

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD EFFECT OF RESILIENT LEADERSHIP ON THE FOLLOWERSHIP OF HOTEL EMPLOYEES

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Annotation. Amid heightened volatility in the global tourism industry and escalating market uncertainty, the operational stability and service quality of the hotel sector depend on the efficiency of leader-member exchange. Resilient leadership emerges as a critical leadership style for navigating adversity, with employee followership determining the depth and responsiveness of interaction. However, the mechanism through which resilient leadership influences employee followership remains unexplored. To address this theoretical gap, drawing on the Job Demands–Resources model and the Conservation of Resources, using a multi-wave survey of 578 hotel employees, the double-edged sword effect of resilient leadership on employee followership, its underlying mechanisms, and boundary conditions were examined. Results show that (1) resilient leadership is significantly and positively correlated with both positive and negative followership; (2) employee cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion mediate these relationship between resilient leadership and positive versus negative followership; and (3) environmental uncertainty negatively moderates the relationship between resilient leadership and ego depletion, meaning higher environmental uncertainty weakens the effect of resilient leadership on ego depletion. The conclusions enrich research on the relationship between resilient leadership and followership, providing theoretical foundations and practical insights for the hospitality industry to effectively leverage the positive effects of resilient leadership while mitigating its negative impact.

Keywords: resilient leadership, positive followership, negative followership, cognitive reappraisal, ego depletion.

JEL classification: M10, Z32.

Introduction

Amidst heightened volatility in the global tourism industry, policy adjustments, and the impact of sudden public health emergencies, the hotel sector—as a service-intensive industry—relies heavily on efficient leader-employee interactions to maintain operational stability and service quality. Resilient leadership is a critical style for navigating adversity, as it enables managers to adapt to market shifts and quickly formulate contingency service strategies. Moreover, by conveying positive beliefs and demonstrating emotional management, resilient leaders help organizations recover from turbulence and achieve growth (Giustiniano *et al.*, 2020; Lombardi *et al.*, 2021). Ultimately, the effectiveness of such leadership hinges on the interaction and responsiveness of followers (Velez and Neves, 2022). This relationship is particularly pronounced in the hotel industry, where the immediacy and high frequency of service interactions make employee followership a core determinant of

operational efficiency. Therefore, clarifying the mechanism through which resilient leadership influences employee followership is crucial for enhancing leadership practices in the hotel sector and guiding employee behavior toward positive outcomes.

Research on the value of resilient leadership has primarily focused on general enterprises or manufacturing settings, often emphasizing their positive effects. For instance, resilient leadership can enhance employee engagement and organizational performance by conveying positive beliefs and strengthening employees' psychological capital while simultaneously alleviating work stress and emotional exhaustion (Dartey-Baah, 2015; Giustiniano *et al.*, 2020; Lombardi *et al.*, 2021; Singh *et al.*, 2023). However, the role of resilient leadership is not merely about positive outputs. While it's inherent, yet contradictory and unified, nature of stability and flexibility has drawn scholarly attention (Giustiniano *et al.*, 2020), its underlying mechanisms remain poorly understood (Shek and Wilkinson, 2022). In summary, although literature has explored the impact of resilient leadership on employee attitudes and behaviors, three key gaps remain. First, it is unclear whether resilient leadership influences employee followership in the hotel industry, where service attributes are prominent and emotional labor intensity is high. Second, studies predominantly focus on the positive effects of resilient leadership on employees, neglecting its underlying mechanisms in negative dimensions. Third, research exhibits significant gaps in addressing environmental variables, overlooking how characteristics unique to the hotel industry (e.g., high market demand volatility and frequent policy adjustments) moderate the relationship between resilient leadership and employees' cognitive and psychological states. Collectively, these areas remain largely unexplored.

Therefore, this study draws on theories such as the Job Demands–Resources model (JD-R model) and Conservation of Resources (COR) to systematically examine the differential effects of resilient leadership on the positive and negative followership of employees. It analyzes the mediating roles of cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion, as well as the moderating effect of environmental uncertainty. Resilient leadership may exert a double-edged sword effect on followership through its impact on the cognitive and psychological states of employees. On one hand, the clear vision and emotional support provided by resilient leadership serve as work resources (Dartey-Baah, 2015), fostering positive followership through cognitive reappraisal. On the other hand, high goal orientation and persistent resource mobilization may translate into work demands, triggering ego depletion and, subsequently, negative followership. Moreover, according to social information processing theory, environmental uncertainty influences employee interpretations of leadership behaviors (Magdy and Elmakkawy, 2025; Lu *et al.*, 2025). In high-uncertainty contexts, employees exhibit heightened reliance on leaders, and the traits and behaviors of resilient leadership better satisfy their informational and emotional needs, thereby exerting a more substantial positive impact on their cognitive reappraisal. Furthermore, the complex tasks, ambiguous goals, and frequent decision-making demands arising from high environmental uncertainty significantly deplete employee self-control resources, increasing ego depletions (Baumeister *et al.*, 2024). Resilient leadership can more effectively mitigate employee ego depletion in such contexts.

