



## Trust in Leadership and Psychological Withdrawal Behavior in Hotel Enterprises: The Mediating Role of Psychological Resilience

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### ABSTRACT

In high-pressure, customer-focused environments like five-star hotels, employees are often exposed to stressors such as heavy workloads, challenging customers, and frequent organizational changes, which can lead to psychological withdrawal behaviors. This study aims to examine the impact of trust in leadership on employees' psychological withdrawal behavior in five-star hotel enterprises in Egypt, with a particular focus on the mediating role of psychological resilience. Data were collected from 390 full-time employees working in five-star hotels in the Greater Cairo region and analyzed using WarpPLS 7.0 software with PLS-SEM. The results revealed that trust in leadership significantly reduces psychological withdrawal behavior, while also enhancing psychological resilience. Additionally, psychological resilience was found to decrease withdrawal behaviors and mediate the relationship between trust in leadership and psychological withdrawal behavior. The findings offer valuable insights for hotel management, suggesting that fostering trust in leadership and enhancing psychological resilience can help create a more engaged and committed workforce, better equipped to cope with the stressors of the hospitality industry.

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### KEYWORDS

Trust in leadership, psychological withdrawal behavior, psychological resilience, five-star hotels.

## الثقة في القيادة وسلوك الانسحاب النفسي في المؤسسات الفندقية: الدور الوسيط للمرونة النفسية

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### الملخص

في البيئات عالية الضغوط التي تركز على العملاء مثل الفنادق ذات الخمس نجوم، غالبًا ما يتعرض الموظفون لضغوط مثل أعباء العمل الثقيلة ومتطلبات العملاء المتزايدة والتغييرات التنظيمية المتكررة، والتي يمكن أن تؤدي إلى سلوكيات الانسحاب النفسي. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة تأثير الثقة في القيادة على سلوك الانسحاب النفسي للموظفين في مؤسسات الفنادق ذات الخمس نجوم في مصر، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على الدور الوسيط للمرونة النفسية. تم جمع البيانات من 390 موظفًا بدوام كامل يعملون في فنادق خمس نجوم في منطقة القاهرة الكبرى، وتم تحليلها باستخدام برنامج WarpPLS 7.0 مع-PLS SEM. كشفت النتائج أن الثقة في القيادة تقلل بشكل كبير من سلوك الانسحاب النفسي، بينما تعمل أيضًا على تعزيز المرونة النفسية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، وجد أن المرونة النفسية تقلل من سلوكيات الانسحاب وتتوسط العلاقة بين الثقة في القيادة وسلوك الانسحاب النفسي. تقدم النتائج رؤى قيمة لإدارة الفنادق، مما يشير إلى أن تعزيز الثقة في القيادة وتعزيز المرونة النفسية يمكن أن يساعد في خلق قوة عاملة أكثر انخراطًا والتزامًا، ومجهزة بشكل أفضل للتعامل مع ضغوطات صناعة الضيافة.

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### الكلمات الدالة

الثقة في القيادة، سلوك الانسحاب النفسي، المرونة النفسية، الفنادق ذات الخمس نجوم.

## Introduction

Work withdrawal behavior, characterized by employees distancing themselves from their work and reducing their engagement with the organization, is a prevalent issue in the modern workplace (Zhu et al., 2024). This behavior often begins with minor actions, such as procrastination, and can escalate into more severe forms like tardiness, absenteeism, and eventually, complete disengagement or resignation. The detrimental effects of such behaviors are far-reaching, impacting both employees and organizations. Therefore, understanding the underlying causes of work withdrawal is critical to mitigating its negative consequences (Zhu et al., 2024).

In the hotel industry, high employee turnover intention can have significant tangible and intangible repercussions. Elevated turnover rates directly harm service quality and customer satisfaction (Holtom and Burch, 2015; Kashif et al., 2017), which in turn affects the brand's reputation and customer loyalty (Dusek et al., 2014). While many hotel managers attempt to address turnover through improvements in compensation, benefits, and working conditions, research indicates that this approach often overlooks the importance of fulfilling employees' internal social needs (Yan et al., 2021). This gap presents an opportunity to explore how psychological factors, such as trust in leadership and psychological resilience, can play a crucial role in alleviating turnover intentions.

In the competitive and service-oriented hospitality industry, leadership is a critical determinant of employee attitudes and behaviors (Lin et al., 2021; Khairy & Mahmoud, 2022; Khairy et al., 2023a, 2023b; Alghamdi et al., 2024; Jasim et al., 2024; Salama et al., 2024). Trust in leadership, as a key component of effective leadership, has gained considerable attention for its influence on employee motivation, performance, and organizational outcomes (Legood et al., 2021; Khairy et al., 2024). In the context of five-star hotel enterprises, fostering trust between leaders and employees is especially important, as it directly impacts employee well-being, commitment, and engagement (Baquero, 2023; Khairy et al., 2023c). However, despite its acknowledged significance, the impact of trust in leadership on behaviors such as psychological withdrawal remains insufficiently explored in the hospitality sector.

