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Social evaluations of restaurant managers: the effects on frontline employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions

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Social Evaluations of Restaurant Managers: The Effects on Frontline Employees' Job Attitudes and Turnover Intentions

Abstract

Purpose – The paper examines the effects of social perceptions, as related to restaurant managers' warmth and competence, on frontline employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions. The study aims to enhance the literature related to the influence of social perceptions which casual dining restaurant employees may adopt regarding their restaurant managers.

Design/methodology/approach – The data came from 781 employees of a large casual dining restaurant franchise group that had 43 restaurants in the United States. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were performed, followed by multilevel path and post-hoc mediation analyses to assess the effects of the proposed model.

Findings – Results demonstrated that managers' warmth and competence represented a single factor, instead of two distinct constructs, thus contradicting several socio-psychological studies. Moreover, this factor had an indirect effect on employees' turnover intentions through job attitudes.

Practical implications – Knowing that employees develop improved job attitudes and lower turnover intentions when they evaluate their managers as warm and competent individuals, restaurant operators should focus on both of these social characteristics when designing interviewing processes, management training and performance appraisal programs.

Originality/value – By studying a casual dining restaurant franchise group that operates a single brand, thus minimizing variation in policies and procedures, this paper fulfills an identified need to examine two essential social dimensions often employed in professional settings, and which have not been vastly studied in organizational behavior or hospitality literature.

Keywords: Casual dining restaurant managers, frontline employees, social perceptions, job attitudes, turnover intentions

Paper Type: Research paper

1. Introduction

Full service restaurants, which represent sit down eateries in which food is served directly to the customers' table, include family dining, casual dining, and fine dining restaurants (National Restaurant Association [NRA], 2010). Of these three segments, casual dining restaurant owners and managers cite the recruitment and retention of employees as one of their most significant operational challenges (NRA, 2015). In fact, 23% of casual dining restaurant operators in the U.S. mention that the recruitment and retention of employees represents a significant obstacle, even more so than attracting new customers or bringing back repeat customers (NRA, 2015). As a result, hospitality researchers have a duty to resolve some of the recruitment and retention concerns that casual dining restaurant operators face, and to try to reduce the disproportionate turnover rates that inflict the restaurant industry (Tews *et al*., 2014).

Despite that a variety of motives (e.g., workforce composition, low salaries) could eventually explain why restaurant workers tend not to remain in their jobs as long as employees from other sectors, there are likely issues related to the organizational culture and climate of casual dining restaurants influencing employees' work attitudes and behavioral intentions (Aarons and Sawitzky, 2006). Accordingly, many studies have shown that the interactions or relationships between supervisors and subordinates represent one of the most significant factors influencing the job attitudes and turnover intentions of employees (Collins, 2010; Larsen *et al*., 2012; Lashley, 2000). A study by Larsen *et al*. (2012) found that the factors impacting the most

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job satisfaction and organizational commitment resulted from the observed social atmosphere (i.e., regarding guests and co-workers), together with superiors' respect and fairness.

In another study that examined the turnover intentions of managers, Walsh and Taylor (2007) identified the job characteristics that improve their commitment levels to their organizations and to the hotel industry, and those that reduce their probability of leaving both. Results suggested that hospitality managers tended to look for challenging jobs that offer growth opportunities, as well as competent leadership and fair compensation. Respondents also rated communication, trust, and confidence in others' abilities as the most significant determinants for their work interactions (Walsh and Taylor, 2007). Therefore, when there is good communication in the workplace between employees and supervisors, and when subordinates evaluate their leaders as competent people, their job attitudes will likely improve as a result of such social perceptions or evaluations, which should then lead them to develop lower turnover intentions.

Two of the most substantial dimensions regulating the social evaluations of individuals and/or groups are "warmth" and "competence" (Fiske *et al.*, 2002). Warmth and competence evaluations are so systematic that when people have to judge or evaluate other persons or groups, 82% of their impressions tend to fall under these two fundamental social constructs (Wojciszke *et al.*, 1998). Many labels are used to describe warmth and competence. For instance, Cuddy *et al.* (2008) included "good-natured, trustworthy, tolerant, friendly, and sincere" in their warmth scales; while their competence scales included traits such as "capable, skillful, intelligent, and confident". Although various socio-psychological studies have assessed the effects of these social perceptions on individuals' responses (Fiske *et al.*, 2002; Fiske *et al.*, 2007; Rosenberg *et al.*, 1968; Wojciszke, 1994), no hospitality or organizational psychology study has measured the effects of casual dining restaurant managers' warmth and competence on employees' job

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attitudes and turnover intentions. Restaurant managers should be studied in more depth, as they often act as representatives of their organization and have a responsibility to portray the company's goals and values, and to evaluate, lead and support their subordinates (Dawley *et al*., 2010).

