

The Impact of Servant Leadership on On-ground Employees' Psychological Well-Being: A Case Study of Heritage Collection Singapore

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Abstract

This research investigates how servant leadership behaviours shape the psychological well-being of on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection Singapore, a digitally enabled boutique hotel brand. Focusing on managerial empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct, the study examines whether these behaviours contribute meaningfully to employee well-being beyond demographic factors. Using a correlational quantitative design and hierarchical multiple regression analysis, data were gathered from 48 staff members across departments. The results highlight that servant leadership behaviours, when enacted collectively, significantly enhance employee well-being, even after accounting for gender, tenure, age, and job role. Employees who perceive their managers as empathetic, empowering, and ethically grounded consistently report higher levels of well-being. However, the results also expose disparities, with lower well-being reported among female staff, housekeeping teams, and employees with mid-level tenure. These insights underscore the powerful role of leadership in creating emotionally supportive work environments and highlight the urgent need for targeted well-being strategies within the hospitality industry. By integrating leadership theory with the practical exigencies of boutique hospitality, this study generates actionable insights for industry practitioners and establishes a foundation for further scholarly inquiry into leadership climates and employee flourishing in service-intensive settings. Future research should extend these results through longitudinal and qualitative designs to capture how servant leadership cultivates well-being over time and across varied hospitality contexts. Such inquiry is vital to reconceptualising leadership as a strategic lever for emotional resilience and sustainable organisational performance.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background information

In today's high-pressure, performance-driven economy, employee psychological well-being has become a critical determinant of organisational success, particularly in the hospitality sector (Ariza-Montes, 2019). Yet, in their pursuit of corporate goals, many leaders neglect employee welfare, disregarding the fact that staff are the primary custodians of organisational values and service quality (Zhang et al., 2017). The

hospitality industry's inherent challenges—emotional labour, irregular hours, and constant guest interaction—render on-ground employees especially susceptible to stress and burnout (Karatepe, 2013; Lu and Gursoy, 2016). Leadership style plays a pivotal role in mitigating these pressures, shaping morale, engagement, and retention (Liden et al., 2008; Popli and Rizvi, 2016). Against this backdrop, the present study investigates how key servant leadership behaviours influence the psychological well-being of frontline staff at The Heritage Collection Singapore.

Servant leadership, first conceptualised by Greenleaf (1977), positions the leader as a steward of employee growth, well-being, and autonomy. Operationalised by Liden et al. (2008), this philosophy manifests in behaviours such as emotional support, autonomy and professional development, and moral integrity, all of which contribute to a psychologically supportive work climate. In parallel, psychological well-being is framed through Ryff's (1995) six-dimensional model ; including autonomy, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relationships, environmental mastery, and self-acceptance; capturing the cognitive-affective health of employees. These dimensions are acutely pertinent to hospitality staff, who must navigate constant customer demands, emotional labour, and dynamic team environments.

This study grounds its investigation in the real-world context of The Heritage Collection—a boutique hospitality group in Singapore that integrates digital innovation with personalised guest service. As the global boutique hotel market surpasses US\$94 billion and is projected to exceed US\$122 billion by 2028 (The Business Research Company, 2024), demand for intimate, experience-driven stays continues to rise. With roughly 50 on-ground employees operating in a decentralised, guest-facing environment, the Heritage Collection offers an ideal context to examine how servant leadership influences employee psychological well-being. Staff autonomy is high, and for some roles, performance is directly tied to guest ratings on online travel agency platforms such as Agoda. Within such emotionally intense and independently managed roles, leadership behaviours are not peripheral - they are pivotal. This setting thus provides a fertile ground for critically assessing the practical impact of servant leadership in boutique hospitality.

1.2 Rationale of the study

Over the past two decades , scholars across organisational psychology, human resource management, and hospitality research have increasingly recognised employee psychological well-being as a critical driver of organisational sustainability, service quality, and staff retention (Loon et al., 2018; Gip et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2024; Guares, 2025). Alarming, hospitality workers continue to report disproportionately high levels of stress and burnout, paired with insufficient leadership support, particularly within the Singaporean context (Salem, 2015; Ali et al., 2022). These results underscore an urgent imperative to investigate leadership approaches that actively foster employee well-being.

Empirical studies consistently associate servant leadership with improved employee outcomes, ranging from job satisfaction and trust to broader psychological well-being (van Dierendonck, 2010; Yoshida, 2014; Kaur, 2018). Within hospitality, it has been linked to reduced burnout and more ethical work climates (Rahal and Farmanesh, 2022; Wiyono et al., 2024;). However, research remains concentrated on large-scale Southeast Asian hotels, overlooking boutique contexts. Wu et al. (2022) demonstrated that servant leadership promoted psychological safety among Chinese hotel staff, yet their focus on safety neglected critical dimensions such as empathy and empowerment. Moreover, most studies bypass Ryff's (1995) comprehensive well-being model, favouring narrower indicators like job satisfaction or stress reduction.

This study addresses key empirical and theoretical gaps by (1) examining core servant leadership behaviours in a boutique hospitality context, diverging from the dominant focus on large hotel chains; (2) applying Ryff's multidimensional framework to assess full-spectrum psychological well-being rather than reductive proxies; and (3) embedding the analysis within Singapore's distinctive socio-cultural and operational environment. Using The Heritage Collection as a case site, the research integrates leadership theory with the realities of digitally enabled, service-intensive hospitality work. In doing so, it operationalises servant leadership as a mechanism for cultivating psychological flourishing in high-pressure, emotionally demanding roles. The findings advance theory by contextualising servant leadership within eudaimonic well-being frameworks and deliver practical guidance for hotel leaders seeking to build resilient, people-centred organisations. These contributions are especially salient amid heightened post-pandemic challenges around employee well-being and retention in the hospitality sector.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

This research aims to analyse the relationship between servant leadership behaviours demonstrated by managers at The Heritage Collection Singapore and the psychological well-being of their on-ground employees.

In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives will be examined:

- To assess the contribution of servant leadership to employees' psychological well-being beyond demographic factors.
- To analyse the current well-being state of on-ground employees in Heritage Collection.
- To explore how on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection in Singapore perceive their managers' servant leadership behaviours.

1.4 Summary of Methodology

This study employed a deductive, correlational quantitative design to examine the relationship between servant leadership behaviours and psychological well-being among on-ground staff at The Heritage Collection, a boutique hospitality group in Singapore. Using structured five-point Likert-scale surveys, data were collected from 48 employees. Independent variables—managerial empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct—were measured via validated scales from Liden et al. (2008), while psychological well-being was assessed through Ryff's six-factor model (1995). Hierarchical multiple regression tested the predictive power of leadership behaviours beyond demographic controls. Rooted in a positivist paradigm, the design prioritises empirical validity and real-world applicability within hospitality settings.

