has been systematically mapped. This structured breakdown details the proportional weight of

both frontline service and administrative-managerial staff across the selected 4-star and 5-star hotel segments. Accordingly, the detailed distribution of the population and the final research sample used for subsequent empirical testing is explicitly presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Population and Sample Distribution

No	Hotel Classification	Operational Stratum	Target Population (N)	Percentage (%)	Calculated Sample Size (n)
1	4-Star Hotels (Selected)	Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	720	60	180
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	540	45	130
2	5-Star Hotels (Selected)	Frontline Service Staff (F&B, Housekeeping, Front Office)	480	40	120
		Administrative Support Staff (HR, Finance, Back Office)	180	15	45
			360	30	90
			120	10	30
All Selected Establishments		Combined Strata	1,200	100	300

Source: Primary Data Processed, (2026)

3.3. Measurement and Instruments

A structured, self-administered questionnaire was utilized for data collection by adopting validated measurement instruments from established previous studies to fit the service dynamics of the hospitality sector. For the sustainable performance management variable, the eco-centric and developmental performance indicators were adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2023) and de Waal (2020), focusing on sustainable service standards and resource stewardship. Psychological empowerment was measured using the four-dimensional scale developed by Pradhan & Panda (2021), which evaluates frontline staff's cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their service roles. Furthermore, employee voice behavior was evaluated using the measurement items developed by Mowbray et al. (2022) to capture proactive suggestions and constructive service recovery inputs. Finally, ethical leadership was constructed based on the scale by Wen & Chi (2023), assessing the moral and supportive behaviors of hotel supervisors and general managers. All questionnaire items were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to ensure robust interval-level data for subsequent statistical processing via structural equation modeling.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

To guarantee the clarity, reliability, and validity of the research instrument within a high-touch service environment, a pilot test was performed with 30 hospitality respondents prior to full deployment. The internal consistency and construct validity of the scales were rigorously evaluated using confirmatory metrics; all targeted constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficients well above the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Furthermore, the standardized outer loading factors for all measurement items across the constructs ranged from 0.832 to 0.937, significantly exceeding the stringent statistical benchmark of 0.70. This confirms excellent convergent validity and

ensures that all indicator items possess strong explanatory power for their respective latent variables, requiring no deletions. Following the successful validation of the pilot assessment, the final surveys were administered using a hybrid deployment approach designed to accommodate the diverse shift schedules of hotel staff. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously in a traditional paper-and-pencil format directly at the properties and electronically via mobile-friendly online forms. This dual approach was critical to secure maximal geographical coverage and optimize overall response rates across the selected hospitality institutions without disrupting daily service operations.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was deployed for data analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS version 4.0 software application. This approach was chosen because it is highly appropriate for complex structural models that simultaneously include mediation and moderation paths, accommodates non-normal data distributions without distorting results, and shows robust performance in moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). Following standard statistical protocols, the analysis process followed a strict two-step approach, beginning with the measurement model assessment to evaluate convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability of the latent variables, followed by the structural model testing to analyze path coefficients and significance levels using the bootstrapping method, alongside the evaluation of the model's explanatory power through R values. This rigorous quantitative approach ensures a thorough empirical exploration of how sustainable performance management, coupled with psychological mechanisms and leadership behaviors, structurally supports employee voice behaviors among frontline staff and support personnel within the hospitality industry.

4. RESULT

4.1. Outer Model Assessment

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), an outer model assessment is recommended to assess the measurement properties of each construct in the research model. Specifically, this process involves checking outer loadings to measure the reliability of indicators; composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for assessing construct reliability and convergent validity; and discriminant validity, which determines that the constructs are empirically different (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). In addition, the other loadings should be higher than 0.70 for each indicator to ensure that they indicate their latent constructs strongly (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability (CR) above 0.70 and an average variance extracted (AVE) over 0.50 indicate that both measures were adequate in terms of their estimated values on the respective indicators of convergent validity. We used the rooting of the AVE approach that suggests that each construct should be significantly higher from its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), or we looked at the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, which needs to have a value lower than 0.90 according to (Henseler et al., 2015).