Despite the fact that previous studies have used similar constructs (e.g., manager support; supervisory support; perceived organizational support) to describe managers' actions and leadership styles, the scarcity of empirical studies related to the warmth and competence dimensions represents an opportunity for researchers to examine such core social constructs, which are often attributed to people or groups when they perform tasks or interact with each other (Fiske *et al*., 2007). The advantage of the warmth and competence constructs over others (e.g., such as "supervisory support" or "perceived organizational support") is that the latter constructs do not make any distinction between socially- or task-oriented leadership styles, while the warmth and competence dimensions clearly make such distinction. Furthermore, while warmth and competence both seem to be important, it is still unclear which of these two constructs affects employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions the most. As Cuddy *et al*. (2011) highlight, there is a need for future research to determine which of these two dimensions is more important in a professional setting and within different industries.

Therefore, the present study will determine the impacts of both warmth and competence perceptions, which casual dining restaurant employees develop towards their managers, on employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions. The obtained findings will help restaurant owners and managers to better comprehend the influence that social perceptions can have towards the satisfaction, commitment level and turnover intentions of frontline employees. This study will also contribute to the literature related to the perceived work environment, by

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assessing the effects of social cognition, and further examine the influence that restaurant managers can play on employees' willingness to continue to work for their organization.

2. Literature review

2.1 Warmth and competence perceptions

One of the first authors to examine social perceptions was Asch (1946), who described the prominence of two social attributes that are often used by people when they evaluate others, namely: the warmth and competence dimensions. Similarly, Bales (1950) was one of the first authors to distinguish socio-emotional from task leadership styles. Allport (1954) was also one of the first to confirm the ambivalence of warmth and competence perceptions, meaning that a person or group can be judged as warm (positive trait) and incompetent (negative trait), or as cold (negative trait) and competent (positive trait). Even if a wide variety of human or social traits may be used to evaluate different people or groups (Brewer and Campbell, 1976; Williams and Best, 1982), most contemporary research focused on the warmth and competence constructs (Leach *et al.*, 2007). The warmth construct encompasses traits connected to perceived intent (Fiske *et al.*, 2007), such as sincerity, friendliness, helpfulness, trustworthiness and morality; while the competence construct reflects traits that are associated to perceived ability, including skill, intelligence, creativity and efficacy. Interestingly, warmth and competence perceptions tend to be negatively related to each other (Kervyn *et al.*, 2009), and more importantly, they induce different emotions and behavioral outcomes (Fiske *et al.*, 2002; Fiske *et al.*, 2007; Rosenberg *et al.*, 1968; Tjosvold, 1984; Wojciszke, 1994).

In the hospitality field, little research has actually measured the effects of warmth and competence perceptions. Accordingly, the first study, which was performed by Gao and Mattila (2014), assessed the mediating effects of warmth and competence perceptions as potential psychological mechanisms explaining consumers' reactions to green hotels. The results showed that warmth and competence perceptions mediated the relationships between service outcomes, consumer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. A second study, which focused on the influence of employees' weight and gender on consumers' warmth and competence perceptions, revealed that employee weight and gender interact to influence warmth perceptions, such that customers perceive heavy female servers to be higher in warmth relative to less heavy female servers. Warmth perceptions also predicted customer service satisfaction, whereas competence perceptions did not (Smith *et al*., 2016). Lastly, the third hospitality study focused on the influence of co-workers' warmth and competence on employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions (Bufquin *et al*., 2017a). Results showed that frontline restaurant employees' perceptions, as related to their co-workers' warmth and competence, produced a significant impact on employees' job satisfaction, which affected organizational commitment. Moreover, these two job attitudes had mediating effects between social perceptions and turnover intentions.

Despite such relevant findings, no study has yet to examine the influence of either warmth or competence perceptions, which restaurant employees develop about their leaders, on job attitudes and turnover intentions. Due to the frequent interactions that occur in the workplace between casual dining restaurant employees and their managers (Nieuwenhuijsen *et al*., 2010; Susskind *et al*., 2007), researchers need to assess how employees evaluate their managers, as well as the effects that such social perceptions can produce on the job attitudes and behavioral intentions of frontline employees.

Before proceeding with such analyses, the attitudinal and behavioral constructs used in this study are first defined. Accordingly, two work attitudes are known to significantly reduce turnover intentions, namely: job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hur *et al*., 2013; Joung *et al*., 2015; Kang *et al*., 2014; Karatepe, 2009). Job satisfaction can be defined as "an internal state that is expressed by affectively and/or cognitively evaluating an experienced job with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Brief, 1998, p. 86); while organizational commitment is usually defined as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Mowday *et al.*, 1979, p. 226). When employees are not satisfied with their jobs or committed to their organization, turnover intentions start to build up (Mobley, 1983), leading to higher turnover rates and lower restaurant sales and customer satisfaction (Bufquin *et al.*, 2017b).

2.2 Restaurant managers' warmth and competence and employees' turnover intentions: The mediating effects of job attitudes

A brief examination of job descriptions indicates that the following knowledge, skills and abilities are often required from casual dining restaurant managers: to train, coach and develop team members; to manage guest relations and guest recovery; to facilitate team member recognition; to possess high personal integrity, professionalism and maturity; to have exceptional interpersonal skills; and to ensure compliance with all company policies and laws (Indeed.com, 2016). Interestingly enough, the adoption of warm (e.g., to have exceptional interpersonal skills) and competent (e.g., to possess high personal integrity, professionalism and maturity) attitudes and behaviors in the workplace is relevant to many of these responsibilities.

