

Article

Fostering Organisational Performance of Star-Rated Hotels Through Employee Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Commitment and Learning

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Abstract

Employee empowerment is critical in today's globalised era because it helps employees make rapid decisions and adapt swiftly to workplace changes and boosts both employee and organisational performance. However, it remains a commonly misunderstood term in the workplace, as many managers view empowerment practices as a threat to their control. Many managers fail to recognise the importance of employee empowerment and how it affects satisfaction, commitment, learning, and organisational performance, believing that empowering subordinates would weaken their authority and influence. Using social exchange theory, this study examined the mediating roles of job satisfaction and organisational commitment, and the moderating role of organisational learning, in the relationship between employee empowerment and organisational performance. The study gathered data from 362 employees working in five-, four-, and three-star hotels in the Chattogram and Cox's Bazar regions. Using Smart-PLS, structural equation modelling was applied to analyse the data. Employee empowerment is positively associated with job satisfaction, organisational commitment, learning, and performance. Similarly, job satisfaction and organisational commitment mediate the relationship between employee empowerment and organisational performance. Finally, organisational learning moderates the same relationship. This study contributes significantly to the literature by being one of the few studies on the hotel industry in Bangladesh that provides a comprehensive overview of employee empowerment and its impact on organisational performance, particularly emphasising the mediating roles of job satisfaction and organisational commitment and the moderating role of organisational learning.



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Keywords: employee empowerment; job satisfaction; organisational commitment; organisational learning; organisational performance

1. Introduction

Employee empowerment (henceforth EE) is now becoming a trend among organisations, including hotels, for remaining productive and competitive and achieving sustainable performance (Anjum et al., 2025; Dong et al., 2025), as it influences employees' innovative job behaviour (Nuwagaba et al., 2025). Organisations must attract and retain committed employees who are not just resources but are the most important asset (Mahmoud et al.,

2020). Empowered employees are active participants in the sustainability activities of the organisation, offering new solutions and connecting their own ambitions with the goals of the organisation (Dong et al., 2025). They also contribute to organisational performance (after this, OP) through their commitment and engagement (Anjum et al., 2025).

Past studies have also indicated that empowerment can enhance job satisfaction (after this, JS), particularly in the hospitality industry, reduce employee turnover, and help organisations function effectively (AlKahtani et al., 2021; Diah & Cahyadi, 2020). Other studies showed a significant association between employee commitment and OP (Mahmoud et al., 2020; Selvi & Maheswari, 2020). Scholars believe that workers who are more efficient and accountable and who favourably influence organisational productivity are highly committed to the organisation (Nadeem et al., 2018; Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024). Subsequently, employees with high organisational commitment (OC) are more likely to remain with the organisation when satisfied with their jobs (Ćulibrk et al., 2018), and organisations prefer employees with high OC (AlKahtani et al., 2021). Moreover, a culture of continuous learning in the organisation (OL) is cultivated when employees are encouraged to share knowledge, participate in problem-solving, and learn from their experiences (Alfes et al., 2022). This can improve employee engagement and retention, which in turn enhances organisational performance (Urrutia Pereira et al., 2022; Karim et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, EE remains a commonly misunderstood term in the workplace, as managers view empowerment practices with a fear of losing control (Anjum et al., 2025; Dong et al., 2025). Many managers fail to understand the importance of EE and how it affects JS, OC, OL, and OP, believing that empowering subordinates would weaken their authority and influence. Furthermore, many other studies have verified the effect of empowerment on various employee outcome variables, including job satisfaction, engagement, commitment, learning, and employee performance across different organisational contexts (Al-Sabi et al., 2023). In various studies, job satisfaction or organisational commitment has been shown to influence organisational performance, directly or indirectly (García-Juan et al., 2023; AlKahtani et al., 2021; Abid & Ahmed, 2020).