The results of the outer model evaluation are provided in Figures 2, this is a visual representation of the outer model analysis (indicator loadings) for each construct in the study. As can be seen, all indicators have outer loading values above the recommended cut-off limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), thus indicating high reliability of the indicator variables. For instance, the CRI ranges from 0.873 to 0.929 for Psychological Empowerment (PE), from 0.836 to 0.903 for Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), from 0.832 to 0.892 for Ethical Leadership (EL), and from 0.880 to 0.937 for

Employee Voice Behavior (EVB). These findings indicate that the items consistently assess their respective latent variable. The values on the latent variable scores included in blue circles also suggest moderate to high levels of construct contribution. This estimation stands for the measurement model before a structural testing that demonstrates its reliability and validity.

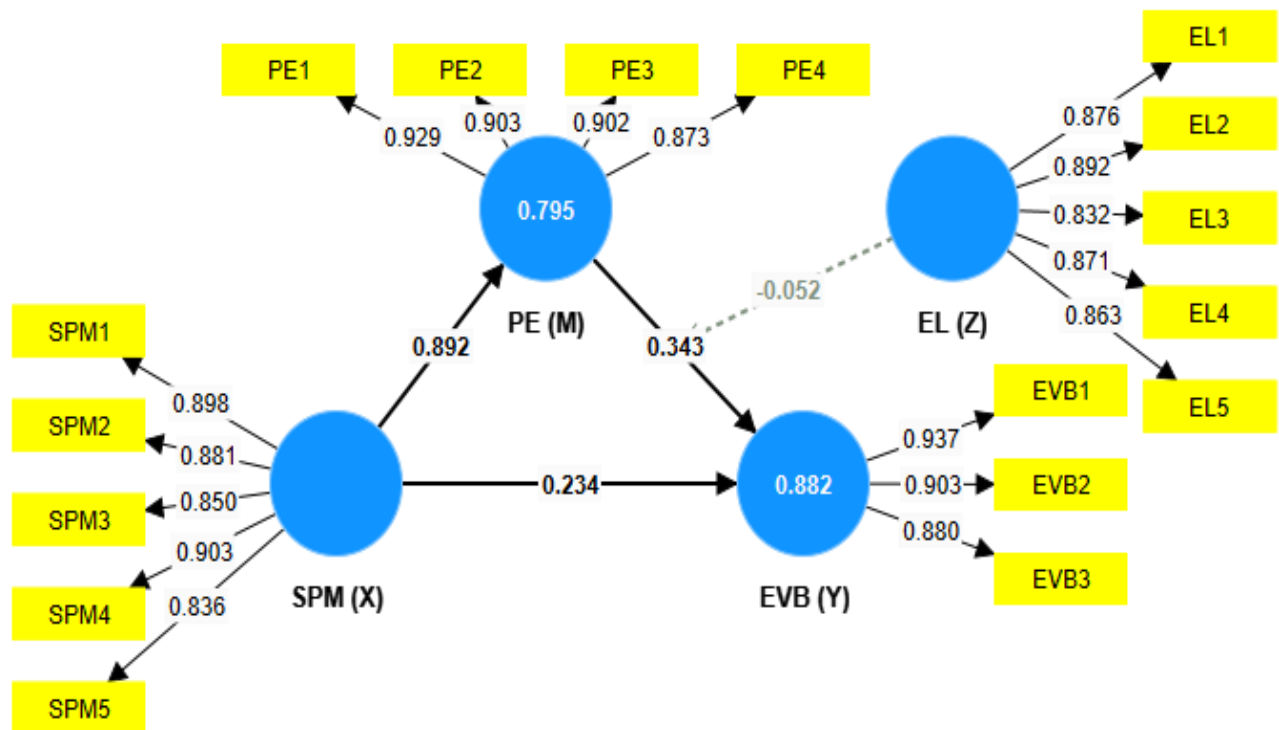


Figure 2. Outer Model
 Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variable	Indicators	Item Code	Loading Factor
Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) (X)	Goal Alignment	SPM1	0.898
	Continuous Feedback	SPM2	0.881
	Participation	SPM3	0.850
	Development Focus	SPM4	0.903
	Fair Evaluation	SPM5	0.836
Psychological Empowerment (PE) (M)	Meaning	PE1	0.929
	Competence	PE2	0.903
	Self-determination	PE3	0.902
	Impact	PE4	0.873
Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) (Y)	Promotive Voice	EVB1	0.937
	Prohibitive Voice	EVB2	0.903
	Supportive Voice	EVB3	0.880
Ethical Leadership (EL) (Z)	Integrity	EL1	0.876
	Fairness	EL2	0.892
	Role Modelling	EL3	0.832
	Accountability	EL4	0.871
	People Orientation	EL5	0.863