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A large body of literature has shown that when managers and/or supervisors improve employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the latter tend to develop lower turnover intentions (Hur *et al*., 2013; Joung *et al*., 2015; Kang *et al*., 2014; Karatepe, 2009; Yang, 2008), which are highly correlated with turnover rates (Mobley *et al*., 1978). Likewise, a study by Yang (2008) implied that social interactions among hotel employees influence their organizational socialization, which affects their job satisfaction and turnover intentions. This implies that it is crucial for newcomers to seek information within the first few months of employment, through both conversations with experienced employees and by watching colleagues' behaviors, in order for them to be more satisfied at work and to develop lower turnover intentions (Yang, 2008).

In a similar study conducted in the Albanian hotel industry, results showed that job involvement and work social support amplify job satisfaction, and that work social support and job satisfaction decrease turnover intentions (Karatepe, 2009; Karatepe, 2013). Therefore, when employees are emotionally invested in their work and receive enough support from their supervisors and co-workers, employees tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction, which in turn reduces their turnover intentions. In a similar study performed by Kim *et al*. (2015), which examined the effects of mentoring functions on employee stress, job attitude, and turnover intentions, all three mentoring activities (i.e., career development, psychosocial support, and role modeling) had significant effects on employee job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

The tripartite view asserting that social evaluations precede affective reactions, which subsequently affect individuals' intentions and/or behaviors, is supported by Bagozzi's (1992) Attitude Theory. Moreover, Social Exchange Theory also helps explain the relationship behind employees' cognition and behavioral responses, as it posits that when an employee receives a

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favor from another associate, he/she will have the tendency to repay this favor to the benefactor (Yen *et al.*, 2011). Hence, it is reasonable to suggest that when employees evaluate their casual dining restaurant managers as warm and competent individuals, employees will tend to respond with a higher job satisfaction, which should then decrease turnover intentions.

Based on the aforementioned literature and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are suggested:

Hypothesis 1a: Job satisfaction will mediate the effects of casual dining restaurant managers' warmth on employees' turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 1b: Job satisfaction will mediate the effects of casual dining restaurant managers' competence on employees' turnover intentions.

Along these lines, a recent study by DiPietro and Bufquin (in press) in the fast casual restaurant industry confirmed the significant influence of managers on employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions. More specifically, their study demonstrated the significant effects of management concern for employees and work status congruence on employees' job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Perceived management concern for employees and work status congruence were also shown to indirectly affect turnover intentions through job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Interestingly, organizational commitment was found to be the most significant predictor of turnover intentions. Hence, when employees perceive that their managers care about them and are able to match their preferences with respect to their work schedule and status, such positive evaluations significantly influence employees' organizational commitment, thus lowering their turnover intentions.

Despite the fact that previous research has used similar constructs to the warmth and competence dimensions (e.g., management concern for employees, supervisory support), the

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latter do not make any distinction between socially- or task-oriented leadership styles, and usually incorporate both styles into a single construct. On the other hand, the warmth and competence constructs clearly make a distinction between these two leadership styles, as warm leaders are more socially-oriented, while competent leaders are more task-oriented (Cuddy *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, because of the lack of empirical research related to these two fundamental social dimensions in a restaurant setting, there is a need for academia to focus on the effects of warmth and competence perceptions, as related to casual dining restaurant managers, on employees' turnover intentions mediated by their job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment).

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 2a: Organizational commitment will mediate the effects of casual dining restaurant managers' warmth on employees' turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2b: Organizational commitment will mediate the effects of casual dining restaurant managers' competence on employees' turnover intentions.

Lastly, several studies have confirmed the significant effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. Accordingly, a study by Meng and Han (2014), which focused on the role of empowerment on South Korean hotel employees' psychological responses (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job dedication, and turnover intention), found that job satisfaction has an impact on affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Similarly, a more recent study by López-Cabarcos *et al.* (2015) demonstrated that job satisfaction significantly influences affective and normative commitment in a Portuguese hotel setting. Based on the aforesaid literature, the following hypothesis and model are presented (see Figure 1):

Hypothesis 3: Job satisfaction will positively affect organizational commitment.

>>>> **INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE** <<<<

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and data collection

As the target population of this study was casual dining restaurant employees, the sampling frame was comprised of employees from one franchise group of a global casual dining brand. The franchise group had 43 restaurant units in the midwest and southeast United States. This study employed a self-report survey instrument, which was administered online via Qualtrics and made available to the employees through the franchisee's intranet and scheduling program. When employees accessed their schedule, they also viewed the invitation to participate in the survey. The internal system let the employees access the survey from any internet connection, thus allowing participation outside of the workplace from either a personal computer or cell phone. The data collection period was February to March of 2015. Throughout the month-long time period, weekly email reminders were sent from the franchisee's corporate office to the unit management teams asking the managers to encourage employee participation. Employees were also made aware that participation in the study was both voluntary and anonymous.

Of the approximately 2000 employees working for the franchise group, 914 logged in and began the survey. Of those 914 responses, 93 were deleted due to extensive missing data. An additional 40 responses were deleted due to the respondent failing to identify their restaurant unit, a grouping item necessary for analysis due to the clustered nature of the data. The final useable sample contained 781 responses, which reflected an overall response rate of 39.1%.