Chapter 2. Literature review

2.1 Servant Leadership: Conceptual Foundations and Dimensions

Servant leadership is a people-centred leadership philosophy that prioritises employee growth, autonomy, and well-being over personal ambition or hierarchical control. Originating with Greenleaf (1970), the servant leader is conceptualised as “first among equals”, guided by a commitment to serve others. Embodying humility, empathy, and empowerment, servant leaders facilitate personal development and emotional support, positioning employees not as instruments for organisational goals but as individuals to be nurtured and coached toward their full potential (Ehrhart, 2007).

Liden et al. (2008) identified seven behavioural dimensions of servant leadership, including emotional healing, empowerment, ethical conduct, and strategic competencies such as conceptual skills and creating community value. While this model offers a comprehensive framework, the present study focuses on three core dimensions - empathy, empowerment, and ethical behaviour - due to their direct relevance to psychological well-being in emotionally demanding, guest-facing roles. By contrast, dimensions like conceptual skills or community value pertain more to macro-level strategy than daily staff experience. Thus, this study isolates the servant leadership behaviours with the most immediate impact on employee well-being (van Dierendonck, 2010).

Empathy, often conceptualised as emotional healing, refers to a leader's ability to recognise and respond to employees' emotional needs. Servant leaders listen actively, offer emotional support, and treat staff with compassion, especially during

periods of stress or hardship. In hospitality, where frontline workers frequently confront emotionally taxing guest interactions, empathy is essential for sustaining psychological resilience. Research indicates that empathetic leadership fosters trust, psychological safety, and staff loyalty, enabling employees to maintain focus on service delivery even in high-pressure environments (Azeemi, 2024). By prioritising understanding and emotional support, servant leaders create climates of psychological containment that facilitate motivation and engagement.

Empowerment, a core tenet of servant leadership, centres on delegating authority, encouraging initiative, and fostering employee development. According to Liden et al. (2008), empowering leaders enable staff to act autonomously and make meaningful decisions, thereby enhancing self-efficacy and trust. Albayrak and Erturk (2021) further delineate empowerment into three dimensions: authority delegation, initiative encouragement, and personal growth support. In the hospitality sector—where adaptability and responsiveness are critical—empowered employees demonstrate greater agility in managing guest needs.

Ethical conduct represents the third key dimension of servant leadership in this study, encompassing transparency, fairness, and moral integrity in leader–follower interactions. Ethical servant leaders uphold principled behaviour, foster organisational justice, and model fairness even amid operational pressures. Kaur (2018) demonstrated that ethical leadership significantly boosts employee commitment and satisfaction, mediated by fairness perceptions. In hospitality where ethical tensions often surface in guest interactions and service recovery, such leadership is critical for maintaining employee morale and organisational credibility.

There is strong scholarly agreement that servant leadership constitutes a unique and multidimensional leadership style that reliably promotes favourable employee outcomes. Empirical studies link it to heightened organisational citizenship behaviour, job engagement, creativity, and psychological well-being (Malingumu et al., 2016). Within hospitality, it fosters service-oriented behaviour and lowers turnover intentions by cultivating an ethical and supportive workplace climate. As such, the literature increasingly recognises servant leadership as a key driver of employee flourishing, organisational cohesion, and long-term performance.

Nevertheless, ongoing debates question servant leadership's conceptual distinctiveness and contextual adaptability. Critics often note its conceptual overlap with transformational leadership, particularly in domains such as follower development, trust-building, and shared

vision (Andersen, 2018). Others argue that servant leadership may be less viable in high-velocity or crisis-prone environments, where rapid, centralised decision-making is essential (Hoch et al., 2016; Rao, 2025). Concerns also include potential dependency effects and diminished practicality under intense operational pressure (Palumbo, 2016). Various models (e.g., Spears, 1996; Patterson, 2003) incorporate divergent dimensions such as stewardship or spiritual love, creating definitional inconsistency and hindering theoretical integration across studies.

Although servant leadership has been widely studied, notable gaps persist. The literature remains predominantly Western-centric and cross-sectional, offering limited insight into Southeast Asian contexts. Empirical investigations into how servant leadership operates in emotionally demanding, high-autonomy service roles such as boutique hospitality, are especially scarce. Scholars have also highlighted the need to explore antecedents (e.g., leaders' moral frameworks), mediating mechanisms (e.g., trust), follower dynamics, and longitudinal effects. Addressing these gaps through contextually grounded, multi-level research will enhance both the theoretical depth and applied utility of servant leadership scholarship.

Servant leadership has been empirically linked to enhanced interpersonal dynamics and follower-driven performance. Wu et al. (2013), using time-lagged data from 304 employee-supervisor dyads in Chinese hotels, found that servant leadership significantly boosted customer-oriented extra-role behaviours (OCBs). Likewise, Liden et al. (2013) reported that servant-led service units outperformed others in job performance, creativity, and customer service. These results underscore the model's effectiveness in service contexts. The present study's focus on empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct is grounded in this evidence: fostering open communication and autonomy appears to unlock discretionary effort and elevate service outcomes.

To condense, the literature shows widespread agreement on servant leadership's core tenets and positive influence. Yet the field calls for finer-grained, context-sensitive research like Southeast Asian hospitality. Addressing these gaps will deepen understanding of "why" and "how" servant leadership works, and when it may not.

2.2 Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being (PWB) has gained prominence in organisational and leadership research due to its strong associations with employee performance, resilience, and retention. Departing from hedonic models that equate well-being with happiness or life satisfaction (Diener

et al., 1999; Ryan and Deci, 2001), contemporary scholarship increasingly adopts a eudaimonic lens, emphasising purposeful functioning and the realisation of potential. Within this paradigm, Ryff's (1989; revised 1995) six-factor model remains foundational, defining PWB through dimensions such as autonomy, personal growth, and purpose in life. Ryff argues that "quality of life should be understood based on how well a person functions as a member of society," rather than merely by individual happiness. Ryff's model instead foregrounds meaning, virtue, and self-realisation as intrinsic goods (Jung et al., 2023), positing that organisational effectiveness stems not from transient satisfaction, but from sustained human flourishing.

Ryff's seminal model of psychological well-being (PWB) conceptualises well-being as six distinct yet interrelated dimensions of eudaimonic functioning: Self-Acceptance, Environmental Mastery, Positive Relations with Others, Personal Growth, Purpose in Life, and Autonomy (Figure 1) (Seo et al., 2019). While each dimension reflects a unique domain of psychological flourishing, collectively they form a comprehensive framework of "positive functioning" across the lifespan.