Thus, the research contributions of this study are fourfold. First, it expands the research context and content of the double-edged sword effect of resilient leadership. This study is the first to validate the dual impact of resilient leadership on positive and negative followership in the hotel industry, thereby filling a research gap regarding the adverse effects of resilient leadership in service sectors. By analyzing the differential mediating roles of cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion, it also refines the theoretical chain that demonstrates how resilient leadership influences followership by affecting the cognitive and psychological states of employees. Second, it enriches the application of the JD-R model in the hotel industry by revealing that resilient leadership possesses dual attributes of job resources and job demands. Specifically, resilient leadership promotes positive followership through its resource dimension while inducing negative followership through its demand dimension.

Third, it reveals the moderating role of environmental uncertainty, providing a theoretical basis for dynamically adjusting resilience leadership strategies in the hotel industry and offering targeted recommendations for resilience leadership across different contexts. Fourth, this study provides insights for hotel industry management practices. The findings suggest that hotel enterprises can amplify the positive effects of resilient leadership while mitigating its negative impacts by implementing strategies, such as enhancing cognitive reappraisal training, alleviating employee ego depletion, and dynamically adapting to environmental uncertainties. This approach ultimately enhances employee followership and organizational performance.

The remainder of the article is organized as follows: Section 1 presents the theoretical analysis and research hypotheses, Section 2 outlines the research design, Section 3 presents the results of the empirical analysis, Section 4 discusses the results, and finally, Section 5 draws conclusions and implications.

1. Theoretical Analysis and Research Hypotheses

1.1 Resilient Leadership and Followership

The JD-R model posits that job characteristics can be categorized into two dimensions: demands and resources (Demerouti, Bakker, 2011). Job demands refer to elements that require employees to continuously expend physiological or psychological energy to cope, such as high-intensity task loads and complex interpersonal interactions. Job resources encompass all resources that support employees in achieving their goals, alleviate the physical and mental stress arising from job demands, or promote their personal growth and competency development. These include material conditions, social support, and career development opportunities. The JD-R model demonstrates strong explanatory power in understanding the work states, work engagement, and related behavioral performance of employees, offering a unique perspective for comprehending the impact of resilient leadership on employee followership.

From the perspective of job resources, job resources are positively correlated with resilience, and their positive impact on resilience is more pronounced in low-demand work situations (Meneghel *et al.*, 2016). Research grounded in the COR theory suggests that key aspects of resilient leadership, including vision, decision-making effectiveness, empowerment, responsiveness, and supportiveness, constitute vital organizational resources. These elements enhance employees' psychological capital, boost work engagement, and ultimately advance organizational objectives (Singh *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, the strategic thinking of resilient leadership clarifies work direction for employees. Its clear vision, as a key work resource, helps employees understand objectives, reduce confusion, and actively engage in work, demonstrating positive followership. Simultaneously, its positive emotional contagion and empathetic appeal constitute vital emotional support, alleviating employee stress, enhancing psychological resilience, and prompting them to participate in decision-making and problem-solving, exhibiting positive followership proactively. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is proposed.

Hypothesis 1: Resilient leadership is positively impacted by positive followership.

From the perspective of job demands, the overconfidence of resilient leaders can foster cognitive biases such as stubbornness, causing them to insist on the absolute correctness of their decisions while rejecting opposing views (Williams *et al.*, 2017; Lu *et al.*, 2024). Resilient leadership decision-making styles may translate into high-intensity work demands for employees. While these demands may lead to rapid organizational recovery or breakthroughs in the face of crises, they can also push leaders to set goals beyond employee capabilities. When combined with urgent deadlines and complex task requirements, these expectations create sustained sources of work pressure that excessively deplete employees' physical and psychological resources, gradually fostering fatigue and accumulated stress. According to COR theory, individuals in resource-depleted states prioritize self-protection mechanisms. Employees may then mitigate further resource depletion through passive compliance,

which is manifested as fulfilling only the minimum work requirements to avoid extra responsibilities, providing minimal positive feedback to leadership decisions, or even deliberately maintaining silence. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is proposed.

Hypothesis 2: Resilient leadership is positively impacted by negative followership.

1.2 Mediating Role of Cognitive Reappraisal

Cognitive reappraisal is the process by which individuals constructively reinterpret emotional events, thereby transforming their personal meaning and altering emotional experiences (Ochsner *et al.*, 2004). On one hand, it significantly reduces negative emotional experiences and expressions when individuals encounter negative stimuli, lowering the risk of emotional exhaustion. On the other hand, by reshaping the cognitive framework of emotions, it enhances the overall positive tendency of individuals to recognize emotions. In addition, it regulates the long-term effectiveness of emotional regulation (Clark, 2022).

Resilient leaders exhibit contagious positive emotions (e.g., confidence and optimism) when confronting challenges. These emotions promote employees' proactive assumption of work responsibilities (Ashkanasy and Härtel, 2014), enhance identification with organizational goals, and increase willingness to adjust perceptions (Giustiniano *et al.*, 2020), thus facilitating cognitive reappraisal and fostering proactive employee followership. Second, the positive, confident, and resilient image demonstrated by resilient leaders in the face of difficulties and uncertainty establishes them as a role model for employees (Eliot, 2020), providing them with a reference point. In other words, when organizations face challenges like intensified market competition, resilient leaders actively analyze situations, formulate response strategies, and boost employee morale through concrete actions (Lombardi *et al.*, 2021). They provide tangible demonstrations of how to perceive stress, guiding employees to transcend the fixed mindset that equates "stress with threat". Instead, they encourage cognitive reappraisal, interpreting workplace pressures and difficulties as opportunities for personal growth and development. Thus, employees become more willing to offer suggestions to leaders, implement leadership decisions, and demonstrate positive followership.