The majority of the sample was female (62.1%), Caucasian (72.1%), and in the 18-25 age range (56.9%). The largest percentage of respondents indicated that they had attended some

college (54.9%), while 31.1% indicated they had a high school diploma or GED. Just over half of

the sample worked full-time (51.9%) and had been with the franchise group for 12 months or

less (47.5%). Annual income of the majority was reported at $20,000 or less (57.4%). A

complete socio-demographic profile is provided in Table I.

>>>> INSERT TABLE I HERE <<<<

3.2 Measurement model

A 32-item survey was designed for hypothesis testing. Items used to measure the

constructs of interest were based on previously tested instruments and were assessed using a 5-

point Likert-type scale in which 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5 indicated strong

agreement. The four items measuring perceived manager warmth (warm, good-natured, sincere,

and tolerant) and five items measuring perceived manager competence (confident, competent,

competitive, intelligent, and independent) were adapted from Fiske *et al*. (2002). Four items

from Alexandrov *et al*. (2007) were used to measure job satisfaction; these items addressed

employee satisfaction with co-workers, managers, teamwork, and pay. Alexandrov *et al*. (2007)

also provided the five items used to measure organizational commitment. The items were

modified to highlight the restaurant as the object of interest; for example, the item "I really care

about this company's future" was adapted to "I really care about this restaurant's future".

Turnover intention was measured with three items from Singh *et al*. (1996).

The survey also contained demographic questions such as age, gender, and ethnicity,

along with a variety of job-based characteristics, such as work status and restaurant location.

Prior to distribution, the survey was evaluated for both face and content validity by hospitality

experts from the restaurant industry and academia.

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3.3 Data analysis

As the items used in this study were drawn from multiple sources and contexts,

exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was first conducted to explore the questionnaire's underlying

factor structure, followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess goodness-of-fit of the

factor structures and construct validity. Following the procedures outlined by Hair *et al*. (2010),

the sample was randomly split, with 40% (N = 312) used for the EFA and 60% (N = 469) used

for the CFA. Then, prior to analysis of the structural model, the intraclass correlation coefficients

[ICC(1)s] were calculated for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover

intention. Assessment of the ICC(1)s was necessary due to the "nested" nature of the data; the

employees who completed the survey were drawn from 43 restaurant units of a franchise

company, thus indicating the potential for dependence in the data. ICC(1)s were: job satisfaction

(0.09), organizational commitment (0.14), and turnover intention (0.08), which indicated that,

respectively, 9%, 14%, and 8% of variability in the data could be attributed to the restaurant.

These values were sufficient to suggest that a complex survey data analysis approach was

appropriate (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-2012; Snijders and Bosker, 2012). This method of

analysis computes standard errors and a chi-square test of model fit while also accounting for

dependence of observations, without specifically modeling it (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-2012).

Since this method requires that the number of free parameters in the model is lower than the

number of clusters, path analysis was employed to examine the data (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-

2012). Based on the EFA and CRA results, factor scores were created to represent each latent

variable. For both the CFA and complex path analysis, the maximum likelihood method was

used and several goodness-of-fit indices were selected to validate the measurement and structural

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models, including the chi-square statistic (χ^2), the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized

root mean square residual (SRMR), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA).

Mplus 7.31 was used for all analysis.

4. Results

4.1 Exploratory factor analysis

Using the smaller sub-sample, EFA with principle axis factoring and Promax rotation

was conducted on the 21 items from the questionnaire relevant to the conceptual model. The

sample was deemed appropriate for EFA, as the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of

sampling adequacy was 0.942 and the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 =$

6082.516 [$df = 210$, p < 0.001]). The rotated solution resulted in four dimensions rather than the

five that were expected based on the conceptual model. Although the items for job satisfaction,

organizational commitment, and turnover split into three factors as expected, all of the items for

manager warmth and competence loaded onto a single factor rather than splitting into two

distinct factors. Moving forward, this dimension will be labeled "manager's warmth and

competence". Additionally, two job satisfaction items were systematically removed. The item "I

am satisfied with my pay" was removed due a low communality (0.309) and the item "I am

satisfied with my restaurant management team" was removed due to a low factor loading

(0.313). Together, the four factors explained 79.9% of the variance.

4.2 Measurement model

Using the larger sub-sample, CFA using the maximum likelihood estimator was

conducted based on the results from the EFA. The CFA results indicated that the four-dimension

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measurement model provided an adequate fit to the data (χ^2 = 560.200 [df = 146, p < 0.001], RMSEA = 0.078, CFI = 0.915, SRMR = 0.06). Although the chi-square statistic was large and significant, this result was expected due to the large sample size (Hair *et al*., 2010). The RMSEA and the SRMR were both at or below their respective acceptable cutoff values of 0.08 and 0.06, while the CFI met the acceptable threshold of 0.90 (Hair *et al*., 2010; O'Rourke and Hatcher, 2013). Since all individual factor loadings were statistically significant with values exceeding 0.50, all items were retained and the measures were assessed for convergent and discriminant validity. Table II reports the means, standard deviations, correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for the study variables.