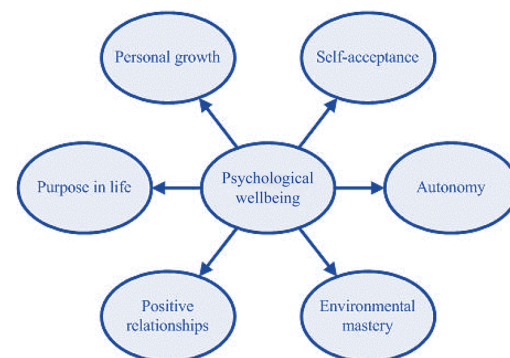


Figure 1: Dimensions of the psychological well-being (Li, 2021)

There is strong scholarly consensus on the conceptual robustness and applied value of Ryff's psychological well-being (PWB) model. Empirical studies across varied populations report high internal consistency ($\alpha = .86-.93$), strong test-retest reliability ($r = .81-.88$), and solid structural validity (van Dierendonck, 2004; Burns and Machin, 2008). Ryff's original and replicated studies support a second-order factor structure, wherein six interrelated dimensions converge into a unified PWB construct (Seo et al., 2019), reinforcing its multidimensional yet cohesive nature. In organisational settings, PWB has been linked to enhanced job satisfaction, engagement, and coping, and negatively associated with burnout and turnover intention. These results affirm the model's practical relevance in hospitality, where fostering facets such as

environmental mastery and purpose can yield measurable performance benefits.

Despite its theoretical prominence, Ryff's model faces ongoing scrutiny regarding factorial stability and cross-cultural applicability. Empirical studies have reported high inter-correlations among dimensions such as Personal Growth, Purpose, and Environmental Mastery, raising concerns about construct overlap (Springer et al., 2006). Moreover, abbreviated or translated versions of the scale often fail to replicate the original six-factor structure, with cross-loadings or dimensional collapse observed in various contexts. For instance, Kafka and Kozma (2002) identified up to 15 emergent factors in Canadian samples, while studies using the 18-item version in China could not validate the original structure. Critics suggest that dimensions like Autonomy and Self-Acceptance - rooted in Western individualism, may not translate meaningfully in collectivist cultures. These inconsistencies raise questions about whether the model's conceptual integrity holds universally, or whether observed deviations are artefacts of measurement and cultural nuance.

While Ryff's model is well-established within psychology and health research, it remains markedly underutilised in hospitality studies, despite the sector's high emotional labour, interpersonal intensity, and autonomy demands. Existing research tends to rely on hedonic proxies such as job satisfaction or burnout, neglecting deeper eudaimonic constructs like meaning, growth, and virtue. In the Singaporean context, empirical applications of Ryff's dimensions are particularly scarce, especially facets such as Environmental Mastery and Autonomy, which are vital in navigating customer interactions in boutique hotels. Moreover, many studies adopt a fragmented view of well-being, isolating individual dimensions rather than addressing the interdependent nature of psychological functioning. Crucially, there is also a lack of empirical work connecting leadership styles—especially servant leadership—with the full scope of Ryff's framework. This is a notable omission given the strong conceptual alignment: servant leadership, through its emphasis on empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct, is theoretically well-suited to foster core dimensions of psychological well-being such as Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, and Positive Relations. In summary, Ryff's PWB model offers a rigorous alternative to hedonic approaches and captures the deeper facets of human functioning crucial for sustainable performance. While questions remain regarding its measurement and cultural generalisability, its theoretical integrity and empirical utility make it an ideal lens for exploring leadership-driven well-being in contemporary service settings.

2.3 Proposed Model and Hypotheses

This study proposes a conceptual model to examine the relationship between specific servant leadership behaviours demonstrated by managers and the psychological well-being of on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection Singapore. The model focuses on three key dimensions of servant leadership derived from Liden et al.'s (2008) work as mentioned above: Managerial Empathy, Managerial Empowerment, and Managerial Ethical Behaviour. These leadership behaviours are treated as independent variables, while Psychological Well-Being, based on Ryff's (1995) multidimensional model, is the dependent variable.

The proposed model assumes that servant leadership behaviours can independently contribute to employee mental health and psychological resilience. By fostering emotional connection, professional growth, and moral consistency, servant leaders are theorised to create working conditions that enhance overall well-being.

Accordingly, each servant leadership behaviour has a positive direct effect on employee psychological well-being. This leads to the following formulated hypotheses:

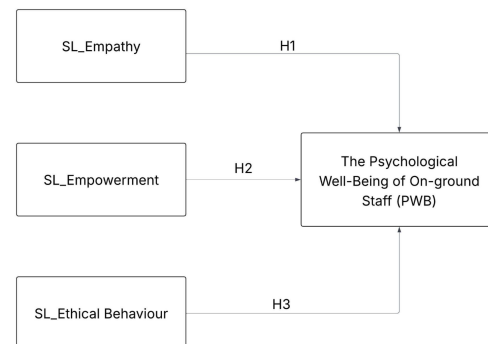


Figure 2: The Influences of Servant Leadership (SL) Behaviours on The Psychological Well-Being (PWB) of On-ground Staff (The author, 2025).

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Impact of Managerial Empathy on PWB.

H1o: There is no relationship between Managerial Empathy and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

H1a: There is a positive relationship between Managerial Empathy and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Impact of Managerial Empowerment on PWB.

H2o: There is no relationship between Managerial Empowerment and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

H2a: There is a positive relationship between Managerial Empowerment and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Impact of Managerial Ethical Behaviour on PWB.

H3o: There is no relationship between Managerial Ethical Behaviour and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

H3a: There is a positive relationship between Managerial Ethical Behaviour and on-ground employees' psychological well-being.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

An effective research design is the intellectual architecture of any rigorous inquiry, strategically aligning paradigms, approaches, and methods to ensure conceptual clarity and empirical precision (Gamage, 2025). This intellectual structure is inherently shaped by the underlying philosophical stance of the researcher, and in this study, it is grounded in the positivist worldview.

“For the positivist, truth is objective and discoverable as there is a reality out there to be studied, captured, and understood” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p. 11). Grounded in the belief that reality is objective and measurable through empirical observation and analysis (Turner, 2001; Hussain et al., 2013), this study adopts a positivist paradigm, which is an ontological position that necessitates a commitment to systematic measurement, empirical rigour, and the pursuit of generalisable knowledge. This approach is appropriate because it supports the rigorous measurement of servant leadership behaviours and psychological well-being, enabling generalisable and unbiased results. This aligns directly with the study's aim to analyse measurable relationships between these variables within The Heritage Collection Singapore.