According to the JD-R model theoretical framework, the personal resources demonstrated by resilient leadership, including time for solitude, focus, health status, optimism, expertise, self-reflection, and communication skills (Förster and Duchek, 2017), serve as role models for employees, prompting them to engage in cognitive reappraisal. In other words, employees gradually refine their own behaviors by observing and learning from their leaders' actions, making persistent efforts, and actively engaging in their work roles (Orhan *et al.*, 2021), thereby following their leaders proactively. Specifically, resilient leadership influences the cognitive reappraisal of employees, enabling them to view workplace challenges and pressures with a more positive mindset, which in turn stimulates their proactive followership. In summary, Hypothesis 3 is proposed.

Hypothesis 3: Employee cognitive reappraisal mediates the relationship between resilient leadership and positive followership.

1.3 Mediating Role of Ego Depletion

The traits of resilient leadership may also produce potential adverse effects in specific contexts. The resilience and high goal orientation demonstrated by leaders may be interpreted by employees as unattainable expectations, thereby inducing psychological pressure and ego depletion. From a motivational psychology perspective, when employees perceive the resilience traits of a leader as tied to organizational recovery goals, creating high expectations, they may experience self-efficacy threat due to concerns about their capabilities failing to meet demands. This anxiety continuously depletes psychological resources, leading to distracted attention and reduced decision-making efficiency and, subsequently, ego depletion (Baumeister *et al.*, 2024).

After ego depletion, individuals tend toward risk aversion (Hagger *et al.*, 2010), reducing their suggestion behavior (Lin and Johnson, 2015) and organizational citizenship behavior (Fehr *et al.*, 2017). Additionally, individuals in ego depletion states are more likely to exhibit dishonesty or unethical behavior, such as increased deception (Gino *et al.*, 2011). Employees subjected to abusive management experience ego depletion, which in turn intensifies the positive correlation between abusive management and employee deviant behavior (Thau and Mitchell, 2010). Therefore, employees in ego depletion states are more inclined to adopt passive compliance to reduce psychological burden and avoid potential risks. They may avoid taking initiative, unthinkingly obey leadership decisions, or mechanically execute clearly unreasonable proposals out of fear of bearing responsibility for decision errors, all to preserve their remaining psychological resources.

Under the JD-R framework, resilient leadership may increase employee work demands, leading to heightened ego depletion and the potential adoption of negative followership. During periods of organizational change, resilient leaders may implement a series of radical measures that impose significant work pressure and psychological burdens on employees, which leads to intensified employee ego depletion. This may prompt them to adopt negative followership behaviors, such as unquestioningly agreeing with leadership decisions or avoiding expressing dissent, to protect their own resources. In summary, Hypothesis 4 is proposed.

Hypothesis 4: Employee ego depletion mediates the relationship between resilient leadership and negative followership.

1.4 Moderating Role of Environmental Uncertainty

Environmental uncertainty primarily stems from sharply fluctuating market demand, disruptive technological innovations, dynamic adjustments to policies and regulations, and complex shifts in competitive dynamics (Magdy and Elmakkawy, 2025), presenting risks and challenges that are difficult to predict and control. Social information processing theory asserts that individuals continuously collect and interpret information within their work environments, adjusting their behaviors accordingly (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978). When environmental uncertainty increases, employees face heightened information overload, goal ambiguity, and decision-making pressure, leading them to rely more heavily on the information and guidance provided by leaders. At this point, the pivotal role of resilient leadership becomes evident. The clear strategic direction, positive emotional support, and open communication environment provided by resilient leadership can significantly promote the cognitive reappraisal of employees (Singh *et al.*, 2023). Employees will reassess environmental challenges as opportunities for growth and development rather than mere threats, thereby stimulating their intrinsic motivation and creativity. In summary, when environmental uncertainty is high, employees increase their reliance on leadership. The traits and behaviors of resilient leadership better meet employee informational and emotional needs, thereby exerting a more substantial positive influence on employee cognitive reappraisal. Specifically, the higher

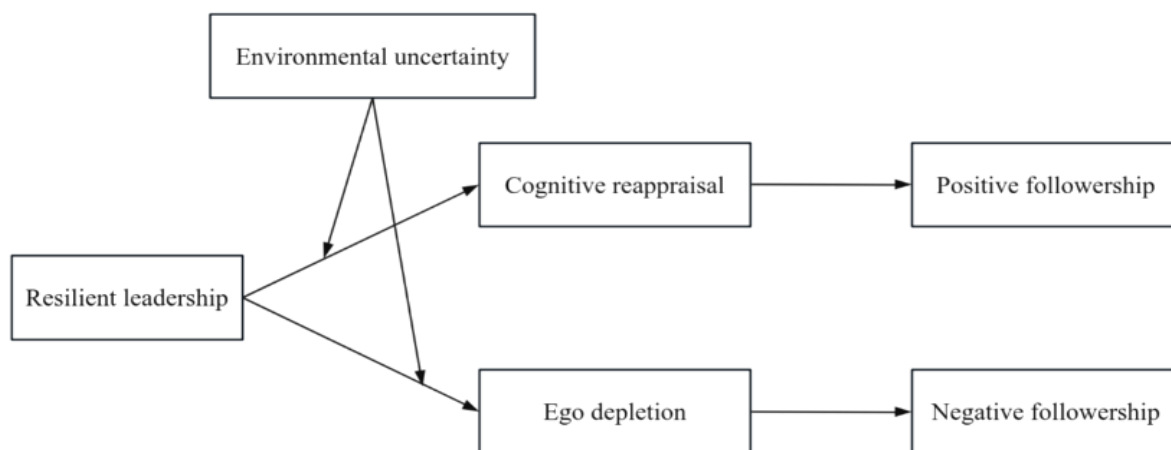
the environmental uncertainty, the stronger the positive impact of resilient leadership on employee cognitive reappraisal. Therefore, Hypothesis 5a is proposed.