>>>> **INSERT TABLE II HERE** <<<<

Table III below provides the standardized factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and construct reliabilities. All four constructs demonstrated AVE values greater than 0.50, the level recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair *et al*. (2010), and construct reliabilities exceeding 0.70, the threshold recommended by Hair *et al*. (2010). Combined, this provided evidence of convergent validity for each construct.

>>>> **INSERT TABLE III HERE** <<<<

Constructs are considered to have discriminant validity when the AVE values exceed the interconstruct squared correlations (Hair *et al*., 2010). Discriminant validity was confirmed, as all AVE values were larger than their relative interconstruct squared correlation estimates. Additionally, the measurement model was congeneric, meaning it did not contain any cross-loadings of measured items or error terms. This further confirmed discriminant validity (Hair *et al*., 2010).

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4.2 Multilevel path analysis

Path model testing was conducted using the sample in its entirety. As manager warmth and competence were not found to be two distinct constructs, H1a, H1b, H2a, and H2b could not be tested as hypothesized. Instead, the interrelationships between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, and the singular construct of manager's warmth and competence were tested. Results from testing of the revised path model are presented in Table IV and the path diagram is presented in Figure 2. Overall, the fit indices suggested acceptable model fit ($\chi^2 = 0.652$ [$df = 1$, p = 0.42], RMSEA = 0.001, CFI = 1.000, SRMR = 0.008). The model accounted for 10.2% of the variance in job satisfaction, 45.7% of the variance in organizational commitment, and 38.0% of variance in turnover intentions.

>>>> **INSERT TABLE IV HERE** <<<<

>>>> **INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE** <<<<

As shown in Table III, the results revealed that manager's warmth and competence had a significant indirect effect on turnover intentions via organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.292$, 95% C.I. = -0.368, -0.216). The 95% confidence intervals did not contain zero, thus indicating statistical significance (Hayes, 2013), and the effect of the indirect path was medium-to-large (Kenny, 2015). The indirect path from manager's warmth and competence to turnover intentions via job satisfaction was not significant, as the 95% confidence interval contained zero (-0.038, 0.005). Finally, the direct path from job satisfaction to organizational commitment was positive statistically significant ($\beta = 0.328$, p < 0.001), thus supporting H3.

4.3 Post-hoc mediation analysis

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In light of these results, additional analysis was conducted to discover whether sequential mediation provided more insight. Sequential mediation occurs when one mediator influences a second mediator, which in turn influences the outcome variable (Muthén *et al*., 2016). The following path was tested: manager's warmth and competence → job satisfaction → organizational commitment → turnover intentions. The result was significant, with a non-zero 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.092 to -0.032 and a moderate effect size of -0.062 (p < 0.001).

5. Discussion and conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of managers' warmth and competence on employees' job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. First, this study demonstrated that managers' warmth and competence actually represent a single construct, thus contradicting a variety of sociological and socio-psychological studies which have clearly made a distinction between the two (Cuddy *et al*., 2011; Fiske *et al*., 2007). Moreover, this unique construct, which was named "manager's warmth and competence," has significant indirect effects on employees' turnover intentions via both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. In other words, when casual dining restaurant employees evaluate their managers as both warm and competent, employees tend to become more satisfied with their jobs and committed to their organization. Such higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment lower employees' turnover intentions.

Although managers' warmth and competence was first found to have a significant indirect effect on turnover intentions only through organizational commitment, a post-hoc

mediation analysis revealed that managers' warmth and competence also impacts employees' turnover intentions via both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Lastly, results also confirmed the well-known influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment (Elangovan, 2001; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Kim, 2014; Kim *et al.*, 2005). These findings support previous research, such as Yang (2008), who found that the social interactions among hotel employees influence their organizational socialization, which was shown to affect employees' organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Yang, 2008). The obtained findings also support a study by Karatepe (2009), which revealed that job involvement and work social support amplify hotel employees' job satisfaction, and that work social support and job satisfaction decrease employee turnover intentions (Karatepe, 2009). The current study also supports DiPietro and Bufquin (in press), who confirmed the significant effects of management concern for employees and work status congruence on restaurant employees' job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, and turnover intentions.

One significant finding from this study is that warmth and competence were found to be one construct, which confirms a shift in conceptions of good leadership, both among researchers and organizations themselves (Cuddy *et al.*, 2011). In response to rapid changes in technology, workforce demographics and other areas, organizations have become more team-oriented, thus requiring transformational leadership as opposed to command-and-control leadership styles (Bass, 1990). This style of leadership requires both social skills and competence. Thus, the way that managers and potential managers in the casual-dining segment of the restaurant industry are selected, trained, and evaluated needs to adjust in order to meet with these changes.

One additional contribution of the study is its setting, in a large franchised casual dining restaurant company, where all policies and procedures are the same. The main variants in the

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surveyed restaurants were managers and their social interactions with employees. Thus, the current study empirically tested the commonly held belief that warm and competent managers can influence positive employee outcomes (i.e., higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions). This study also tested the influence of managers' warmth and competence on employees' turnover intentions (mediated by their job attitudes), by minimizing the influence of other organizational factors, such as firm policies and managerial procedures, which could arise in different restaurant settings or companies.