Anchored in the philosophical foundations of positivism, this study chooses a deductive research approach as the most logically coherent and methodologically rigorous means of examining the proposed relationships. Deductive approach begins with well-established theories, formulates precise hypotheses and then empirically tests them (Hyde, 2000; Azungah, 2018). This method provides structure, precision, and rigour through hypothesis-driven testing within the positivist paradigm. In comparison, while inductive reasoning builds theory from observations (Thomas, 2006) and abductive reasoning seeks the most plausible explanation for surprising phenomena (Dobson et al., 2012; Awuzie and McDermott, 2017), deductive emerges as the best choice for this research because it allows for hypothesis testing. Contextually, this study employs a deductive

approach grounded in Servant Leadership theory (Liden et al., 2008) and Ryff's well-being model (Ryff, 1995), providing a robust theoretical basis for hypothesis testing. This design supports the use of structured surveys and parametric analysis, such as multiple regression, to quantitatively assess the relationship between leadership behaviours and psychological well-being, making it ideal for this study. By applying established theory within the context of a boutique hotel in Singapore, the study critically evaluates the generalisability of these constructs. As per Pearse (2019), this approach also aligns with the positivist paradigm, ensuring methodological rigour, transparency, and replicability.

To align methodological rigor with the study's relational objectives, a correlational quantitative design was adopted, enabling the examination of naturally occurring associations without experimental intervention (Asamoah, 2014; Curtis et al., 2015). Structured surveys conducted in a real-world hospitality setting allowed for the systematic analysis of the strength and direction of relationships between servant leadership behaviours and psychological well-being. Rooted in a positivist paradigm and guided by deductive reasoning, this methodological framework offered internal coherence and empirical reliability, effectively supporting the use of hierarchical multiple regression to test hypothesis-driven associations within the context of the chosen company.

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

This study focused on on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection Singapore—a boutique hospitality group comprising approximately 50 front-line staff operating under decentralised management. Given their autonomous roles and direct guest interaction, this context was well-suited for examining the effects of servant leadership on psychological well-being. To enhance objectivity and minimise selection bias, a simple random sampling technique was employed. Eligibility criteria required participants to be current staff aged 18 or above with at least three months' tenure under their current manager, ensuring adequate exposure to leadership behaviours. Former employees were excluded to maintain temporal alignment between perceived leadership and present managerial practices.

A structured survey instrument comprising 19 questions was employed to collect data (Appendix F). The survey included validated items developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Liden et al., (2008), whose items demonstrated consistently high internal consistency, as verified through Cronbach's alpha. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 =

Strongly Agree, allowing for quantifiable analysis of attitudes and experiences. The survey was administered electronically to maximise accessibility and response efficiency. Out of 50 invited employees, 48 valid responses were received, representing a 96% response rate, substantially strengthening the reliability of the data and its representativeness of the target population.

3.3 Measures

According to van den Berg (ca. 2025), variables measured at higher levels carry greater informational precision. In this study, the survey instrument comprised variables across multiple measurement levels. Core independent variables and the dependent variable were treated as interval-level data, consistent with standard practice in quantitative research and to permit the use of parametric analyses, including multiple regression. Demographic variables were incorporated at appropriate measurement levels: gender and job role were coded as nominal variables, while age and tenure were treated as ordinal data.

This study assessed the dependent variable—Psychological Well-being (PWB)—using the Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being as adapted by Seifert (2005), which measures six theoretically grounded dimensions. Each dimension demonstrated strong internal consistency reliability in this study: Autonomy ($\alpha = .83$), Environmental Mastery ($\alpha = .86$), Positive Relations with Others ($\alpha = .88$), Purpose in Life ($\alpha = .88$), Personal Growth ($\alpha = .85$), and Self-Acceptance ($\alpha = .91$). These dimensions were measured using Likert-scale items tailored to the workplace context. Sample items include:

- Autonomy: “I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from my team’s.”
- Environmental Mastery: “I am good at managing the challenges of my daily work.”
- Personal Growth: “I feel like I am developing and growing through my job experiences.”
- Positive Relations: “I enjoy warm and trusting relationships with my coworkers.”
- Purpose in Life: “I feel my work contributes to something meaningful.”
- Self-Acceptance: “In general, I feel good about myself and the work I do.”

The three independent variables—Managerial Empathy, Empowerment, and Ethical Behaviour—were measured using the Multidimensional Measure of Servant Leadership (MMSL) developed by Liden et al. (2008). Each construct was assessed via a validated three-item scale, demonstrating strong internal reliability: $\alpha = .91$ for empathy, $\alpha = .89$ for empowerment, and

$\alpha = .85$ for ethical behaviour. These coefficients affirm the psychometric soundness of the instrument within this study’s context. Examples of items include: “My manager shows concern for my emotional well-being”, “My manager treats all members fairly”, etc.

3.4 Data Analysis

A hierarchy of multiple regression analyses was conducted, using IBM SPSS Statistics to assess the impact of servant leadership practices on the psychological health of employees. This method allows for the estimation of the incremental variance in well-being explained by the major predictors after controlling for demographic variables. This two-step strategy was utilised to clearly isolate the effects of background variables from the leadership behaviours under investigation.

Prior to regression analysis, demographic variables were dummy-coded to enable their inclusion as control variables. Reference categories were selected to provide meaningful comparisons: 18–30 years for Age (representing early-career employees common in hospitality), “Less than 1 year” for Tenure (to contrast with more experienced staff), Female for Gender (reflecting higher representation), and “DC–Digital Concierge (Front Desk)” for Position (due to its central, guest-facing role in operations).

In Step 1 (Block 1), demographic control variables—age, tenure, gender, and job role (dummy-coded)—were entered. In Step 2 (Block 2), the three servant leadership variables were added. Predictors were entered simultaneously within each block using the enter method. Composite scores were computed by averaging multiple Likert-scale items, and nominal demographic variables were dummy-coded for inclusion. The change in R^2 across blocks assessed the incremental explanatory power of leadership behaviours beyond demographic characteristics.

3.5 Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations are vital in safeguarding participant rights and ensuring research integrity, particularly when human respondents are involved. To ensure informed consent, all participants were provided with a Participant Information Sheet clearly outlining the study’s purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and right to withdraw without consequence. Written consent was obtained electronically prior to survey commencement. To protect identity, participant anonymity was maintained throughout the study by assigning unique identifiers and avoiding the collection of names or identifying details. Responses were handled confidentially and are not attributable to any

individual in the report. Data were collected via Google Forms and stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher. No raw data will be shared with third parties and all records will be retained until December 2025, after which they will be permanently deleted.