Hypothesis 5a: Environmental uncertainty moderates the relationship between resilient leadership and employee cognitive reappraisal. That is, the higher the environmental uncertainty, the stronger the positive effect of resilient leadership on the cognitive reappraisal of employees.

COR theory posits that individuals possess finite self-regulatory resources. Sustained effort or stress response depletes these resources, leading to ego depletion (Hagger *et al.*, 2010). The impact of resilient leadership on employee ego depletion may be negligible when environmental uncertainty is low, where work tasks are relatively stable and well-defined, and the employee's reliance on leadership is relatively weak. However, in work settings characterized by high environmental uncertainty, marked by complex tasks, ambiguous goals, and frequent decision-making demands, employee self-control resources are significantly depleted, increasing their ego depletion levels. Resilient leadership can play a crucial buffering role in such contexts, exhibiting a more pronounced inhibitory effect on employee ego depletion. That is, the higher the environmental uncertainty, the stronger the negative impact of resilient leadership on employee ego depletion. Therefore, Hypothesis 5b is proposed.

Hypothesis 5b: Environmental uncertainty moderates the relationship between resilient leadership and employee ego depletion. That is, the higher the environmental uncertainty, the stronger the adverse effect of resilient leadership on the ego depletion of employees.

The theoretical model of this study is shown in *Figure 1*.



Source: authors' own results.

Figure 1. Research Model

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Participants and Data Collection

This study focused on the employee population within the hotel industry. By designing the research process with precise industry-specific attributes, we enhance the relevance of survey participants to the hotel environment. The survey scope covered various hotel types (including star-rated hotels and chain brand hotels) across Beijing, Tianjin, Shandong, and other provinces/cities. Questionnaires were distributed to employees across various positions, including frontline service staff (e.g., front desk reception, housekeeping, and food and beverage service), mid-level managers (e.g., department supervisors and floor managers), and back-office support personnel (e.g., human resources, finance, and administration), to ensure the sample was representative of the hotel organizational structure. To maximize questionnaire response rates and authenticity, research team members explicitly informed participants before the formal survey that all responses would be completely anonymous and that collected data would be kept strictly confidential.

To avoid common method bias, the research team collected data in two phases in July 2024, with a two-week interval between them. The details are as follows: (1) In T1, 725 valid questionnaires were obtained, achieving an 87.8% valid response rate. The data collected included resilient leadership, environmental uncertainty, and demographic information, comprising gender, age, education level, and work duration. (2) In T2, follow-up data collection on employee cognitive reappraisal, ego depletion, positive followership, and negative followership yielded 578 valid questionnaires, achieving a 79.7% valid response rate. Among the valid samples, males accounted for 54.9%, employees born between 1995 and 1978 constituted 47.1%, those with a bachelor's degree represented 30.2%, and those with three to five years of work duration comprised 29.5%.

2.2 Variable Measurement

All variables in the questionnaire, except for the control variables, were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree") and was completed by employees. All scales strictly followed the "translation-back-translation" procedure, ensuring that the original meaning of each item remained unchanged during translation into Chinese.

(1) Resilient Leadership: This variable was measured using the Resilient Leadership Scale developed by Dartey-Baah (2015), comprising 32 items such as "My leader remains rational in formulating reasonable contingency strategies for subordinates when encountering difficulties". In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.843.

(2) Cognitive reappraisal: This scale draws upon the Cognitive Reappraisal Scale developed by Garnifski *et al.* (2001) while also incorporating organizational context to measure cognitive reappraisal. It comprises four items, such as "When faced with complex projects or challenges at work, I feel I can gain experience and master new work methods and skills". In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.879.

(3) Ego depletion: This variable was measured using a scale developed by Lin and Johnson (2015), which comprises five items, including "I often feel exhausted". The Cronbach's α coefficient for this scale was 0.839.

(4) Followership: As measured by the Employee Followership Scale developed by Brumm and Drury (2013), this variable comprises 14 items, divided into positive and negative followership. Examples include "My leader

encourages me to take initiative in work opportunities” and “My leader’s behavior makes me do only the minimum required work”. In this study, the Cronbach’s α coefficient for the positive followership scale was 0.867, while that for the negative followership scale was 0.888.

(5) Environmental uncertainty: This variable was measured using a five-item scale developed by Miller and Dröge (1986), which includes statements such as “Firms need to frequently adjust their marketing strategies to adapt to market demands and competitor dynamics”. In this study, the Cronbach’s α coefficient for this scale was 0.848.

(6) Controlling for variables: Research has found that factors such as gender and age are closely associated with resilient leadership (Christman and McClellan, 2012). Therefore, gender, age, educational attainment, and years of work experience were included as control variables.