5.2 Theoretical implications

One of the study's most important theoretical contributions is that the warmth and competence dimensions represented a single construct instead of two distinct constructs as found in previous studies (Fiske *et al*., 2002; Fiske *et al*., 2007; Rosenberg *et al*., 1968; Wojciszke, 1994). The obtained findings also add to the hospitality management literature, as they reveal significant relationships among warmth and competence perceptions, as related to casual dining restaurant managers and employees' job attitudes and turnover intentions. Hence, one can affirm that the tripartite view of Bagozzi's (1992) Attitude Theory represents a reliable model, which helps explain why restaurant employees adopt specific attitudes and behavioral intentions after evaluating the most important social traits of their managers. Social Exchange Theory was also supported in this study, as it implies that employees develop positive job attitudes and behavioral intentions once they receive enough support from their leaders (Blau, 1964).

While most of the studies that assessed the influence of these social perceptions were done in social psychology and sociology, little attention was given to their influence in a corporate setting (Cuddy *et al*., 2011). Cuddy *et al*. (2011) suggested that assumptions made

about people in a work setting may affect the way they behave. In this study, results demonstrated that it is important for employees to feel that they are working for both warm and competent managers, as they tend to develop improved job attitudes and lower turnover intentions as a result of these positive social evaluations (Fiske *et al*., 2007). Consequently, this study fills a gap in the organizational behavior and hospitality literature, as related to the influence of these fundamental social constructs that govern the social evaluations of individuals and groups (Fiske *et al*., 2002).

5.3 Practical implications

From an operational standpoint, there are several implications which need to be taken into consideration. Knowing that employees develop lower turnover intentions when they judge their managers as warm and competent, casual dining restaurateurs should focus on these social dimensions when making their hiring decisions and implementing management training programs. When searching for management candidates, a variety of structured and unstructured interviews (e.g., behavioral and situational interviews; face-to-face and panel interviews) and psychological tests (e.g., The DISC Assessment; The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire) could be used in order for casual dining restaurant owners to assess personality and social traits.

Among the aforementioned personality assessments, one could cite the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire developed by Cattell *et al*. (1993). Interestingly, many traits portrayed in this questionnaire largely resemble the warmth (e.g., warmth, liveliness, social boldness) and competence constructs (e.g., dominance, rule-consciousness, self-reliance) (Cattell *et al*., 1993). Hence, such personality tests could assist restaurant owners and human resources managers with personnel selection and career development through measurement and assessment

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of the primary management dimensions of warmth and competence identified to forecast management potential and style.

Restaurant owners and operators should also help develop and coach their managers, in order for the latter to be more socially-oriented and adopt professional attitudes and behaviors that reflect the company's values and culture. The implementation of a strong organizational culture, which focuses both on the well-being and professional development of restaurant managers and employees, is vital for casual dining restaurateurs to reduce their turnover rates. Tools such as the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, developed by Cameron and Quinn (2005), may be useful in helping managers diagnose and change the fundamental cultures of their organization. Restaurant owners should not only focus on the required knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary for managers to comply with the company's operational procedures and standards, but they should also pay close attention to and enhance their managers' social nature and demeanor.

Training programs should focus on helping casual dining restaurant managers to develop behaviors that allow them to demonstrate to their employees that they care about them and are sincerely concerned about their professional and personal well-being. For instance, restaurant managers could be taught how to (1) recognize or compliment employees more often; (2) create social gatherings in order for employees to get to know them on a personal level; (3) engage employees more often by asking for their feedback on important operational/professional issues; and finally (4) lead by example (e.g., watching what they say; taking more responsibility; listening to team members; and communicating more frequently with employees).

Restaurant managers are often asked to act as representatives of their organization, and have a responsibility to portray their organization's goals and values (Dawley *et al*., 2010). This

is why it is so important for casual dining restaurant owners to constantly evaluate restaurant managers' performance in order to align their behaviors with expectations for employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which leads to lower levels of turnover. Restaurant operators may want to incorporate employee feedback into the managers' performance appraisal as well. The ultimate goal is for casual dining restaurant operators to build cohesive teams, so that their employees remain longer in their organization and most importantly, deliver the best possible customer service experience.

5.4 Limitations and future research

Despite the contributions made by this study, several limitations need to be addressed. The first study limitation deals with the obtained convenience sample, which prevents the researchers from generalizing the current findings. Moreover, only employees from a casual dining restaurant chain participated in the online self-administered survey, and employees from no other restaurant segment were able to participate in this study. Furthermore, no differentiation was made regarding employees' roles, statuses and socio-demographic background. Future research could examine if the effects of social evaluations differ according to employees' job positions, hierarchies and socio-demographic characteristics, as the resultant attitudes and behaviors of employees may vary considerably according to such variables. Lastly, researchers could use different attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, other than the ones employed in this study, such as work engagement, burnout, extra-role customer service or job performance, to expand the literature related to the influence of social judgements or evaluations.