Psychological withdrawal—mental and emotional disengagement from work—is a serious concern, impacting both service quality and productivity in hotels (Shatnawi et al., 2024; Yasami et al., 2024). In the demanding and high-pressure environment of hospitality, it is essential to identify the factors that contribute to or mitigate such behaviors (Choi, 2024; Fayyad et al., 2024). One such factor is psychological resilience—the ability to adapt positively to stress and adversity (Sisto et al., 2019; Vella and Pai, 2019). Employees with high psychological resilience are better able to cope with work-related stress and remain engaged with the organization, reducing the likelihood of psychological withdrawal (Masten, 2012).

To better understand the relationship between trust in leadership, psychological withdrawal, and psychological resilience, this study draws upon Social Exchange Theory (SET). SET posits that organizational relationships are based on reciprocal exchanges, where employees assess the costs and benefits of their interactions with leaders (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Trust in leadership is a key resource in these exchanges, influencing employees' emotional and cognitive

responses. When trust is high, employees feel valued and supported, which reduces the likelihood of psychological withdrawal. Furthermore, SET suggests that strong leader support can enhance employees' psychological resilience, buffering the negative effects of workplace stress.

This research aims to examine how trust in leadership influences psychological withdrawal behavior in the context of five-star hotel enterprises in Egypt, with a specific focus on the mediating role of psychological resilience. By integrating Social Exchange Theory, this study offers a novel framework for understanding the interplay between leadership, employee behavior, and resilience. The insights gained could provide valuable guidance for hotel management to improve employee well-being, reduce disengagement, and promote organizational success. In light of recent challenges facing the hospitality sector—such as high employee turnover and increased stress due to post-pandemic recovery—this research is particularly timely and necessary to understand the key factors that can help mitigate psychological withdrawal behaviors.

## **Literature review and hypotheses development**

### **Underpinning theory**

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is a psychological and sociological framework that explains how individuals form and maintain relationships based on the perceived costs and benefits of their interactions (Homans, 1958; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). At its core, SET is grounded in the principle of reciprocity—people engage in social exchanges because they expect to receive rewards or avoid costs. These rewards can be both tangible (e.g., money, recognition) and intangible (e.g., emotional support, trust), while costs may include factors like time, effort, or emotional strain (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cook et al., 2013).

In organizational settings, SET suggests that relationships between employees and leaders are built on reciprocal exchanges. When leaders offer support, trust, and resources, employees are more likely to feel valued and motivated to reciprocate with increased commitment, performance, and engagement. However, when these exchanges are perceived as imbalanced—such as in the absence of trust or instances of unfair treatment—employees may respond with dissatisfaction, disengagement, or psychological withdrawal. SET emphasizes that the quality of these relationships is continuously assessed by individuals, based on the ongoing exchange of benefits and costs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano et al., 2017).

This theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how trust, as well as other interpersonal dynamics, shape employee behavior in organizations, influencing outcomes such as engagement or withdrawal. In this context, Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that organizational relationships are built on reciprocal exchanges, where trust in leadership plays a key role in shaping employee behavior and attitudes.

### **Conceptual framework and Hypotheses development**

Effective corporate leadership is essential for achieving financial success, but beyond financial outcomes, the true driver of organizational growth and employee commitment is trust in leadership (Nasomboon, 2014; Khairy et al., 2023c). When employees trust their leaders, they are motivated not only to meet performance targets but also to invest deeply in the organization's broader vision (Burke et al., 2007; Paais

and Pattiruhu, 2020). Trust inspires employees to go beyond personal or financial gain, dedicating themselves to causes they believe in—whether improving lives, benefiting their communities, or contributing to both the organization's and their long-term success (Bruhn, 2012). This level of commitment is fundamentally rooted in trust in leadership (Martin, 1999; González-Cánovas et al., 2024).

Trust in leadership is defined as an employee's willingness to be vulnerable to the leader's actions, decisions, and behaviors, often beyond their control. This trust is shaped by the leader's character—dependability, integrity, and competence—which directly influence how much trust employees place in them (Tan & Tan, 2000). In hierarchical relationships, employees' vulnerability ties their trust to their perception of the leader's character. Leaders who cultivate both behavioral and emotional trust by demonstrating integrity and competence strengthen this bond (Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Sharkie, 2009).

A trusted leader provides clear direction, inspires through genuine care, and cultivates a team grounded in mutual respect (Burke et al., 2007; Soderberg and Romney, 2022). By focusing on effectiveness over mere efficiency, trusted leaders guide their teams toward a shared goal, rather than strictly adhering to systems and processes (Covey, 1991). These leaders aim to transform their followers, aligning them with a vision that naturally drives success and fosters desired results. When employees trust their leaders' vision, they become more engaged and committed to the collective purpose, further driving organizational success (Berson et al., 2015; Abdul-Azeez et al., 2024). Moreover, the level of trust employees have in their leaders is positively correlated with their organizational commitment (Yuan et al., 2022). Employees who trust their leaders are more likely to engage in riskier behaviors, such as sharing sensitive information, because they believe their leaders will act with integrity (Mayer, 1995; Boudrias et al., 2021). On the contrary, when trust is lacking, employees may experience mental distractions, reducing their focus and hindering performance (Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Sharkie, 2009). Factors such as perceived organizational support, procedural justice, and distributive justice further influence employees' perceptions of leadership, ultimately shaping their trust levels (Connell et al., 2003; Sharkie, 2009).