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The outer loading assessment presented in Table 2 confirms robust indicator reliability across all four latent constructs. Rather than merely reflecting acceptable statistical thresholds, the high magnitude of these loading factors ranging from 0.832 to 0.937, it is demonstrating strong convergent validity, indicating that more than 69% of the variance in each item is explained by its respective underlying construct (Hair et al., 2019). This uniform empirical strength ensures that the indicator items are highly representative measures of SPMS, PE, EVB, and EL within the hospitality context, providing a solid and statistically sound foundation for subsequent structural model estimation.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
SPM (X)	0.923	0.926	0.942	0.764
PE (M)	0.924	0.925	0.946	0.814
EVB (Y)	0.892	0.893	0.933	0.822
EL (Z)	0.917	0.922	0.938	0.752

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

Table 3 presents the results of the construct reliability and validity tests for the four research constructs, namely SPM, PE, EVB, and EL. All constructs display respectably high Cronbach's Alpha values (≥ 0.892), which implies excellent internal consistency. Nearly all constructs achieve a composite reliability (rho_c) value greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70, therefore indicating strong construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Moreover, all constructs also have the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.50, which indicates that more than half of each construct's variance is explained by its indicators, thus meeting convergent validity requirements for factor analysis. These results suggest that all latent variable constructs utilized in the model are measurable with reliability and validity for further exploration of structural relationships.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	EL (Z)	EVB (Y)	PE (M)	SPM (X)
EL (Z)	0.867	0.740	0.710	0.800
EVB (Y)	0.740	0.907	0.780	0.860
PE (M)	0.710	0.780	0.902	0.840
SPM (X)	0.800	0.860	0.840	0.874

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which checks for discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE with correlations between constructs. The diagonal value elements (in bold) correspond to the square root of the AVE, and they are greater than their correlation values with other constructs in that same row and column. This implies that each of the constructs has decent discriminant validity—it is unique and cannot be mistaken for other constructs. So, the model of this study fulfilled the necessary criteria for discriminant validity to go through the further analysis.

4.2. Inner Model Assessment

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) involves the inner model evaluation, which is used to understand the relationships among latent constructs evaluated through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Path coefficients show the strength and direction of the hypothesized paths, while R^2 values explain how much variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables values close to 1 indicate stronger prediction (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the Q^2 values are used to assess how well these models predicted by

using the blindfolding economy explanation; a Q^2 above 0 ensures that the model has predictive value (Shmueli et al., 2019).

The results of Table 5. Conclusion of Path Coefficients All path relationships in the structural model are significant. SPM in this study has an effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) with a coefficient of 0.234 ($p < 0.05$), and the effect of SPM on Psychological Empowerment (PE) is very strong & significant ($\beta = 0.892$, $p = 0.000$). Next, PE also significantly influences EVB ($\beta = 0.343$, $p = 0.000$), as does Ethical Leadership (EL) towards EVB ($\beta = 0.354$, $p = 0.000$). Surprisingly, the interaction of EL and PE about EVB is negatively significant ($\beta = -0.052$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the moderating effect of EL may reduce the impact of PE on the employee voice behavior attitude. These results indicate that all the paths in the model under test are statistically meaningful and have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 5. Path coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.234	0.220	0.112	2.079	0.038
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

Table 6. R-squared (R^2)

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EVB (Y)	0.882	0.881
PE (M)	0.795	0.795

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

The results of Table 6. If the value of R-squared (R^2) is greater than 0.5, this shows that there is a substantial explanation about the structural model. The R^2 value of Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) is 0.882, which indicates that SPM, PE, and EL (interacted with PE) have the ability to explain more than 88.2% of the variance in EVB. Second, SPM accounts for 79.5% of the variance in PE ($R^2 = 0.795$). The adjusted R^2 values (which are virtually the same as the original R^2 values) say that our model is both stable and robust. According to Hair et al. (2019), the R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, which implies both the constructs endogenously linked in this model can be powerfully predicted with the help of exogenous variables.

Table 7. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SPM (X)	1500.000	547.087	0.635
PE (M)	1200.000	396.255	0.670
EVB (Y)	900.000	353.159	0.608
EL (Z)	1500.000	571.736	0.619

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

Table 7 displays the results for different sets of data. We also present Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs in the model that indicate good predictive relevance to our data. In this context, PE ($Q^2 = 0.670$), SPM ($Q^2 = 0.635$), EL ($Q^2 = 0.619$), and EVB ($Q^2 = 0.608$) have higher predictive relevance according to the Q^2 values. According to Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values > 0.35 at the very least suggest that the model can predict such an endogenous construct and are often indicative of good predictive performance (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, a high extent of prognostic accuracy regarding all constructs was provided as evidence confirming the ability of the structural model to reliably predict observed outcomes.