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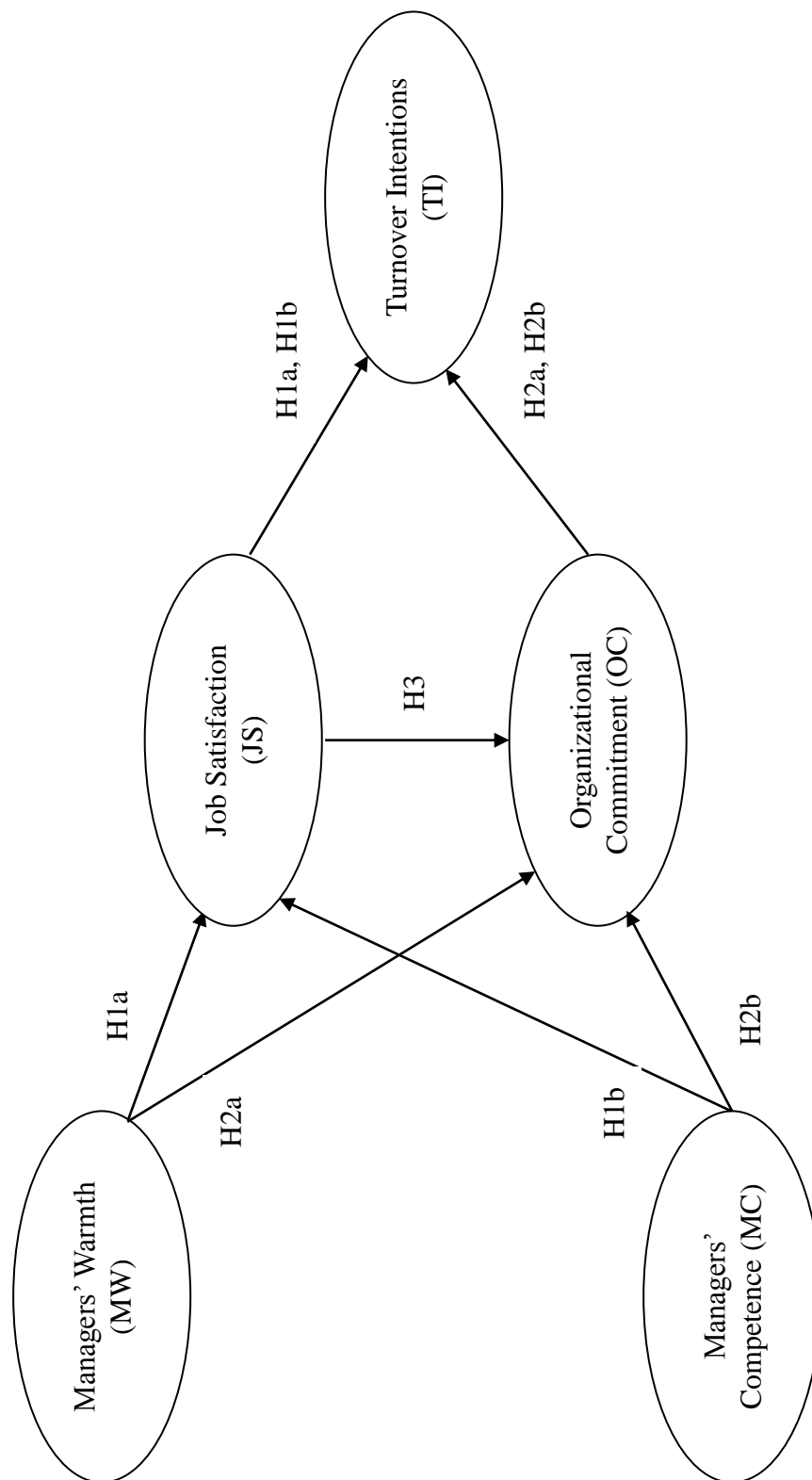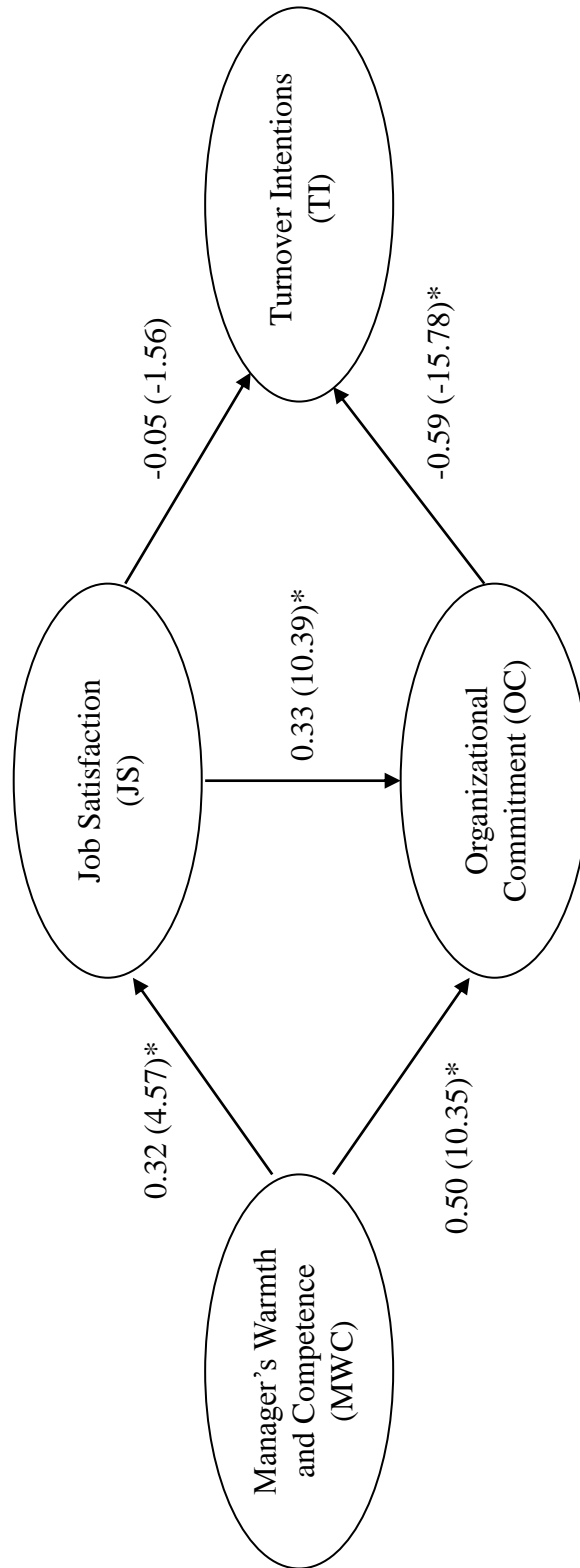
Figure 2. Results of Path Model Testing