In the context of team dynamics, trust is critical for fostering positive communication and relationships between leaders and subordinates (Burke et al., 2007; Imam and Zaheer, 2021). When leaders demonstrate fairness and trust, it strengthens employees' trust, making them more willing to go above and beyond their usual duties. This increased commitment enhances performance and engagement (Burke et al., 2007). Conversely, if employees perceive their leaders as acting against their interests, trust erodes, diminishing loyalty and commitment to the organization. Leaders who cultivate a trusting environment create security and loyalty among employees, reinforcing their commitment to the organization's goals (Davis et al., 2000; Burke et al., 2007). Trust, therefore, becomes the cornerstone of organizational commitment, resilience, and overall employee engagement (Sharkie, 2009; Lambert et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2023).

Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers a valuable framework for understanding how trust in leadership impacts employees' psychological withdrawal behavior. SET posits that workplace relationships are based on reciprocal exchanges, where individuals

assess the costs and benefits of their interactions, including with their leaders (Cropanzano et al., 2017). When employees trust their leaders, they are more likely to perceive a positive and supportive work environment, which enhances their sense of security, and job satisfaction, and promotes higher commitment and engagement in work tasks (Burke, 2007; Håvold et al., 2021). Conversely, when trust is low, employees may feel unsupported or undervalued, leading to psychological withdrawal behaviors such as disengagement and reduced emotional investment in work. Thus, SET suggests that trust acts as a form of social capital that strengthens the relationship between leaders and employees, encouraging continued mental and emotional involvement in their work (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012; Schoenherr et al., 2015). When trust erodes, employees may withdraw psychologically to protect their well-being, signaling a breakdown in this reciprocal relationship.

SET also helps explain how trust in leadership affects employees' psychological resilience. According to SET, employees engage in a reciprocal exchange with their leaders (Zou et al., 2015), with trust serving as the foundation of this relationship. When employees trust their leaders, they feel valued and secure within the organization (Hurley, 2011; Bruhn, 2012), which enhances their resilience. In times of adversity or stress, employees who trust their leaders are more likely to feel supported, reducing the impact of challenges and helping them recover more quickly from setbacks (Liu et al., 2010; Khairy et al., 2023c). Conversely, a lack of trust creates uncertainty and vulnerability, undermining employees' ability to cope with difficulties (Galford and Drapeau, 2003; Bligh, 2017). Without trust, employees may feel isolated and less confident in their ability to manage stress, hindering their resilience. Ultimately, SET suggests that trust in leadership serves as a psychological resource (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Chen and Sriphon, 2022), enhancing employees' ability to adapt to and recover from challenges while reinforcing the mutual support between leaders and employees. Given these dynamics, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H.1: Trust in leadership decreases employees' psychological withdrawal behavior.*

*H.2: Trust in leadership increases employees' psychological resilience.*

Furthermore, SET offers a valuable perspective for understanding the mediating role of psychological resilience in the relationship between trust in leadership and employees' psychological withdrawal behavior. According to SET, workplace relationships are built on reciprocal exchanges, where trust plays a central role in shaping how employees perceive their work environment (Yu et al., 2018). When employees trust their leaders, they tend to feel supported and treated fairly, which promotes positive emotional and psychological outcomes (Burke, 2007; Khairy et al., 2023c). This trust cultivates a sense of security and confidence that the organization will assist them during challenging times. As a result, employees develop greater psychological resilience, which enhances their ability to cope with stress, setbacks, and challenges in their roles (Bardoel et al., 2014). Resilient employees are more likely to maintain their emotional and cognitive engagement (Alshiha et al., 2024), reducing the likelihood of psychological withdrawal behaviors.

Conversely, when trust in leadership is low, employees may feel unsupported, vulnerable, and uncertain about their role in the organization. This lack of trust

diminishes their psychological resilience, making it more difficult for them to manage workplace adversity (Fletcher and Sarkar, 2013). In response, employees may engage in psychological withdrawal behaviors as a form of emotional self-protection, withdrawing mentally and emotionally from their work. In this context, psychological resilience acts as a mediating factor between trust in leadership and psychological withdrawal behavior. Trust in leadership fosters resilience, which in turn helps employees stay mentally and emotionally engaged, reducing the likelihood of withdrawal behaviors. Thus, SET suggests that the quality of the relationship between leaders and employees (Chen and Sriphon, 2022), shaped by trust, influences not only immediate behaviors but also how employees psychologically buffer the stresses of their work environment. Consequently, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H.3: Psychological resilience decreases employees' psychological withdrawal behavior*

*H.4: Psychological resilience mediates the relationship between trust in leadership and employees' psychological withdrawal behavior.*

The conceptual model of the study along with hypotheses are presented in Figure (1) below.