3.6 Limitations

Methodological limitations inevitably shape the interpretability and generalisability of research outcomes (Price and Murnan, 2004). Despite the use of simple random sampling to minimise selection bias, the small sample size ($N = 50$) limits statistical power and reduces the external validity of the results, restricting generalisability beyond The Heritage Collection. The cross-sectional design further constrains causal inference, as observed associations between servant leadership behaviours and psychological well-being may be reciprocal or confounded by unmeasured variables (Tsai et al., 2022). Moreover, reliance on self-reported data introduces the risk of common method bias and social desirability effects, potentially inflating observed relationships. Although validated instruments were employed to enhance construct validity, the exclusive use of a single-source survey remains a limitation. Finally, the extensive scope of the questionnaire may have induced response fatigue, potentially undermining data accuracy.

Chapter 4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

This chapter presents the results from the statistical analyses conducted to explore the relationship between servant leadership behaviours and the psychological well-being of on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection Singapore. To aid interpretation of the following statistical analysis, Table 1 below defines key SPSS terms used throughout the Results chapter and provides common thresholds for their interpretation.

Term	Definition	Standard Interpretation/ Threshold
M	Mean (Average) score of responses.	Gives a central tendency of the data; e.g., $M = 3.27$ on a 5-point Likert scale.
SD	Standard Deviation — measures how spread out the responses are.	Smaller SD = more consistency; larger SD = greater variability.
N	Sample Size — number of valid responses	
r	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient — measures strength and direction of relationship.	Ranges from -1 to 1 . Strong: $> .50$, Moderate: $.30-.49$, Weak: $< .30$.
p / p-value	p-value — indicates statistical significance of a result.	$p \leq .05$ = statistically significant; $p \geq .05$ = not significant.
R	Multiple Correlation Coefficient — correlation between all predictors and the DV.	R closer to 1 = stronger relationship; R itself is less reported than R^2 .
R^2	R Square — percentage of variance in DV explained by predictors.	$R^2 = .61$ means 61% of the variation in well-being is explained by the model.
Adjusted R^2	R^2 adjusted for number of predictors — more accurate for small samples.	Typically slightly lower than R^2 ; preferred when comparing models.
R^2 Change	The increase in R^2 when new variables are added to the model.	Indicates additional variance explained by added predictors.
F	F-statistic — tests overall model significance.	Higher F = stronger model; use with p-value to assess significance.
F Change	Change in F when comparing two models in hierarchical regression.	Shows if new predictors significantly improve the model.
β (Beta)	Standardised Coefficient — shows strength/direction of each predictor's effect.	$\beta > .30$ = strong; positive = direct, negative = inverse relationship.
B	Unstandardised Coefficient — raw score effect of predictor on DV.	Used for interpretation in original units (e.g. Likert scale).
t-value	Tests significance of individual predictor coefficients.	Associated with p-value; $t > 2$ or $p < .05$ typically indicates significance.
Tolerance	Measures collinearity — how much a variable is explained by others.	Tolerance $< .10$ = potential multicollinearity problem.
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor — inverse of Tolerance.	VIF > 10 = serious multicollinearity concern; VIF < 5 = acceptable.
SE (or Std. Error)	Standard Error of Estimate — average distance between observed and predicted values.	Smaller SE = better model fit; check in Model Summary table.
df	Degrees of Freedom — used in F-test calculations.	Reflects sample size minus number of estimated parameters.

Table 1. Definitions and Interpretations of Key Statistical Terms Used in the Analysis (The author, 2025).

Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 2. The mean score for Psychological Well-Being was 3.27 ($SD=1.22$), suggesting a moderate level of overall well-being among respondents. Among the independent variables, Managerial Empowerment received the highest average score ($M= 3.57$, $SD=1.02$), followed by Managerial Ethical Behaviour ($M=3.31$, $SD=1.13$) and Managerial Empathy ($M=3.10$, $SD=1.09$).

Demographic dummy variables were also included as control variables in the regression analysis. Female participants comprised approximately 41.7% of the sample with $M=0.42$ (0.4167), $SD=0.50$ while 37.5% of respondents had been employed for less than one year. Job role dummies indicated that 37.5% of respondents worked in Housekeeping, 20.8% in Guest-relation Service, and 18.8% as Technicians, with Front Desk serving as the reference category. With respect to age, 35.4% of employees were aged 31-40, and 8.3% were aged 41-50 while the rest were aged 18-30.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Wellbeing_Total	3.2674	1.21978	48
HSKP Dummy variable	.3750	.48925	48
HA Dummy variable	.2083	.41041	48
Tech Dummy variable	.1875	.39444	48
31-40 Dummy Variable	.3542	.48332	48
Age41-50 Dummy	.0833	.27931	48
Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable	.3750	.48925	48
Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable	.2083	.41041	48
Tenure 7-10 dummy	.0625	.24462	48
gen-female dummy	.4167	.49822	48
Empathy_Total	3.1042	1.08972	48
Empowerment_Total	3.5694	1.01515	48
Ethical_Total	3.3125	1.12653	48

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Table in SPSS (N=48)

4.2 Inferential Statistics

Prior to conducting the hierarchical regression, Pearson’s correlation coefficients were examined to assess bivariate relationships between key variables (Table 3). Significant positive correlations were found between Psychological Well-Being and Managerial Empathy ($r = .62, p < .001$), Empowerment ($r = .60, p < .001$), and Ethical Behaviour ($r = .58, p < .001$) . These results suggest that employees who perceive higher levels of servant leadership behaviours from their managers tend to report better psychological well-being. In contrast, significant negative correlations were found between Psychological Well-Being and being female ($r = -.41, p=.002$), working in housekeeping ($r = -.35, p= .007$), and having 4-6 years of tenure ($r = -.34, p= .009$), suggesting that certain demographic groups may experience lower well-being outcomes.

		Correlations															
		Wellbeing_Total	HSKP Dummy variable	HA Dummy variable	Tech Dummy variable	31-40 Dummy Variable	Age41-50 Dummy	Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable	Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable	Tenure 7-10 Dummy Variable	gen-female dummy	Empathy_Total	Empowerment_Total	Ethical_Total			
Pearson Correlation	Wellbeing_Total	1.000	.326	.207	.177	.354	.083	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	HSKP Dummy variable	.326	1.000	.207	.177	.354	.083	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	HA Dummy variable	.207	.207	1.000	.207	.354	.083	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Tech Dummy variable	.177	.177	.207	1.000	.354	.083	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	31-40 Dummy Variable	.354	.354	.354	.354	1.000	.083	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Age41-50 Dummy	.083	.083	.083	.083	.083	1.000	.375	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable	.375	.375	.375	.375	.375	.375	1.000	.208	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable	.208	.208	.208	.208	.208	.208	.208	1.000	.062	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Tenure 7-10 Dummy Variable	.062	.062	.062	.062	.062	.062	.062	.062	1.000	.417	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	gen-female dummy	.417	.417	.417	.417	.417	.417	.417	.417	.417	1.000	.620	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Empathy_Total	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	.620	1.000	.599	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Empowerment_Total	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	.599	1.000	.580	.211	.338	.215
	Ethical_Total	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	.580	1.000	.211	.338	.215
	Wellbeing_Total	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	.211	1.000	.338	.215
	HSKP Dummy variable	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	.338	1.000	.215
	HA Dummy variable	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	.215	1.000