Notes: Figures in parentheses are t-values; figures outside the parentheses are standardized path coefficients; * statistically significant paths

Table I. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Sample

	n*	Percentage
Gender		
Male	291	37.9
Female	476	62.1
Ethnicity		
African American	81	10.6
Caucasian	551	72.1
Asian	4	0.5
Hispanic	71	9.3
Other	57	7.5
Age Group		
18-25	431	56.9
26-33	186	24.6
34-41	92	12.2
42-49	33	4.4
50 or more	15	2.0
Education		
Less than high school	21	2.8
High school/GED	237	31.1
Some college or equivalent	418	54.9
Bachelor's degree	70	9.2
Graduate degree	16	2.1
Work Status		
Full-time	404	51.9
Part-time	374	48.1
Work Shift		
Lunch	237	30.6
Dinner	538	69.4
Annual Income		
Less than $20,000	429	57.4
$20,000 to $24,999	150	20.1
$25,000 to 29,999	64	8.6
$30,000 to 34,999	25	3.3
$35,000 or more	80	10.7

Note: * Subcategories may not total to 781 due to missing data

Table II. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Manager's Warmth and Competence	4.15	0.98	(0.96)			
2. Job Satisfaction	3.59	1.07	0.32**	(0.83)		
3. Organizational Commitment	3.96	0.99	0.60**	0.49**	(0.92)	
4. Turnover Intentions	2.62	1.23	-0.39**	-0.34**	-0.62**	(0.91)

Note: Cronbach's alpha values for measurement scales are reported on the diagonal
** $p < .01$

Table III. Convergent Validity Estimates for CFA Model

Items	Std. Loading	AVE	Construct Reliability
Manager's Warmth and Competence		0.706	0.955
I consider my restaurant manager to be Sincere	0.897**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Good-natured	0.924**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Warm	0.863**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Tolerant	0.811**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Competent	0.893**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Confident	0.838**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Intelligent	0.854**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Competitive	0.723**		
I consider my restaurant manager to be Independent	0.735**		
Job Satisfaction		0.712	0.832
I am satisfied with my co-workers	0.810**		
I am satisfied with the teamwork in my restaurant	0.876**		
Organizational Commitment		0.684	0.915
I find that my values and this restaurant's values are similar	0.817**		
I am really glad that I chose to work for this restaurant rather than for other restaurants	0.893**		
I really care about this restaurant's future	0.739**		
I would not hesitate to recommend this restaurant as a good place to work	0.875**		
My work at this restaurant gives me a sense of accomplishment	0.803**		
Turnover Intentions		0.791	0.918
It is likely that I will actively look for a new job next year	0.979**		
I often think about quitting	0.712**		
I will probably look for a new job next year	0.953**		

** p-value < 0.001

Table IV. Path Model and Indirect Effects

Alternate Paths	Std. Estimate	Standard Error	t-value	95% Confidence Interval		Hypothesis
				Low	High	
MWC → OC → TI	-0.292	0.039	-7.555**	-0.368	-0.216	Supported
MWC → JS → TI	-0.017	0.011	-1.150	-0.038	0.005	Not Supported
MWC → JS → OC → TI	-0.062	0.015	-4.020**	-0.092	-0.032	Supported
JS → OC	0.328	0.032	10.392**	0.266	0.390	Supported

Notes: R^2 (Job Satisfaction) = 0.10; R^2 (Organizational Commitment) = 0.46; R^2 (Turnover Intentions) = 0.38; Model fit: χ^2 = 0.652 [df = 1, p = 0.42], RMSEA = 0.001, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = 0.008; ** p < 0.001