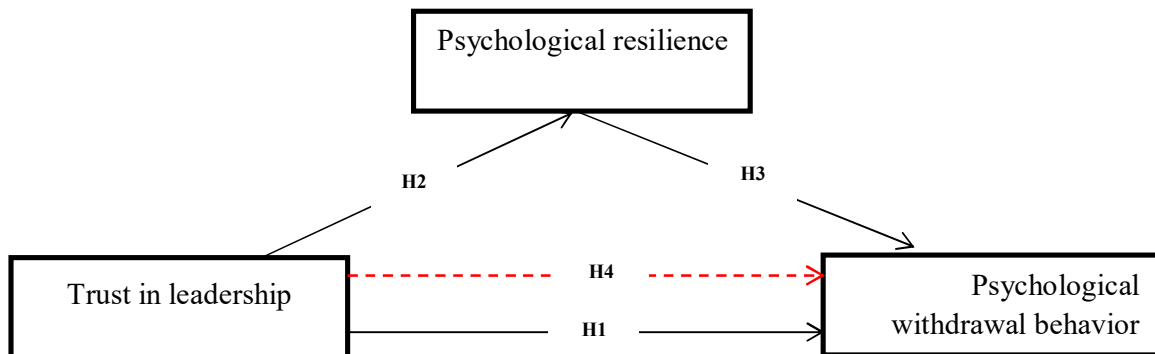


Figure 1. The conceptual model of the study

## Methodology

### Research design and measures

This study adopted a quantitative, survey-based methodology to examine and test a proposed four-variable model, encompassing "trust in leadership," "psychological withdrawal behavior," and "psychological resilience." The survey included 29 items to assess employees' perceptions of these three core variables, along with three demographic questions regarding gender, age, and education level. The survey was initially developed in English, and to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance, a reverse translation method was used to obtain the well-matched Arabic version of the questionnaire. This structured approach ensured that key constructs were accurately captured, providing insights into the relationship between leadership trust, resilience, and withdrawal behaviors in the workplace.

To measure trust in leadership, the study utilized a 7-item scale adapted from Robinson (1996), including statements such as, "I believe my leader has high integrity" and "In general, I believe my leader's motives and intentions are good". In addition, psychological resilience was assessed using a 14-item scale adapted from Block & Kremen (1996) and Yang et al. (2022). Sample items include, "I will recover quickly

after being frightened” and “I enjoy dealing with new and unusual situations”. Lastly, psychological withdrawal behavior was measured using an 8-item scale adapted from Lehman and Simpson (1992), with items such as, “I have thoughts of missing work” and “I’m having thoughts about leaving my current job”.

### **Sampling and Data Collection**

To investigate the proposed model, data were collected from employees working in five-star hotels in Egypt between October and November 2024. The high-pressure, customer-centric environments of these hotels, coupled with the pivotal role leadership plays in shaping employee engagement, make them an ideal context for studying the dynamics of trust in leadership, psychological resilience, and psychological withdrawal behavior. Additionally, the significant need for resilience in managing job-related stress in these settings further underscores their relevance for exploring the interaction between these factors and providing actionable insights to improve both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

To ensure that respondents could accurately assess the study's variables, participants were required to have at least one year of work experience. The study specifically focused on employees in the Greater Cairo region, where 30 five-star hotels were listed, according to the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2022). While the exact number of employees working in these hotels is not officially recorded, Cochran's (1963) sampling equation was applied to estimate a representative sample. This method suggested that a sample size of 385 responses would be sufficient. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed in premises across 22 five-star hotels that voluntarily agreed to participate. Ultimately, 390 valid responses were returned, yielding a response rate of 65%. These 390 valid responses were deemed adequate for analysis.

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis for this study was carried out using WarpPLS 7.0 statistical software, employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a widely recognized method for theory validation, particularly in management research within hospitality and tourism (Hair et al., 2020). PLS-SEM was used to analyze both the measurement and structural models of the study, as well as to test the research hypotheses. To examine non-response bias, t-tests were conducted, revealing no significant differences between early and late responses ( $p > 0.05$ ), suggesting that non-response bias was not a concern. Additionally, common method variance was assessed using Harman's single-factor test and principal component analysis. The results showed that no single factor accounted for more than 50% of the total variance, indicating that common method bias was not substantial in this study.

## **Results**

### **Participant's profile**

Table (1) presents the demographic profile of the study's participants. The data shows that a majority of the respondents were male (77.44%,  $n = 302$ ), with females accounting for 22.56% ( $n = 88$ ). In terms of age, the largest group of participants were aged between 30 and 39 years (30.26%,  $n = 118$ ), followed by those aged 40-49 years (26.15%,  $n = 102$ ). The group of employees aged 18-29 years comprised 25.13% ( $n =$



98), while 18.46% (n = 72) were over the age of 50. Regarding educational background, most participants held a bachelor's degree (68.72%, n = 268), followed by high school or institute education (24.87%, n = 97), and a smaller proportion had a Master's or PhD degree (6.41%, n = 25).

Table 1. Participant's profile (N=390).

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	302	77.44
	Female	88	22.56
Age	18: < 30 years	98	25.13
	30 : < 40 years	118	30.26
	40: 50 years	102	26.15
	>50	72	18.46
Education	High schools/institute	97	24.87
	Bachelor	268	68.72
	Master/PhD	25	6.41

### Measurement model

Table (2) presents the factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for the study's constructs. For Trust in Leadership (TIL), the factor loadings of the seven items range from 0.632 to 0.938, all of which are statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). The construct demonstrates strong internal consistency with  $CR = 0.898$  and  $CA = 0.865$ , both exceeding the acceptable thresholds. The AVE value of 0.561 indicates that more than half of the variance in the items is explained by the latent variable, while the VIF value of 1.257 suggests no issues with multicollinearity. For psychological withdrawal behavior (PWB), the factor loadings for the eight items range from 0.627 to 0.934, all statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). The CR value of 0.821 and CA of 0.741 suggest acceptable reliability for the construct, with an AVE of 0.552, showing that the construct explains over half of the variance in the items. The VIF value of 1.164 further confirms the absence of multicollinearity. Finally, for psychological resilience (PR), the 14 items have factor loadings ranging from 0.600 to 0.921, all significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). This construct exhibits excellent internal consistency, with  $CR = 0.962$  and  $CA = 0.956$ , both well above the recommended thresholds. The AVE of 0.646 indicates that a substantial proportion of the variance is explained by the latent variable, and the VIF value of 1.096 suggests no multicollinearity issues. In summary, the table demonstrates that all constructs show strong reliability and validity, with no significant multicollinearity concerns, thus supporting the robustness of the study's measurement model.