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Key Variables

A hierarchical multiple regression was then conducted to assess the extent to which servant leadership behaviours predict employee psychological well-being beyond the influence of demographic factors. In Step 1, control variables (age, tenure, gender, and job role dummy variables) were entered. In Step 2, the three leadership variables were added: Managerial Empathy, Managerial Empowerment, and Managerial Ethical Behaviour. In Model 1 (control variables only) produced an R² value of .412 (Table 4), indicating that 41.2%

of the variance in PWB was explained by demographic factors alone, $F(9, 38) = 2.96, p = .009$ (Table 5). Among the controls, being female ($\beta = -.37, p = .015$), working as Technician ($\beta = -.43, p = .028$), and working in Housekeeping ($\beta = -.44, p = .025$) were all significant negative predictors of well-being (Table 5), suggesting these employees tend to experience lower levels of psychological health. Other demographic factors were not statistically significant. In Model 2, which included the three servant leadership behaviours, resulted in an R² of .615, and Adjusted R² of .483 (Table 4). This represents a significant increase in explanatory power, with R² change = 0.203 (Table 4), F change (3, 35) = 6.15, $p=.002$ (Table 5). The model was significant overall, $F(12, 35) = 4.66, p < .001$, indicating that the leadership variables significantly improved the model fit.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.642 ^a	.412	.273	1.04030	.412	2.957	9	38	.009
2	.784 ^b	.615	.483	.87221	.203	6.148	3	35	.002

a. Predictors: (Constant), gen-female dummy, Tenure 7-10 dummy, 31-40 Dummy Variable, Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable, HA Dummy variable, HSKP Dummy variable, Age41-50 Dummy, Tech Dummy variable, Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable

b. Predictors: (Constant), gen-female dummy, Tenure 7-10 dummy, 31-40 Dummy Variable, Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable, HA Dummy variable, HSKP Dummy variable, Age41-50 Dummy, Tech Dummy variable, Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable, Empowerment_Total, Empathy_Total, Ethical_Total

Table 4: Model Summary for Hierarchical Regression

ANOVA ^a					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	28.805	9	3.201	2.957
	Residual	41.125	38	1.082	
	Total	69.930	47		
2	Regression	42.997	12	3.583	4.656
	Residual	26.933	35	.770	
	Total	69.930	47		

a. Dependent Variable: Wellbeing_Total

b. Predictors: (Constant), gen-female dummy, Tenure 7-10 dummy, 31-40 Dummy Variable, Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable, HA Dummy variable, HSKP Dummy variable, Age41-50 Dummy, Tech Dummy variable, Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable

c. Predictors: (Constant), gen-female dummy, Tenure 7-10 dummy, 31-40 Dummy Variable, Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable, HA Dummy variable, HSKP Dummy variable, Age41-50 Dummy, Tech Dummy variable, Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable, Empowerment_Total, Empathy_Total, Ethical_Total

Table 5: ANOVA Table

However, none of the individual leadership variables emerged as significant predictors on their own. Empathy ($\beta = .24, p = .191$), Empowerment ($\beta = .23, p = .112$), and Ethical Behaviour ($\beta = .21, p = .282$) were all positively associated with psychological well-being but did not reach statistical significance. This may be due to moderate multicollinearity or shared variance among the three leadership behaviours, as the intercorrelations between these predictors were substantial (Empathy–Empowerment: $r = .55$, Empathy–Ethical Behaviour: $r = .72$). Nevertheless, the significant improvement in R² indicates that their combined contribution to the model is meaningful. Notably, once the leadership behaviours were added, the significance of most demographics diminished, suggesting that perceptions of managerial leadership behaviours may partially mediate the relationship between employee

background characteristics and well-being outcomes. The only demographic variable that remained significant in Model 2 was Housekeeping ($\beta = -.34, p = .042$), implying that housekeeping staff may continue to experience lower well-being regardless of managerial behaviour, potentially due to intrinsic job demands.

Multicollinearity diagnostics (Tolerance > .29, VIF < 3.40) indicated that no problematic collinearity existed among predictors (Table 6,8). The standard error of the estimate improved from 1.040 in Model 1 to 0.877 in Model 2, supporting the stronger predictive performance of the full model.

In summary, the regression results partially support the alternative hypotheses. The overall model significantly improved when servant leadership variables were introduced, suggesting that Managerial Empathy, Empowerment, and Ethical Behaviour collectively contribute meaningfully to employees' psychological well-being. As such, the null hypothesis for the combined model is rejected. However, the individual predictors did not reach statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level. Specifically, Managerial Empathy ($p = .191$), Empowerment ($p = .112$), and Ethical Behaviour ($p = .282$) were all positively associated with psychological well-being but not significant on their own. Therefore:

- Ho1 is retained (no significant relationship between Empathy and well-being),
- Ho2 is retained (no significant relationship between Empowerment and well-being), and
- Ho3 is retained (no significant relationship between Ethical Behaviour and well-being).

While H1a, H2a, and H3a (which posited that Empathy, Empowerment, and Ethical Behaviour would each be positively associated with PWB) were not supported individually, the significant R^2 change (R^2 change = .203, $p = .002$) suggests that the combined effect of these servant leadership behaviours is substantial, practically important, and influential in supporting employee psychological well-being in the context of boutique hospitality operations such as The Heritage Collection Singapore. These results affirm the theoretical relevance of servant leadership for employee mental health but also point to the need for further research into role-specific experiences and possible mediation pathways.

Table 6: Coefficients Table

Coefficients ^a									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics			
						Tolerance	VIF		
1	(Constant)	4.631	.403	11.488	<.001				
	HSKP Dummy variable	-1.084	.465	-.435	.2332	.446	2.245		
	HA Dummy variable	-.457	.487	-.154	.939	.577	1.733		
	Tech Dummy variable	-1.327	.582	-.429	.279	.436	2.292		
	31-40 Dummy Variable	.472	.473	.187	.998	.324	.440	2.271	
	Age41-50 Dummy Variable	.697	.800	.160	.871	.389	.462	2.166	
	Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable	-.530	.422	-.213	1.257	.216	.541	1.848	
	Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable	-1.127	.588	-.379	1.918	.063	.396	2.528	
	Tenure 7-10 dummy	-.426	.935	-.086	.456	.651	.440	2.270	
	gen-female dummy	-.907	.357	-.370	2.542	.015	.729	1.372	
2	(Constant)	1.162	.890	1.305	.200				
	HSKP Dummy variable	-.851	.404	-.341	2.108	.042	.420	2.383	
	HA Dummy variable	.048	.430	.016	.110	.913	.525	1.905	
	Tech Dummy variable	-.563	.538	-.182	1.048	.302	.364	2.747	
	31-40 Dummy Variable	.498	.404	.197	1.232	.226	.430	2.328	
	Age41-50 Dummy Variable	.964	.710	.221	1.359	.183	.417	2.399	
	Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable	-.021	.390	-.009	.955	.957	.450	2.220	
	Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable	-.503	.519	-.169	.970	.339	.361	2.769	
	Tenure 7-10 dummy	-.514	.823	-.103	.624	.537	.404	2.475	
	gen-female dummy	-.424	.326	-.173	1.301	.202	.622	1.609	
Empathy_Total		.269	.202	.241	1.333	.191	.338	2.957	
Empowerment_Total		.278	.171	.231	1.639	.112	.546	1.831	
Ethical_Total		.229	.209	.211	1.092	.282	.294	3.399	