2.3 Data Analysis Methods

This study employed SPSS 25.0, AMOS 24.0, Mplus 8.0, and PROCESS 4.1 to test the model hypotheses. First, reliability and validity were established. Subsequently, a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis was employed to compare the fit indices of the hypothesized six-factor model with those of competing models and further validate the discriminant validity among variables. To control for potential common method bias, we conducted supplementary validation using both Harman’s single-factor analysis and Mplus 8.0. After that, SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 24.0 were used to calculate the mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient matrix, and AVE values for each variable. The results presented the basic distribution characteristics of the variables and the direction and strength of their pairwise associations, which provided a preliminary basis for subsequent hypothesis testing. Finally, SPSS 25.0 and the PROCESS 4.1 plugin were employed to verify the mediating and moderating effects.

3. Result Analysis

3.1 Research Participants and Data Collection

The reliability analysis results indicate that the CR for all variables in this study exceeded 0.70, standardized factor loadings were all greater than 0.5, and AVE values were all above 0.50 (see bolded numbers on the diagonal in *Table 2*). Additionally, Cronbach’s α for each variable exceeded 0.70, demonstrating effective differentiation among variables. In summary, all variables involved in this study exhibit good reliability and validity.

3.2 Common Method Bias Test

To further examine the discriminant validity among variables, this study employed multilevel confirmatory factor analysis. *Table 1* indicates that the hypothesized six-factor model (resilient leadership, cognitive reappraisal, ego depletion, positive followership, negative followership, and environmental uncertainty) demonstrated excellent fit ($\chi^2 = 804.556$, $df = 303$, $\chi^2/df = 2.655$, CFI = 0.970, TLI = 0.957, RMSEA = 0.049), significantly outperforming alternative models. Thus, these findings provide robust empirical support for discriminant validity.

Although this study employed a multi-time point, multi-source questionnaire survey design, it essentially remains cross-sectional data and may harbor potential common method bias. Therefore, Harman's single-factor analysis was conducted using SPSS 25.0. According to Podsakoff et al. (2003), a cumulative variance explained by a single factor less than 40% is considered acceptable. The analysis results indicated that the cumulative variance explained by the first extracted factor was 30.01%, below the 40% threshold. Furthermore, when introducing a common method factor into a six-factor model using Mplus 8.0, the seven-factor model failed to provide a good fit. Consequently, this study does not exhibit severe common method bias.

Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (N = 578)

Models	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Six-factor model (RL, CR, ED, PF, NF, EU)	804.556	303	2.655	0.970	0.957	0.049
Five-factor model (RL, CR+ED, PF, NF, EU)	918.984	308	2.984	0.963	0.948	0.053
Four-factor model (RL, CR+ED, PF+NF, EU)	978.208	311	3.145	0.960	0.944	0.054
Three-factor model (RL+CR+ED, PF+NF, EU)	1104.351	315	3.506	0.953	0.935	0.057
Two-factor model (RL+CR+ED, PF+NF+EU)	1418.022	320	4.431	0.934	0.911	0.060
Single-factor model (RL+CR+ED+PF+NF+EU)	1618.057	324	4.994	0.922	0.896	0.065

Source: authors' own results.

3.3 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics for the study variables and the correlation coefficient matrix results are presented in Table 2. Resilient leadership is shown to be significantly positively correlated with cognitive reappraisal, ego depletion, positive followership, and negative followership ($r = 0.435, p < 0.001$; $r = 0.283, p < 0.001$; $r = 0.533, p < 0.001$; and $r = 0.314, p < 0.001$). Cognitive reappraisal was significantly positively correlated with positive followership ($r = 0.596, p < 0.001$), and ego depletion was significantly positively correlated with negative followership ($r = 0.303, p < 0.001$). These correlation statistics validate Hypotheses 1 and 2, providing preliminary support for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis (N = 578)

	M	SD	Gend	Age	Edu.	WD	RL	CR	ED	PF	NF	EU
Gend.	1.450	0.498										
Age	1.740	0.680	-0.295									
Edu.	2.540	1.064	-0.113	-0.113								
WD	3.020	1.420	-0.050	0.242	-0.068							
RL	3.351	0.957	0.026	0.042	0.014	0.017	0.534					
CR	3.220	0.904	-0.002	0.032	0.024	-0.030	0.435	0.549				
ED	3.992	0.731	0.056	-0.030	-0.014	-0.011	0.283	0.298	0.569			
PF	4.192	0.842	0.021	0.029	0.056	-0.044	0.533	0.596	0.081	0.598		
NF	3.355	0.974	-0.030	0.030	0.031	0.016	0.314	0.153	0.303	0.076	0.618	
EU	3.418	0.860	-0.040	0.070	0.026	0.033	0.447	0.359	0.187	0.449	0.298	0.670

Note: Gend = Gender, Edu = Education, WD = Work Duration, RL = Resilient Leadership, CR = Cognitive Reappraisal, ED = Ego Depletion, PF = Positive Followership, NF = Negative Followership, and EU = Environmental Uncertainty (the same below). *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .005$, and * $p < .05$.