4.3. Testing Mediation Effects

Mediation testing is an important step within Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to determine whether and how much of the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable follows through a mediator. Factor mediation typically involves the Total Effects (TE) and Specific Indirect Effects (IE) (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which clarify whether the mediation effect is partial or full, as well as if the indirect effects are statistically significant. The indirect effect reflects the path through the mediator, and the total effect covers both direct and indirect effects. When using regression, bootstrapping is encouraged to determine whether these effects are significantly different than zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020). The importance of mediation can be justified if the indirect effect is significant and the confidence interval does not contain zero.

Table 8. Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> EVB (Y)	0.540	0.529	0.099	5.433	0.000
SPM (X) -> PE (M)	0.892	0.892	0.019	47.566	0.000
PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.343	0.346	0.079	4.354	0.000
EL (Z) -> EVB (Y)	0.354	0.366	0.098	3.601	0.000
EL (Z) x PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0, (2026)

Results Table 8 shows the outcome. Total Effects showcases that all the relationships between the variables are statistically significant. The maximum total effect appears between SPM (X) and PE (M), with a coefficient of 0.892, $t=47.566$, and $p<0.000$, which means the significant effect of SPM on PE. The SPM(X) also has a significant total effect on EVB(Y) ($\gamma=0.540$, $t=5.433$, $p<0.001$), which underscores the involvement of SPM in improving employee voluntary behavior directly and indirectly as well. The significant effect of PE (M) on EVB (Y) (0.343, $t = 4.354$, $p < 0.05$) implies the mediating role of PE in the relationship between SNPs and EVB. In addition, EL (Z) has a positive and significant direct effect on EVB (Y) (0.354, $t = 3.601$, $p = 0.000$), while the interaction effect of EL (Z) x PE (M) on EVB (Y), which is negative but still significant (-0.052; $t = -3.343$, $p = 0.001$), acts as a moderating variable that may attenuate somewhat the strength of the positive effect in a specific sub-region of data space. Drawing on the hierarchical theory of motivation, structural strategic management research is apparently unwavering in recognizing cross-level effects between managerial strategy and individual employee behavior, although our study suggests a number of networked pathways in which strategic management influences voluntary employee behavior via empowerment.

Table 9. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SPM (X) -> PE (M) -> EVB (Y)	0.306	0.309	0.073	4.203	0.000

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The findings in Table 9, Key Indirect Effects, show that Strategic Performance Management (SPM) also has a statistically significant indirect effect on Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB) through Psychological Empowerment (PE). The path coefficient of the indirect relationship is 0.306 ($p = 0.000$), with a t-value of 4.203, being significant too. The results suggest that SPM affects EVB directly and indirectly, with the stronger effect of SPM on psychological empowerment leading to more voluntary, proactive behavior in the workplace. This confirms the earlier suggestion that empowerment mediates between SHRM practices and employee behavior facets.

4.4. Testing Moderation Effects

Central to the process of moderation effects is assessing whether how strongly or in which direction one thing relates to another varies as a consequence of being at some level of a third thing, which is called a moderator. In SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), moderation is usually tested by employing an interaction term, which is the outcome of multiplication between predictor and moderator variables (Hair et al., 2019). It enables researchers to test whether the moderator has a significant impact on the relationship between an independent and dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2015). In Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a significant interaction effect signals that moderation is at work, and this interaction term lends interpretation as per the sign-magnitude-significance of the related coefficient (Sarstedt et al., 2022). These kinds of analyses are especially valuable when it comes to determining conditional effects within more elaborate behavioral models. Table 10 below shows the results of the moderation tests.