Table 2. Factor loadings, CA, CR, AVE, and VIF

	Item loading	CR	CA	AVE	VIF
Trust in Leadership (TIL)	-	0.898	0.865	0.561	1.257
Item.1	0.720**				
Item.2	0.680**				
Item.3	0.758**				
Item.4	0.938**				

Item.5	0.821**				
Item.6	0.632**				
Item.7	0.647**				
Psychological Withdrawal Behavior (PWB)	-	0.821	0.741	0.552	1.164
Item.1	0.837**				
Item.2	0.683**				
Item.3	0.934**				
Item.4	0.776**				
Item.5	0.695**				
Item.6	0.627**				
Item.7	0.658**				
Item.8	0.685**				
Psychological Resilience (PR)	-	0.962	0.956	0.646	1.096
Item.1	0.775**				
Item.2	0.680**				
Item.3	0.724**				
Item.4	0.779**				
Item.5	0.738**				
Item.6	0.802**				
Item.7	0.600**				
Item.8	0.886**				
Item.9	0.921**				
Item.10	0.892**				
Item.11	0.827**				
Item.12	0.878**				
Item.13	0.801**				
Item.14	0.882**				
** P-value for item loading					

Table 3 presents the discriminant validity results for the study's key constructs. Discriminant validity is assessed by comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct with the correlations between the constructs. The diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE for each construct, showing that the square roots for TIL (0.749), PR (0.804), and PWB (0.743) are all higher than their correlations with other constructs, indicating good discriminant validity. Specifically, the correlation between TIL and PR is 0.295, between TIL and PWB is -0.375, and between PR and PWB is -0.120. These correlations are all lower than the corresponding diagonal values, further supporting the discriminant validity of the constructs. In summary, the results from this table demonstrate that each construct is distinct from the others, as the square roots of the AVE are greater than the inter-construct correlations, confirming the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Table 3. Discriminant validity results

	TIL	PR	PWB
Trust in Leadership (TIL)	0.749	0.295	-0.375
Psychological Resilience (PR)	0.295	0.804	-0.120
Psychological Withdrawal Behavior (PWB)	-0.375	-0.120	0.743

Table 4 presents the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) results and their corresponding p-values for the study's constructs. HTMT is used to assess discriminant validity, where a value less than 0.85 indicates strong discriminant validity and a value below 0.90 is acceptable. The HTMT ratios between the constructs show values of 0.430 between TIL and PR, 0.534 between TIL and PWB, and 0.453 between PR and PWB. All of these values are below the 0.85 threshold, suggesting that the constructs are distinct from each other and demonstrating good discriminant validity. Additionally, the p-values for the HTMT ratios, which assess whether the correlations between constructs are significantly different from 1 (indicating non-discriminant validity), are all less than 0.05. Specifically, the p-values are <0.001 for TIL and PR, 0.001 for TIL and PWB, and <0.001 for PR and PWB, which further support the discriminant validity of the constructs, as these values indicate significant differences between the constructs. In conclusion, both the HTMT ratios and the p-values confirm that the study's constructs possess strong discriminant validity, supporting the robustness of the measurement model.

Table 4. HTMT for validity

<b>HTMT ratios (good if &lt; 0.90, best if &lt; 0.85)</b>	<b>TIL</b>	<b>PR</b>	<b>PWB</b>
Trust in Leadership (TIL)			
Psychological Resilience (PR)	0.430		
Psychological Withdrawal Behavior (PWB)	0.534	0.453	
P values (one-tailed) for HTMT ratios (good if < 0.05)	TIL	PR	PWB
Trust in Leadership (TIL)			
Psychological Resilience (PR)	<0.001		
Psychological Withdrawal Behavior (PWB)	0.001	<0.001	

Furthermore, the study effectively fulfilled all ten criteria of Kock's (2021) model fit and quality index, as detailed in Appendix A. This appendix provides a comprehensive overview of the various model fit indices utilized to assess the quality of the structural model, including the corresponding thresholds for each index to determine their acceptability. Overall, the indices indicate that the model is of high quality, with no issues related to multicollinearity, statistical paradoxes, or overfitting. The fit indices confirm that the model is robust and reliable for testing the hypothesized relationships.

### **The structural model and hypotheses testing**

Figure 2 illustrates that the perception of trust in leadership (TIL) exhibits a negative correlation with psychological withdrawal behavior (PWB) ( $\beta = -0.50$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), while it shows a positive correlation with employees' psychological resilience (PR) ( $\beta = 0.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that as TIL increases, PR also rises and PWB decreases, thereby supporting hypotheses H1 and H2. Additionally, PR is negatively correlated with PWB ( $\beta = -0.30$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ), suggesting that higher levels of PR reduce the likelihood of psychological withdrawal, further confirming the support for hypothesis H3.