Source: authors' own results.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing

First, this study employed stepwise regression analysis using SPSS 25.0 to examine the mediating effect, with results presented in Table 3. To test Hypothesis 3, we conducted the following procedure: Step 1 involved conducting a regression analysis with cognitive reappraisal as the dependent variable, incorporating control variables such as gender, age, education, work duration, and resilient leadership. As shown in Model 1 of Table 3, resilient leadership was significantly positively correlated with cognitive reappraisal ($\beta = 0.396$, $p < 0.001$). Second, positive followership was set as the dependent variable, with control variables and cognitive reappraisal included in the regression analysis. As shown in Model 2 of Table 3, cognitive reappraisal was significantly positively correlated with positive followership ($\beta = 0.518$, $p < 0.001$). Third, regression analysis was conducted again with positive followership as the dependent variable and controlling for cognitive reappraisal. In Table 3, Model 3 indicates that resilient leadership was significantly positively correlated with positive followership ($\beta = 0.322$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Similarly, to test Hypothesis 4, the first step involved conducting a regression analysis with ego depletion as the dependent variable, controlling for moderating variables and resilient leadership. As shown in Table 3, Model 4 indicates that resilient leadership was significantly positively correlated with ego depletion ($\beta = 0.259$, $p < 0.001$). Second, with negative followership as the dependent variable, we conducted regression analysis incorporating control variables and ego depletion. In Table 3, Model 5 indicates that ego depletion was significantly positively correlated with negative followership ($\beta = 0.352$, $p < 0.001$). Third, with negative followership as the dependent

variable, we conducted another regression controlling for ego depletion. As shown in *Table 3*, Model 6 indicates that resilient leadership was significantly positively correlated with negative followership ($\beta = 0.230, p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported.

Additionally, this study employed the PROCESS 4.1 plugin to re-examine the mediating effect through 10,000 bootstrap samples. The results indicated that the indirect effect value of resilient leadership on positive followership via cognitive reappraisal was 0.136, with a 95% CI of [0.106, 0.169], excluding 0. The indirect effect value of resilient leadership on negative followership through ego depletion was 0.053, with a 95% CI of [0.037, 0.072], which did not include 0. Thus, Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 are again supported.

Table 3. Mediating Effect Test (N = 578)

	CR	PF		ED	NF	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Gend</i>	-0.040	0.024	0.003	0.042	-0.045	-0.055
<i>Age</i>	-0.004	0.018	0.010	-0.041	-0.015	-0.023
<i>Edu.</i>	0.010	0.043	0.039	-0.006	0.031	0.027
<i>WD</i>	-0.056	-0.015	-0.034	0.008	-0.001	-0.010
<i>RL</i>	0.396***		0.322***	0.259***		0.230***
<i>CR</i>		0.518***	0.390***			
<i>ED</i>					0.352***	0.205***
<i>R²</i>	0.158	0.273	0.360	0.071	0.072	0.121
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.153	0.269	0.356	0.067	0.067	0.115
<i>F</i>	35.210***	70.495***	88.014***	14.459***	14.527***	21.539***

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .005$, and * $p < .05$.

Source: authors' own results.

Next, the moderating effect of environmental uncertainty was examined through hierarchical regression analysis, with the results presented in *Table 4*. The specific steps are as follows: First, to avoid multicollinearity, we centered resilient leadership and environmental uncertainty before multiplying them together. Second, stratified regression analyses were conducted with cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion as dependent variables, sequentially including control variables, resilient leadership, environmental uncertainty, and the interaction term between resilient leadership and environmental uncertainty. In *Table 4*, Model 2 indicates that the interaction term between resilient leadership and environmental uncertainty did not significantly influence cognitive reappraisal, thus failing to support Hypothesis 5a. Model 4 reveals that the interaction term had a significant and negative effect on ego depletion ($\beta = -0.108, p < 0.001$), providing preliminary support for Hypothesis 5b.

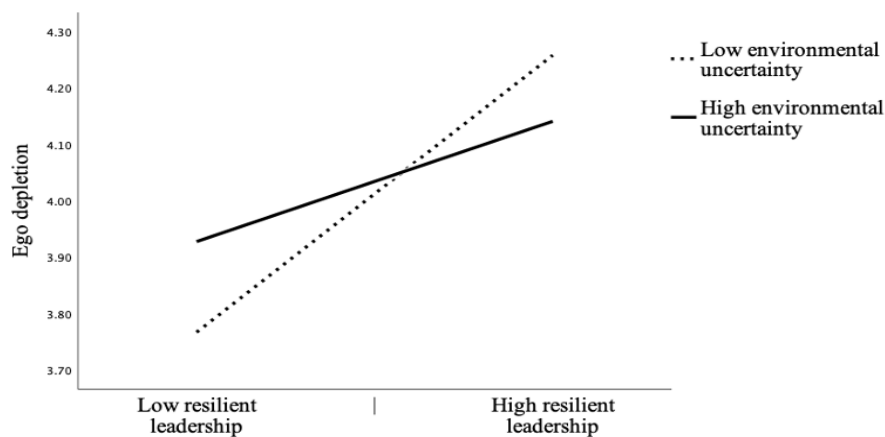
Additionally, this study plotted simple slope diagrams for high environmental uncertainty (+1 SD) and low environmental uncertainty (−1 SD) to further clarify the direction and magnitude of the effect of environmental uncertainty on ego depletion, with the results shown in *Figure 2*. As depicted in the figure, when environmental uncertainty was low, resilient leadership was significantly positively correlated with ego depletion ($\beta = 0.256$, $p < 0.001$); when environmental uncertainty was high, the two variables showed a significant positive correlation ($\beta = 0.111$, $p < 0.005$). The difference between high and low levels was also significant ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 5b is again supported.