Table 10. Interaction Term Moderating Effect

Moderating Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
EL (Z) $\times$ PE (M) $\rightarrow$ EVB (Y)	-0.052	-0.049	0.015	3.343	0.001

Source: Primary data processed via SmartPLS 4.0 (2026)

The results in Table 10. Results of Interaction Term Moderating Effect interactions indicated that the variable Environmental Leadership (EL) had a significant moderation effect on the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Employee Voluntary Behavior (EVB). The value of the original sample, 0.052, means that as environmental leadership increases, psychological empowerment decreases in voluntary employee behavior; this suggests that the moderating effect was negative. The moderating effect is that the T-statistic value is 3.343 (>1.96) and the P-value is 0.001 (<0.05). The results suggest that environmental leadership serves as a moderator on the association between PE and EVB, although with a negative direction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer strong empirical evidence on the seminal roles of Sustainable Performance Management (SPM), Psychological Empowerment (PE), and Ethical Leadership (EL) in affecting Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) within the hospitality industry. These findings point to the

profound beneficial effects of SPM, supporting the view that sustainable performance management—characterized by procedural fairness, transparent criteria, a high extent of forward-looking developmental feedback, and a strategic linkage with long-term environmental and social goals—drives constructive communication tendencies among hospitality staff. This is consistent with the established results of Jia et al. (2023); Ajmal et al. (2025) and Chen & Treviño, (2022) which emphasize that sustainable human resource frameworks foster deep psychological safety and organizational justice, thereby encouraging frontline service employees to voice innovative ideas or operational concerns without fear of management retaliation.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that SPM substantially increases psychological empowerment, tightly aligning with the theoretical arguments made by Pradhan & Panda (2021), where empowerment structurally occurs when an individual perceives meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. By integrating sustainable performance practices with a core commitment to the environment and the local community (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021), hospitality firms can successfully nurture frontline personnel who feel psychologically empowered and intrinsically motivated to deliver exceptional service. This highlights the dual function of SPM, which acts not merely as a traditional performance evaluation system to monitor occupancy and service metrics, but also as a vital strategic leverage for human capital development and proactive organizational change toward comprehensive corporate sustainability.

The positive association between psychological empowerment (PE) and employee voice behavior (EVB) substantiates the established organizational behavior perspective, which posits that empowered service employees are significantly more inclined to participate in proactive voice behaviors (Pradhan & Panda, 2021; Morrison, 2023). Within the fast-paced and emotionally demanding hospitality sector, the resilience of frontline employees and their propensity to contribute toward operational and structural improvement stem directly from feeling that their insights are genuinely heard, their professional autonomy is respected, and their presence is valued (Ajmal et al., 2025). This relationship becomes even more critical for sustainability-driven hospitality brands, as psychologically empowered workers frequently transition into active change agents who willingly align their daily service behaviors with global environmental goals and corporate social responsibility objectives, such as green lodging initiatives and sustainable waste management (Burhan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the empirical findings of this study strongly support the role of psychological empowerment as a vital cognitive mediator between sustainable performance management (SPM) and employee voice behavior. This structural pathway is highly consistent with the earlier empirical evidence presented by Vu et al. (2021) and Burhan et al. (2023). confirming the theoretical proposition that individual empowerment acts as a core psychological mechanism connecting macro-level sustainable HRM frameworks to micro-level positive behavioral responses. In practice, these insights imply that hospitality organizations must avoid treating performance appraisal systems as mere bureaucratic or administrative compliance tools. Instead, hotel management and HR executives need to strategically embed these performance frameworks within the organizational culture to actively foster a sense of individual capability, meaningfulness, and self-determination, which ultimately drives frontline staff to speak up and innovate for long-term hospitality sustainability.

Although the moderating influence of ethical leadership on the relationship between psychological empowerment and employee voice behavior seems nuanced, the empirical findings reveal a complex behavioral dynamic that expands traditional leadership paradigms. While ethical leadership is conventionally celebrated for fostering organizational openness (Wen & Chi, 2023), this study uncovers a compelling boundary condition where highly institutionalized ethical norms statistically attenuate the positive impact of empowerment on voice. This paradoxical result, aligning with Ajmal et al. (2025), indicates that when hospitality leaders establish deeply trusted, psychologically safe environments and

hyper-transparent communication channels, frontline workers may perceive that the system is already inherently fair and self-correcting.

Consequently, empowered employees feel less structural necessity or personal risk-bearing pressure to engage their independent, individual voice, as they trust that leaders will preemptively address operational anomalies. Rather than reflecting employee apathy, this negative interaction suggests a "comfort zone" effect unique to high-touch hospitality environments (Zainal et al., 2023). In a mature ethical climate, formal leadership actions can inadvertently substitute for employee-driven interventions. Therefore, to ensure that psychological safety translates into continuous service improvement rather than administrative reliance, hotel managers must explicitly signal that ethical leadership is not a replacement for proactive frontline initiative, but a protective safeguard designed to amplify it.