a. Dependent Variable: Wellbeing_Total

Table 7: Excluded Variables

Excluded Variables ^a							Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Tolerance	VIF	Minimum Tolerance
1	Empathy_Total	.493 ^b	3.537	.001	.503	.612	1.633	.369
	Empowerment_Total	.420 ^b	3.351	.002	.483	.774	1.291	.382
	Ethical_Total	.511 ^b	3.289	.002	.476	.510	1.959	.366

a. Dependent Variable: Wellbeing_Total

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), gen-female dummy, Tenure 7-10 dummy, 31-40 Dummy Variable, Tenure 1-3 Dummy Variable, HA Dummy variable, HSKP Dummy variable, Age41-50 Dummy, Tech Dummy variable, Tenure 4-6 Dummy Variable

Table 8: Collinearity Diagnostics

Collinearity Diagnostics ^a													
Model		Predictors		Constant		Empathy		Empowerment		Ethical Leadership		Tenure	
		Tolerance		VIF		Partial Correlation		Partial Correlation		Partial Correlation		Partial Correlation	
1	Empathy	1.000		1.000		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
2	Empathy	.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
3	Empathy	.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
		.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000	
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
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.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
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.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000		.000		.000		.000			
.999		1.001		.000									

Chapter 5. Discussion

5.1 The Contribution of Servant Leadership Behaviours to Employee Psychological Well-Being Beyond Demographic Factors

The first objective of this study was to assess the extent to which servant leadership behaviours (specifically managerial empathy, empowerment, and ethical behaviour) contribute to employees' psychological well-being after accounting for demographic influences. The hierarchical multiple regression analysis provided compelling evidence that servant leadership behaviours collectively offer a significant explanatory advantage beyond demographic factors. In Model 1, control variables such as gender, tenure, job role, and age explained 41.2% of the variance in well-being. However, upon adding the leadership variables in Model 2, the explained variance rose markedly to 61.5%, with an R^2 change of .203 that was statistically significant ($p = .002$). This suggests that servant leadership behaviours account for an additional 20.3% of the variance in well-being, thus confirming their independent and meaningful impact.

While none of the individual servant leadership dimensions such as Empathy ($\beta = .24, p = .191$), Empowerment ($\beta = .23, p = .112$), or Ethical

Behaviour ($\beta = .21$, $p = .282$) emerged as statistically significant predictors on their own, their collective contribution to well-being was substantial. This result supports van Dierendonck's (2010) conceptualisation of servant leadership as a holistic construct where the integrated enactment of multiple dimensions creates a more influential leadership presence than any single trait alone. Moreover, it reinforces Liden et al.'s (2008) assertion that servant leaders influence employee outcomes not only through discrete actions but by cultivating a coherent culture of trust, fairness, and emotional support. The results also revealed that, following the inclusion of leadership variables, many demographic controls lost their statistical significance. This attenuation may indicate a buffering or mediating role of servant leadership in reducing the negative impact of certain demographic disadvantages. This interpretation is consistent with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, where leaders serve as behavioural models whose ethical, empowering, and empathetic behaviours are internalised by followers, thereby reshaping their workplace perceptions and emotional states. By modelling supportive behaviours, servant leaders can create psychologically safe environments that help diminish the effects of demographic-based stressors.

Nevertheless, the sustained significance of the Housekeeping dummy ($\beta = -.34$, $p = .042$) signals persistent structural or job-specific challenges. Employees in housekeeping may experience more physically demanding and less socially recognised work, which could limit the positive influence of leadership. This result aligns with previous research by Karatepe (2013) and Lu and Gursoy (2016), who argue that the emotional and physical demands of housekeeping roles are distinct stressors that leadership alone cannot fully alleviate. As such, servant leadership should be complemented by role-specific organisational support strategies, such as workload management, flexible scheduling, and career progression opportunities.

5.2 Psychological Well-Being Among On-Ground Employees at The Heritage Collection

The second objective was to analyse the psychological well-being of on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection. Descriptive statistics revealed a mean well-being score of 3.27 (SD = 1.22), indicating a moderate level of psychological health among employees. While this score is not alarmingly low, it suggests that employees are functioning at a baseline level of well-being rather than flourishing. This middle-ground result should be seen in the context of the emotionally demanding nature of hospitality work, which

frequently involves high guest expectations, time pressure, and limited autonomy.

Particularly concerning are the statistically significant negative correlations between psychological well-being and three demographic variables: gender (female: $r = -.41$, $p = .002$), job role (housekeeping: $r = -.35$, $p = .007$), and tenure (4–6 years: $r = -.34$, $p = .009$). These relationships point to the nuanced and sometimes cumulative challenges faced by specific subgroups within the workforce. For example, women may experience greater emotional labour or gender-based role expectations, leading to elevated emotional exhaustion (Karatepe and Karadas, 2015). Similarly, employees in the 4–6 year tenure band may encounter career stagnation or unrealised growth expectations, which are known predictors of reduced job satisfaction and disengagement (Wong et al., 2024).

Moreover, the elevated stress reported by housekeeping staff likely stems from a convergence of physical demands, emotional invisibility, and limited recognition—conditions that constrain key dimensions of Ryff's (1995) psychological well-being model, notably autonomy, environmental mastery, and positive social relations. These constraints suggest that roles characterised by low visibility and restricted decision-making power may inherently undermine employee flourishing. Thus, the moderate average well-being score should not be interpreted as benign; rather, it conceals substantial disparities across roles, underscoring the need for role-specific, targeted interventions. The regression results indicate that while demographic factors play a role, psychological well-being is significantly influenced by the social-relational climate fostered by servant leadership. Notably, positive leadership behaviours appear to mitigate some adverse effects associated with demographic disadvantages. This underscores a critical implication for HR professionals and hospitality leaders: cultivating servant leadership practices—centred on empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct—can yield substantial and inclusive benefits for employee well-being.