Table 4. Moderating Effect Test (N = 578)

	CR		ED	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Gend.</i>	−0.034	−0.037	0.044	0.049
<i>Age</i>	−0.015	−0.014	−0.045	−0.048
<i>Edu.</i>	0.009	0.011	−0.007	−0.012
<i>WD</i>	−0.057	−0.059	0.008	0.012
<i>RL</i>	0.326***	0.334***	0.231***	0.214***
<i>EU</i>	0.193***	0.196***	0.078	0.073*
<i>RL × EU</i>		0.050		−0.108***
<i>R</i> ²	0.196	0.192	0.077	0.088
<i>Adj-R</i> ²	0.185	0.186	0.071	0.081
<i>F</i>	36.680***	31.907***	12.999***	12.895***

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .005$, and * $p < .05$.

Source: authors' own results.



Source: authors' own results.

Figure 2. Moderating Effect of Environmental Uncertainty on Ego Depletion

4. Discussion

This study, founded on the JD-R model, COR theory, and social information processing theory, utilizes multi-wave survey data from 578 hotel employees to validate the double-edged sword effect of resilient leadership on employee followership. It further demonstrates the differential mediating roles of cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion, as well as the moderating effect of environmental uncertainty. The discussion unfolds across five dimensions to elucidate the study's value and future research directions.

(1) Existing research has predominantly focused on the positive effects of resilient leadership, confirming its beneficial impact on employee job performance, work engagement, and organizational performance (Lombardi *et al.*, 2021; Singh *et al.*, 2023). However, no study has examined its negative implications. Hypotheses 1 and 2 align with the theoretical notion that resilient leadership exhibits a double-edged sword effect (Chamorro-Premuzic and Lusk, 2017). For the first time in the hotel industry, this research empirically demonstrates the positive influence of resilient leadership on negative followership, filling a research gap on the adverse effects of resilient leadership in service industries. Furthermore, this study addresses the lack of research on resilience leadership mechanisms (Shek and Wilkinson, 2022) by employing a dual mediation and conditional moderation model design to clarify the specific pathways through which resilience leadership influences employee followership, providing a more complete logical chain for research in this field.

(2) Based on the JD-R model, Hypotheses 3 and 4 reveal the dual-path mechanism through which cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion influence the impact of resilient leadership on employee followership. This approach not only enriches the application of the JD-R model in leadership-employee relationships but also provides a detailed theoretical framework for understanding how leadership behaviors shape employee followership by influencing their cognitive and psychological resources. Furthermore, it responds to academic calls for expanding the application boundaries of the JD-R model and deepening the understanding of variable mechanisms (Bhatti, 2024; Junker *et al.*, 2025).

(3) This study successfully validates the effectiveness and applicability of the Positive and Negative Followership Scales (Brumm and Drury, 2013) for hotel employees in the Chinese context. By testing the scales using actual

survey data, it enriches the application research of followership-related scales across industries and cultural contexts. It provides a reliable measurement tool reference for subsequent research and lays a more solid measurement foundation for in-depth studies on employee followership within the Chinese context.

(4) In this study, Hypothesis 5a posits that environmental uncertainty moderates the relationship between resilient leadership and employee cognitive reappraisal, yet this relationship lacks empirical support. This unexpected finding warrants in-depth analysis considering both theoretical logic and the unique characteristics of the hotel industry. The immediacy demands of hotel services and the requirements of emotional labor may already continuously occupy a significant portion of employees' cognitive resources. When environmental uncertainty increases, employees must allocate additional cognitive resources to cope with external information overload and goal ambiguity, further squeezing the cognitive resources available for processing resilient leadership signals. Consequently, even when resilient leadership conveys positive signals, employees struggle to comprehend and translate them into positive reappraisal due to insufficient cognitive resources. This situation, in turn, hinders the moderating effect of environmental uncertainty on the relationship between resilient leadership and cognitive reappraisal from manifesting.

(5) Hypothesis 5b of this study validates the moderating role of environmental uncertainty. Existing boundary conditions in organizational behavior research primarily focused on individual factors. However, environmental factors exert a greater influence on the cognitive and psychological states of employees than individual differences. This finding aligns with calls to emphasize the critical role of environmental factors in organizational behavior research (Liang and Li, 2024). It opens new avenues for subsequent studies to explore further the moderating role of environmental factors in the relationship between leadership behavior and employee behavior. It likewise contributes to building a more comprehensive theoretical framework for organizational behavior that fully accounts for the impact of dynamic external environmental changes on internal interpersonal relationships and behaviors within organizations.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusions

This study reached the following conclusions: (1) Resilient leadership can elicit both positive and negative followership among hotel employees. (2) Employee cognitive reappraisal and ego depletion mediate the relationship between resilient leadership and positive and negative followership. Resilient leaders are capable of guiding employees in reappraising work situations and stressful events from a positive, rational perspective, facilitating more favorable evaluations of job content, and motivating them to engage in proactive positive followership. Simultaneously, the sustained resource mobilization and high-intensity coping demands inherent in resilient leadership can lead to employee ego depletion, resulting in the manifestation of negative followership. (3) Environmental uncertainty exerts a significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between resilient leadership and ego depletion. That is, when environmental uncertainty is high, resilient leadership mitigates the ego depletion of employees.