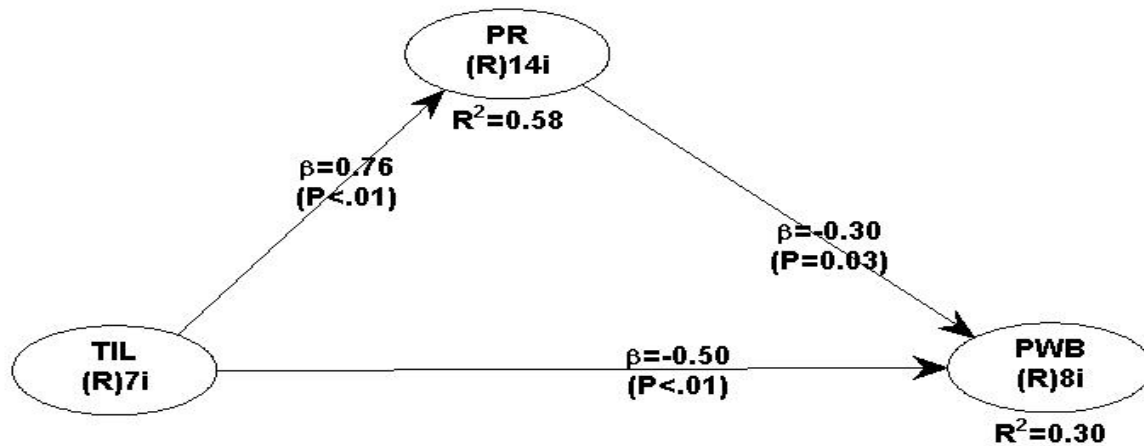


Figure 2: Final model of the study

### Mediation analysis

Hypothesis 4 was tested to examine whether psychological resilience (PR) mediates the relationship between trust in leadership (TIL) and psychological withdrawal behavior (PWB) (see Table 5). The analysis revealed a significant indirect effect of TIL on PWB through PR. The bootstrapped confidence interval for the indirect effect ranged from -0.277 to -0.179, and since this interval does not include zero, it confirms the significance of the mediation.

Table 5. Mediation analysis

Hypothesis 4	Path a TIL → PR	Path b PR → PWB	Indirect Effect	SE	t-value	Bootstrapped Confidence Interval		Decision
						95% LL	95% UL	
TIL → PR → PWB	0.760	-0.300	-0.228	0.025	-9.120	-0.277	-0.179	Mediation

### Discussion

This study explores the effect of trust in leadership on psychological withdrawal behavior among employees in five-star hotel enterprises in Egypt, with a particular focus on the mediating role of psychological resilience.

The findings of this study reveal that trust in leadership is negatively correlated with psychological withdrawal behavior, meaning that as trust in leadership increases, employees are less likely to engage in withdrawal behaviors. Conversely, trust in leadership is positively correlated with employees' psychological resilience, suggesting that higher levels of trust lead to greater resilience. These results are consistent with the findings of Khairy et al. (2023c), Wang et al. (2023), and Alshiha et al. (2024), who similarly identified a significant role of leadership in shaping psychological resilience and withdrawal behaviors. Trust in leadership plays a crucial role in reducing employees' psychological withdrawal behavior. When employees trust their leaders, they experience reduced anxiety and stress, which are key contributors to withdrawal behavior, as they feel more secure and supported.

Additionally, trust in leadership is strongly linked to increased job satisfaction (Akhtar and Nazarudin, 2020). Employees who trust their leaders are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, which enhances their engagement and reduces the likelihood of withdrawal. Furthermore, trust fosters open and honest communication, improving collaboration, teamwork, and overall job satisfaction (Callaway, 2007). Employees who trust their leaders also tend to be more motivated and engaged in their work, feeling valued, respected, and supported, which strengthens their commitment to the organization (Burke, 2007). Finally, trust in leadership can mitigate perceptions of organizational politics, as employees are less likely to believe that unfair or unethical practices are present within the organization (Al-Romeedy and Khairy, 2024).

This study strongly indicates that trust in leadership plays a vital role in enhancing employee psychological resilience. When employees trust their leaders, they feel more secure and supported, which helps reduce stress and anxiety (Burke, 2007; Kelloway et al., 2012; Khairy et al., 2024)—key factors contributing to resilience. Trust in leadership also provides employees with a sense of control over their work environment, empowering them to navigate challenges and overcome obstacles (Sharkie, 2009), which is essential for building resilience. Additionally, trust fosters increased self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2010), as employees who trust their leaders are more likely to believe in their abilities to succeed. This belief in themselves is a crucial element of psychological resilience. Furthermore, a trusting leadership environment encourages open communication (Yue et al., 2019), allowing employees to seek help and support when needed, which enhances their coping mechanisms. Finally, trust in leadership contributes to a positive organizational climate (Khan et al., 2021), fostering a sense of belonging, support, and meaning—factors that are essential in strengthening resilience and overall employee well-being.