The findings of this study promote significant implications across theoretical, practical, and macro-policy dimensions within the tourism and hospitality sectors. From a theoretical perspective, this study deepens the organizational behavior literature by successfully synthesizing macro-level systems like Sustainable Performance Management with micro-level psychological mechanisms and contingency behaviors. It provides a robust cognitive framework explaining how and why sustainable human resource architectures translate into proactive service recovery actions. Consequently, these findings offer a clear conceptual baseline for future researchers who are developing academic roadmaps in Green HRM and sustainable service science.

For hospitality practitioners, general managers, and HR executives, the practical implications of these insights are immediate and actionable. The results demonstrate that hotel appraisal systems must urgently move beyond traditional, short-term financial metrics and occupancy rates. Hotel management needs to strategically design evaluation frameworks that psychologically enable employees, ensuring that corporate green lodging and sustainability goals are directly integrated into individual KPIs. This integration is essential to actively foster a sense of individual capability, operational meaningfulness, and self-determination among frontline service staff.

On a broader scale, the synthesis of these results serves as a vital reference for tourism ministries, regional governments, and industry policymakers who are responsible for shaping corporate social responsibility standards. Government bodies can leverage this empirical model to design regional certification programs or sustainable tourism guidelines that encourage hospitality brands to adopt sustainable performance structures. By doing so, decision-makers can systematically promote an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem that elevates national service standards while simultaneously safeguarding workforce well-being.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully accomplishes its core research objectives by empirically validating the structural paths that drive proactive communication within the hospitality sector. Based on the structural analysis, it is concluded that Sustainable Performance Management (SPM) exerts a significant and positive direct effect on Employee Voice Behavior (EVB) among hotel employees. When hospitality institutions transition from traditional appraisal models to systems grounded in sustainability principles such as procedural fairness, operational transparency, and continuous developmental feedback, they successfully foster a safe work environment that encourages frontline staff to proactively voice service innovations and constructive operational inputs.

Furthermore, the empirical testing confirms that Psychological Empowerment (PE) functions as a central and vital mediating mechanism that bridges the relationship between SPM and employee voice behavior. The macro-level structural benefits of an SPM framework effectively elevate frontline staff's

micro-level cognitive perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact within their roles. These heightened psychological resources subsequently act as the internal motivational driver that triggers independent voice behavior. Crucially, the structural integration of sustainable performance systems does not merely serve as an administrative compliance tool, but acts as a powerful strategic catalyst that fundamentally reshapes the employee's psychological state, ultimately driving continuous organizational learning and service innovation across hospitality operations.

6.1. Recommendations

Hospitality managers and HR practitioners should integrate multidimensional sustainability principles into formal performance evaluation architectures, moving beyond short-term financial and occupancy metrics toward procedural fairness and long-term developmental feedback. Hotel organizations need to design leadership development programs that train department heads to balance ethical stewardship with high employee autonomy. To build a culture of active service recovery and collaborative innovation, leaders must encourage independence of thought and establish trusted communication channels that eliminate frontline staff's fear of career reprisals. Ultimately, utilizing these results supports the development of an ethical, socially responsible, and eco-friendly hospitality ecosystem.

6.2. Limitations and Further Study

This study possesses several inherent limitations that present valuable directions for future inquiry. First, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to definitively infer long-term causality; future research should employ longitudinal designs to monitor behavioral evolution over time. Second, the empirical scope was geographically confined to a single urban center, meaning future studies should expand the sampling frame to include diverse resort destinations and various hotel classifications to enhance generalizability. Finally, future agendas should integrate supplementary contextual variables such as organizational culture, governance structures, and the influence of external stakeholders like guests and eco-tourism partners to construct a holistic view of sustainable hospitality management.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS (CRediT)

Yayan Sugiarto: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft.

Raden Intan Medya Ratna Pury: Data curation, Investigation, Project administration, Writing – review & editing.

Dewi Fitriani: Validation, Supervision, Resources, Writing – review & editing.

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication and declare that this work has not been published elsewhere.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Pembayaran an Yayan

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No Referensi

ESB630607375

Metode Transfer

Sekarang

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Transfer Bank Lain

Tipe Transaksi

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Tujuan Transaksi

Lainnya

Bank Tujuan

BANK BCA

Nominal

Rp 2.500.000

Biaya Admin

Rp 2.500

Total

Rp 2.502.500