Management Implications

Based on the research findings, the following management implications are proposed:

(1) Resilience is widely recognized as a positive behavioral trait. However, under certain circumstances, it may carry disadvantages and come at a cost. Resilient leadership has a "dark side" (Van Wart *et al.*, 2021).

Organizations should recognize the positive role of resilient leadership, enhance the positive followership of employees, avoid negative followership, and mitigate the adverse effects of resilient leadership by means such as conducting specialized mentoring on resilient leadership and regularly organizing feedback sessions between leaders and employees.

(2) Organizations should prioritize the dual development of employees' cognitive regulation capabilities and psychological resource management to guide followership toward positive outcomes. This can be done in two ways. First, specialized training focused on cognitive reappraisal can be conducted. Through case simulations and scenario-based exercises, employees can learn to transform work stress into growth opportunities, reinforcing the positive transmission of proactive followership from resilient leadership. Second, a psychological resource replenishment system for employees must be established. Flexible work arrangements, mindfulness training, and team-building activities help alleviate employee ego depletion.

(3) Managers must strategically optimize guidance and regulation of followership. For proactive followership, organizations should establish positive incentive mechanisms by incorporating employee suggestions, voluntary collaboration, and similar behaviors into performance evaluation systems. Reinforce these positive tendencies through a combination of material rewards and recognition. For negative followership, managers should identify its root causes. If the issue stems from ego depletion, alleviate it through resource replenishment measures; if it arises from excessive risk avoidance, reduce employee defensive motivation by clarifying task boundaries, lowering uncertainty, and establishing error-tolerant environments.

(4) Organizations should adjust their resilient leadership strategies based on the level of environmental uncertainty, dynamically adapting follower engagement management across different scenarios. In low-uncertainty environments, where resilient leadership tends to drive ego depletion, leaders should moderately lower high standards for employees. By clarifying workflows and minimizing sudden changes, they can prevent employees from adopting defensive behaviors due to excessive resource depletion. In high environmental uncertainty, organizations should amplify the proactive guiding role of resilient leadership. By clearly communicating objectives and demonstrating confidence in navigating challenges, leaders can stimulate the proactive followership of employees. Simultaneously, high-frequency communication and resource allocation should counteract the potential negative impacts of uncertainty. Additionally, organizations must establish environmental monitoring mechanisms to capture external changes in real time, providing decision-making support for leaders to adjust behavioral strategies. This ensures resilient leadership aligns with evolving environmental demands.

Limitations and Future Directions

The limitations of this study are reflected in three aspects: (1) Although this study employed multi-source, multi-stage questionnaire surveys, all responses were self-reported by employees, and the mediating and dependent variables were measured at the same stage, which increased the risk of common method bias. Future research could reduce this concern by collecting paired data from leaders and employees. (2) While this study validated the double-edged sword effect of resilient leadership at the employee level, it did not examine its impact on leaders. High external expectations may lead to increased stress and emotional exhaustion among leaders, necessitating further research to refine this understanding. (3) The analysis lacked a team-level perspective. Although resilient leadership can inspire teams and enhance security, fostering long-term dependency among members may stifle team creativity. Future research should expand to the team level.

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DVIPUSIS ATSPARIOS LYDERYSTĖS POVEIKIS VIEŠBUČIŲ DARBUOTOJŲ ATSAKUI

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Santrauka. Padidėjus pasaulinės turizmo pramonės kintamumui ir augančiam rinkos neapibrėžtumui, viešbučių sektoriaus stabilumas ir paslaugų kokybė priklauso nuo lyderių ir darbuotojų sąveikos efektyvumo. Atspari lyderystė tampa itin svarbiu vadovavimo stiliumi, leidžiančiu įveikti sunkumus, o darbuotojų elgesys lemia sąveikos gilumą ir atsako greitį. Tačiau mechanizmas, kuriuo atspari lyderystė veikia darbuotojų atsaką, iki šiol nėra išsamiai ištirtas. Siekiant užpildyti šią teorinę spragą, remiantis Darbo reikalavimų ir išteklių (angl. *Job Demands–Resources*) modeliu ir Išteklų išsaugojimo teorija (angl. *Conservation of Resources*), atlikta daugkartinė apklausa, kurioje dalyvavo 578 viešbučių darbuotojai. Buvo tiriamas atsparios lyderystės dvipusio poveikio efektas darbuotojų atsakui, jo vidiniai mechanizmai ir ribinės sąlygos. Rezultatai atskleidė, kad: (1) atspari lyderystė reikšmingai ir teigiamai koreliuoja tiek su teigiamu, tiek su neigiamu darbuotojų atsaku; (2) darbuotojų kognityvinis perversinimas ir savikontrolės išteklių išsekimas tarpininkauja atsparios lyderystės ryšiui su teigiamu ir neigiamu darbuotojų elgesiu; ir (3) aplinkos neapibrėžtumas silpnina atsparios lyderystės ir savikontrolės išteklių išsekimo sąsają. Išvados praturtina tyrimus apie atsparios lyderystės ir darbuotojų atsako santykį, suteikia teorinę bazę ir viešbučių sektoriui pasiūlo praktinių įžvalgų, kaip efektyviai pasinaudoti teigiamu atsparios lyderystės poveikiu ir sušvelninti jos neigiamą įtaką.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: atspari lyderystė; teigiamas darbuotojų mąstymas; neigiamas darbuotojų mąstymas; kognityvinis perversinimas; asmenybės išsekimas.