The findings also indicate that employees' psychological resilience is negatively correlated with psychological withdrawal behavior, meaning that higher resilience levels are associated with a lower likelihood of withdrawal behaviors. Furthermore, psychological resilience was found to mediate the relationship between trust in leadership and psychological withdrawal behavior, suggesting that trust in leadership indirectly influences withdrawal behaviors through its impact on resilience. These results align with the findings of Alshiha et al. (2024), who similarly highlighted the significant role of employee resilience in shaping work-related attitudes and behaviors.

This study consistently underscores the critical role of psychological resilience in mitigating employees' psychological withdrawal behaviors. Resilient individuals are better equipped to manage workplace stressors, such as heavy workloads, interpersonal conflicts, and organizational changes, which makes them less likely to disengage or withdraw from their work (Lian & Tam, 2014). Resilient employees also tend to maintain positive emotions like optimism and hope, even in challenging situations (Collins, 2007), which act as buffers against stress and reduce the likelihood of withdrawal. Moreover, resilience enables individuals to find deeper meaning and purpose in their work (Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019), fostering intrinsic motivation and further reducing withdrawal tendencies. These individuals often build stronger relationships with colleagues and supervisors, creating a network of social support that reinforces their sense of belonging, which further combats the inclination to

disengage. Additionally, resilient employees utilize proactive coping strategies, such as seeking support, problem-solving, and skill development (Butler et al., 2021), to manage stress effectively and maintain their engagement at work.

Furthermore, psychological resilience plays a mediating role in the relationship between trust in leadership and employees' psychological withdrawal behavior. When employees trust their leaders, they feel secure, supported, and aligned with the organization's values (Jerab and Mabrouk, 2023), which fosters psychological resilience. This trust helps alleviate stress and anxiety, enabling employees to focus more on their work and develop coping mechanisms for adversity. Trust in leadership also boosts employees' self-efficacy, enhancing their confidence in handling challenges. As a result, resilient employees are better prepared to deal with workplace stressors, reducing the likelihood of engaging in withdrawal behaviors (Alshiha et al., 2024). Their ability to maintain optimism and find meaning in their work serves as intrinsic motivation that helps counteract the desire to withdraw. In essence, trust in leadership strengthens psychological resilience, which in turn equips employees to navigate stress effectively, reduce disengagement, and remain committed to their work.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study offers several important theoretical contributions, particularly concerning Social Exchange Theory (SET) and its application to understanding leadership and employee behavior in the hospitality industry, specifically within the context of five-star hotel enterprises in Egypt.

First, this research extends the application of SET by exploring its relevance in explaining psychological withdrawal behavior in hospitality settings. Although SET has been widely used to analyze organizational relationships and employee behavior, its use in understanding employee disengagement within service-oriented industries, such as hospitality, remains underexplored. By applying SET to psychological withdrawal behavior, this study highlights the critical role trust in leadership plays in shaping the social exchange between employees and their leaders. This extension of SET demonstrates how leadership trust can mitigate negative outcomes such as emotional disengagement, providing a more nuanced understanding of how organizational dynamics influence employee behaviors in high-pressure industries.

The second key theoretical implication is the central role of trust in leadership as a core component of the social exchange process. SET suggests that when employees trust their leaders, they feel the exchange is fair and reciprocal, which can lead to higher levels of commitment and a lower likelihood of withdrawal behaviors. This research contributes to the SET framework by emphasizing that trust in leadership is not just an abstract concept but a powerful driver that actively shapes employees' emotional and cognitive responses to their work environment. In particular, when trust is high, employees are less likely to psychologically withdraw, as they feel their contributions are valued and supported. This insight strengthens the theoretical understanding of trust in leadership, underscoring its importance for employee engagement and organizational success.

Another significant contribution of this study is the identification of psychological resilience as a mediating factor in the relationship between trust in leadership and

psychological withdrawal behavior. This research integrates the concept of resilience into SET, providing a deeper understanding of how individuals cope with organizational challenges. By highlighting resilience as a buffer between leadership trust and psychological withdrawal, the study expands the scope of SET. It suggests that while trust in leadership is critical, employees with higher psychological resilience are better able to handle workplace stressors, even when trust in leadership may be challenged. This adds a layer of complexity to SET, linking individual psychological characteristics to the broader social exchange process and illustrating how employees can sustain engagement despite unfavorable conditions.

Additionally, this study clarifies the relationship between trust in leadership and employee performance, particularly in terms of psychological withdrawal behavior. While previous research has often linked trust to improved employee performance, this study deepens our understanding by showing that low trust may not directly lead to poor performance but instead may result in psychological withdrawal. This type of disengagement, while not immediately visible through absenteeism or low productivity, can have long-term negative consequences for organizational effectiveness. By highlighting psychological withdrawal as a key outcome of low trust, this study adds a significant dimension to SET, demonstrating that a lack of trust can subtly undermine organizational success over time.

Finally, this research contributes to the cross-cultural application of SET, particularly in the context of Egyptian hotel enterprises. Although SET has been predominantly applied in Western organizational contexts, this study provides insights into how trust and psychological resilience function within a non-Western setting. It suggests that while the core principles of SET—such as trust and reciprocal exchange—are universally applicable, local cultural dynamics, such as hierarchical structures and collectivist values, influence how trust in leadership is built and maintained. This cross-cultural perspective enriches SET by emphasizing the need to account for cultural differences when applying the theory to diverse organizational environments.