5.3 Employee Perceptions of Servant Leadership and Their Relationship to Well-Being

The third objective was to explore employee perceptions of their managers' servant leadership behaviours and how these perceptions relate to psychological well-being. Pearson's correlation results showed strong positive relationships between perceived Empathy ($r = .62$), Empowerment ($r = .60$), and Ethical Behaviour ($r = .58$) and employee well-being, all statistically significant at $p < .001$. These results confirm prior literature suggesting that the relational quality of leadership, particularly when grounded in servant principles, has a profound impact on

how employees feel about their work and themselves (Yoshida et al., 2014; Eva et al., 2019). These strong associations suggest that employees are attuned to the leadership climate and that their perceptions translate meaningfully into psychological outcomes. Importantly, the shared variance among the three leadership predictors suggests that employees do not view these behaviours as isolated or compartmentalised but as facets of a broader leadership ethos. This reinforces the idea of servant leadership as a coherent identity rather than a toolkit of tactics. As Liden et al. (2008) note, when employees perceive consistency across multiple dimensions of leadership, trust and psychological safety are enhanced.

The context of The Heritage Collection further amplifies the relevance of these perceptions. As a boutique, digitally enabled hospitality provider, the organisation relies heavily on staff autonomy, adaptability, and emotional labour. In such decentralised settings, employees benefit from leaders who empower them to act with discretion while also modelling ethical judgement and emotional sensitivity. The positive perception of leadership behaviours within this context suggests that the organisational culture already aligns with servant leadership principles. This creates a foundation upon which further leadership development can be built.

Nonetheless, the lack of individual significance for each leadership dimension in the regression analysis suggests that their influence may be more interdependent or operate through mediating mechanisms. Future research might investigate whether psychological safety, role clarity, or perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between servant leadership and well-being. Additionally, qualitative inquiry could enrich our understanding of how employees interpret and emotionally respond to servant leadership behaviours.

In sum, while individual servant leadership traits may not independently predict well-being in a statistically significant manner, their collective presence has a demonstrably positive impact on employees' psychological health. The results imply that cultivating a leadership climate grounded in empathy, empowerment, and ethical behaviour is vital for employee well-being in hospitality settings. These insights offer valuable direction for leadership development, HR strategy, and workplace culture initiatives at The Heritage Collection and comparable service organisations.

Chapter 6. Conclusions

This study set out to explore the relationship between servant leadership behaviours, specifically managerial empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct, and the psychological well-

being of on-ground employees at The Heritage Collection Singapore. Drawing on Liden et al.'s (2008) servant leadership model and Ryff's (1995) multidimensional well-being framework, the research aimed to identify whether these leadership traits contributed significantly to employee well-being above and beyond demographic influences, how employees currently experience well-being, and how their perceptions of leadership relate to this experience.

The results show that servant leadership, when conceptualised as an integrated leadership climate, substantially enhances the predictive power of psychological well-being, accounting for an additional 20.3% of variance beyond demographic controls. This underscores the theoretical claim that servant leadership cultivates a relational ecosystem marked by trust, fairness, and autonomy—conditions essential for flourishing in emotionally intensive service roles. For boutique hotels and similar organisations, embedding such leadership practices is not an optional managerial style but a strategic necessity. Notably, the individual components—empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct—were not significant predictors in isolation, reinforcing the premise that their impact derives from their synergistic coherence. This finding affirms the value of cultivating a unified leadership ethos rather than promoting fragmented behavioural traits.

Secondly, the study identified notable disparities in psychological well-being across demographic groups, with female employees, housekeeping staff, and those with 4–6 years' tenure consistently reporting lower scores. Even after accounting for servant leadership behaviours, housekeeping remained a significant negative predictor, indicating that structural stressors—such as physical labour, limited recognition, and emotional invisibility—may undermine the benefits of supportive leadership. As Hviid et al. (2012) argue, chronic job demands and perceived status invisibility can induce persistent psychological strain, even within otherwise positive climates. These findings highlight the limitations of relational leadership alone and underscore the need for targeted structural interventions—such as job redesign, development pathways, and workload redistribution—to address entrenched inequities. Servant leadership must therefore be complemented by systemic reforms to realise inclusive employee well-being.

Thirdly, employee perceptions of leadership were strongly associated with psychological well-being. High ratings of managerial empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct aligned with greater reported flourishing, suggesting that leadership behaviours are interpreted as affirmations of personal worth, fairness, and

trust. These results reinforce the conceptualisation of servant leadership as a coherent ethos rather than a sum of discrete actions. In boutique hospitality—where emotional labour, autonomy, and guest interaction are heightened—such integrative leadership cues are essential to cultivating psychological safety and meaning (Pohlmann et al., 2022). Servant leadership thus emerges not merely as a desirable approach but as a structural necessity for sustaining well-being in contemporary service settings.

The implications of these results transcend the immediate case of The Heritage Collection. As the global boutique hotel sector expands, leadership models attuned to emotionally intensive, high-autonomy service contexts become increasingly indispensable. This study offers both theoretical advancement and operational relevance. Theoretically, it affirms the applicability of Ryff's eudaimonic framework to frontline hospitality roles and empirically demonstrates how specific servant leadership behaviours (empathy, empowerment, and ethical conduct) enhance psychological well-being. Practically, the research calls for the integration of servant leadership into management training, appraisal systems, and organisational values. In particular, empowering middle managers to model ethical conduct, listen empathetically, and delegate authority can transform the emotional climate of the service team. By prioritising relational integrity and psychological flourishing, hospitality firms can reorient leadership development towards cultures of trust, care, and resilience. When institutionalised, such practices hold the potential to transform employee experience and redefine service leadership across the sector.

In light of these results, the author believes that there are several key directions that are recommended for future research. Firstly, longitudinal studies would allow for the assessment of causal and temporal dynamics between servant leadership and psychological well-being, offering a deeper understanding of how perceptions evolve over time. Secondly, larger and more diverse samples across multiple boutique hotels or other hospitality settings would enhance external validity and help identify sector-wide patterns or outliers. Thirdly, qualitative methodologies—such as interviews or ethnographic studies—could yield rich, contextual insights into how servant leadership is enacted and experienced by employees across different cultural and operational settings. Furthermore, future researchers may consider comparative studies involving other leadership models, such as transformational or authentic leadership, to discern relative efficacy and contextual fit. Incorporating psychological mediators (e.g., trust, emotional exhaustion) or

organisational moderators (e.g., team climate, workload) would also contribute to more nuanced explanatory frameworks. Collectively, such studies will refine our understanding of leadership's role in promoting sustainable employee well-being and advance the hospitality industry's capacity to build humane, high-performing workplaces.

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