### **Practical implications**

This study highlights the critical role of trust in leadership as a driver of employee behavior. Hotel managers and leaders should prioritize building and maintaining trust within their teams to foster a more engaged and motivated workforce. Since trust significantly impacts employees' psychological resilience, leaders in the hospitality industry can enhance their effectiveness by demonstrating integrity, transparency, and care for their employees' well-being. By fostering trust, leaders create an environment where employees feel supported and secure, which enhances their ability to cope with work-related stress and challenges. As a result, employees are more likely to remain committed, emotionally engaged, and focused on providing excellent customer service, which is crucial in the highly competitive five-star hotel industry.

In addition, the study underscores the importance of psychological resilience as a mediator between trust in leadership and psychological withdrawal behavior. Hotel managers should recognize that resilience plays a vital role in helping employees manage job-related stress and adversity. By cultivating resilience, employees are better equipped to handle the pressures of high-demand work environments, such as those found in luxury hotels. Training programs focused on resilience-building

techniques, such as stress management, emotional intelligence, and coping strategies, can be incorporated into staff development initiatives. These programs can empower employees to maintain their emotional and cognitive engagement, reducing the likelihood of psychological withdrawal behaviors like disengagement or burnout.

Moreover, the findings suggest that hotel leaders should focus on fostering a supportive and communicative workplace. When employees trust their leaders, they are more likely to experience a sense of emotional security, which buffers them against the negative effects of workplace stress. In turn, leaders should regularly engage in open communication, offer feedback, and provide emotional and professional support, especially during times of difficulty or high stress. This approach not only enhances employees' resilience but also strengthens the relationship between leadership and staff, contributing to lower levels of psychological withdrawal behavior and fostering a more committed workforce.

Finally, the study's results have significant implications for human resource management and employee retention strategies in the hospitality industry. Given that trust in leadership influences psychological resilience and reduces withdrawal behaviors, hotel managers can implement policies and practices that promote a culture of trust and well-being. Regular employee recognition, fair reward systems, and the promotion of a healthy work-life balance can reinforce trust and resilience. By creating a work environment where employees feel valued, trusted, and resilient, hotel enterprises in Egypt can reduce turnover rates, increase employee satisfaction, and ultimately improve their service quality and reputation in a highly competitive market.

### **Limitations and Further Research Avenues**

While the study offers valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that could influence the interpretation of the results and suggest avenues for further research.

One limitation is the cross-sectional design of the study, which captures data at a single point in time. This approach does not allow for the establishment of causal relationships between trust in leadership, psychological resilience, and psychological withdrawal behavior. Future studies could adopt a longitudinal research design to track these variables over time, providing a deeper understanding of the causal mechanisms at play and how changes in trust or resilience impact employee behavior in the long run. A longitudinal approach would also help explore how the relationship between these factors evolves and how trust in leadership may influence withdrawal behaviors over time.

Another limitation is the focus on five-star hotel enterprises in Egypt. While this context provides valuable insights into the hospitality industry, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other cultural or organizational contexts. The Egyptian hotel industry, particularly in the luxury sector, may have unique characteristics, such as specific cultural expectations, organizational hierarchies, and leadership styles, that differ from those in other countries or industries. Future research could expand the scope to include other hospitality sectors or compare findings across different countries and regions to enhance the external validity of the results. Comparative studies across diverse settings could provide a more comprehensive understanding of



how trust in leadership and psychological resilience influence employee behavior in different cultural and organizational contexts.

Additionally, the study primarily relied on self-report data, which is susceptible to social desirability bias and common method variance. Employees may have been inclined to provide responses that reflect favorable perceptions of their leaders or the organization, which could affect the accuracy of the findings. To address this limitation, future research could incorporate multiple data sources, such as leader assessments, peer reviews, or objective measures of employee performance and engagement. Triangulating data from different sources would help mitigate the risks associated with self-reporting and provide a more robust understanding of the relationships between trust, resilience, and withdrawal behavior.

Furthermore, while the mediating role of psychological resilience was explored, other potential mediators or moderators of the relationship between trust in leadership and psychological withdrawal behavior were not examined. Future research could explore additional factors, such as emotional intelligence, organizational support, or work-life balance, that may influence how trust in leadership affects employee behavior. Understanding how different factors interact with trust and resilience could offer more targeted interventions for reducing psychological withdrawal behaviors and improving employee engagement.

Lastly, the study focused on psychological withdrawal behavior as an outcome variable, but it did not examine other potential outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance, or organizational commitment. Future studies could broaden the scope by exploring a wider range of employee outcomes, which would provide a more comprehensive view of how trust in leadership influences employee behavior. Additionally, the potential impact of psychological resilience on other outcomes like job satisfaction or performance could be investigated to assess its broader relevance in the hospitality industry.

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**Appendix A. Model fit and quality indices**

Indices	Assessment	Criterion
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.521, $P < 0.001$	$P < 0.05$
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.441, $P = 0.001$	$P < 0.05$
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.409, $P = 0.002$	$P < 0.05$
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.016	acceptable if $\leq 5$ , ideally $\leq 3.3$
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.172	acceptable if $\leq 5$ , ideally $\leq 3.3$
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.487	small $\geq 0.1$ , medium $\geq 0.25$ , large $\geq 0.36$
Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$ , ideally = 1
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.9$ , ideally = 1
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$