Studies that consider both JS (García-Juan et al., 2023; AlKahtani et al., 2021; Diah & Cahyadi, 2020; Humborstad & Perry, 2011) and OC (Abid & Ahmed, 2020; Meng & Han, 2014; García-Juan et al., 2023) as mediating variables in the link between EE and OP are minimal in the context of the hospitality industry. Moreover, in the Bangladesh hotel industry context, some studies (Islam et al., 2022; Akter et al., 2023) have considered empowerment for determining employee retention and quality of work life. Others have focused on green HRM practices and environmental sustainability (Hasan & Hossain, 2026), green leadership (Alam, 2026), training and development, career development, and organisational commitment as the predictors of work performance (Hosen et al., 2024). In addition, a few studies have examined the moderating role of OL in the relationship between EE and OP in the hospitality industry. Several studies (Alkhalaf & Badewi, 2024; Ullah et al., 2025; Zhu et al., 2025) have examined the role of OL as a mediator across different contexts. However, very few investigations have examined the role of employee empowerment in assessing hotel performance through JS, OC, and OL in the context of the hospitality industry in Bangladesh.

Given these gaps in the literature, this study examines the organisational performance of hotels in Bangladesh through the lens of employee empowerment (EE), job satisfaction (JS), organisational commitment (OC) and organisational learning (OL). The following are the objectives:

- (i) To examine the impact of EE on OP in the Bangladesh hotel industry.
- (ii) To assess the impact of JS and OC on OP in the Bangladesh hotel industry.
- (iii) To investigate how JS and OC mediate the relationship between EE and OP.
- (iv) To assess the moderating role of OL in the association between EE and OP.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Social Exchange Theory

The central tenet of social exchange theory (SET) is that both parties in relationships must abide by certain exchange norms, most notably the reciprocity norm, as they develop loyal and reciprocal commitments over time (Gouldner, 1960; Jones, 2010; Zhao et al., 2020). According to SET, specific workplace precursors lead to interpersonal interactions, often known as social exchange relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano et al., 2017; Jones, 2010). Social exchange relationships emerge when employers pay attention to employees, creating beneficial results. Specifically, SET suggests that individuals develop and sustain relationships in which economic and socio-emotional exchanges may emerge (Jones, 2010).

In other words, SET demonstrates that when employers treat their employees well, the latter act more productively toward the former (Zhao et al., 2020). Companies that help employees and include their input in decision-making are more likely to have more dedicated employees (AlKahtani et al., 2021). Several key themes have been explored through the lens of SET, including employee empowerment, organisational commitment, fairness, and organisational support, and empirical findings confirm the doctrines of social exchange theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2020). In line with SET, as relationships are based on mutual exchanges, when organisations provide empowerment, support, autonomy, and trust, employees are likely to experience increased job satisfaction, greater organisational commitment and learning, and improved performance, thereby boosting organisational performance.

2.2. Employee Empowerment (EE) and Organisational Performance (OP)

EE is critical in today's globalised era because it helps employees make rapid decisions and adapt swiftly to workplace changes and boosts employee and organisational performance (Lathabhavan & Kuppusamy, 2024; Karim et al., 2025). EE is a key element of sustainable HR practices, supporting organisational success, employee well-being, and long-term sustainability (Kramar, 2014; Aust et al., 2020). Empowerment through autonomy, participation in decision-making, and access to relevant information further enhances psychological well-being, work engagement, and job satisfaction, while reducing turnover intentions, improving retention and significantly enhancing OP (Deci et al., 2017; Kim & Beehr, 2018; Lathabhavan & Kuppusamy, 2024; Nadeem et al., 2018). Empowered employees are more likely to make discretionary decisions that foster organisational sustainability, such as environmental initiatives, green innovation, and pro-environmental work practices (Renwick et al., 2013; Dumont et al., 2017). Moreover, EE contributes to positive human resource consequences, such as employee satisfaction, employee interaction, employee loyalty, and favourable employee attitudes, all of which contribute to OP (AlKahtani et al., 2021). Moreover, numerous studies (e.g., García-Juan et al., 2023; Lathabhavan & Kuppusamy, 2024; Otero et al., 2019) have found that EE is significantly and positively associated with OP. Accordingly, the study proposes the following:

H1. *EE is positively related to OP.*

2.3. Employee Empowerment (EE) and Job Satisfaction (JS)

JS is viewed as a measure of how employees assess their employment and the degree to which employees hold positive or negative cognitive beliefs and emotional feelings toward their job and organisation (Daley, 2017; Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020; Mohiya, 2025). Empowerment plays a significant role in enhancing JS (Al-Ababneh et al., 2017). Numerous studies recognise empowerment as a critical component of JS and note

that empowered employees report higher job satisfaction. Moreover, empowerment benefits employees and the organisation (Marta et al., 2021). Employees are satisfied intrinsically and extrinsically at work through the decision-making process, knowledge of job requirements, opportunities for advancement, and easy access to information about the organisation's goals, thereby contributing to job satisfaction (Meng & Han, 2014; Okumus et al., 2018; Pelit et al., 2011). From the perspective of the hotel sector, Saban et al. (2020) found that employees' JS increased when empowered. In addition, several studies (i.e., Al-Ababneh et al., 2017; Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020; Marta et al., 2021; Nikpour, 2018; Pelit et al., 2011) reported that empowered employees were satisfied with their jobs. Hence, the proposition being tested is as follows:

H2. *EE is positively related to JS.*

2.4. Employee Empowerment (EE) and Organisational Commitment (OC)

OC refers to an employee's obligation and loyalty to his/her organisation and job (Mahmoud et al., 2020; Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024). It is an employee's emotional and psychological affection and attachment to his/her firm (Koo et al., 2020). OC is an innate affiliation that occurs when people are passionately involved in the organisation's goals and duties or desire to be a part of it (Sadeghi & Razavi, 2020). Employees who experience empowerment will likely exhibit personal dedication and a higher sense of commitment for putting in high-quality efforts (Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024; Hanaysha, 2016). Empowered employees are loyal to their employers since they are provided with employment, given opportunities, and treated adequately (AlKahtani et al., 2021). According to Ruiz-Palomo et al. (2020), an organisation needs to empower workers to be more self-reliant to make decisions while doing their tasks and providing satisfying customer service. Prior researchers have suggested that empowering employees enhances their trust and commitment to the organisation (Hanaysha, 2016; Kariuki & Kiambati, 2017; Zaraket et al., 2018; Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024). Thus, the suggested hypothesis is as follows:

H3. *EE is positively related to OC.*

2.5. Interrelationships Among Job Satisfaction (JS), Organisational Commitment (OC), and Organisational Performance (OP)

Organisations that provide high levels of JS to their employees will reap the benefits of their excellent work attitude, including engagement and commitment (Saridakis et al., 2020). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to remain with their organisation and contribute to its success than those who are dissatisfied (Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020). Furthermore, Meng and Han (2014) found that JS boosts OP through greater commitment, as satisfied employees exhibit higher dedication and emotional attachment to the organisation and perform better. Thus, JS is an underlying factor for OP because satisfied employees have stronger emotional perceptions of the organisation, which likely impact their loyalty and performance (Daley, 2017; Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020). In addition, several studies (e.g., Saridakis et al., 2020; Ghasempour Ganji et al., 2021) have shown that more satisfied employees are highly committed in diverse work settings, including the hotel industry, and contribute to the organisation's accomplishment. Thus, we propose the following:

H4. *JS is positively related to OP.*

Moreover, it has been demonstrated that OC improves the overall production, efficiency and success of an organisation (Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024) through better quality and innovation, enhanced performance and efficiency of staff, increased job satisfaction, low absenteeism and a lower turnover rate, leading to excellent OP (Oyewobi et al., 2019; Silva et al., 2023; Lim et al., 2017). Empowered employees with a stronger OC improve OP and increase productivity (Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2024). Employees committed to the organisation are more likely to work toward its goals and objectives and devote their full effort to the organisation and its stakeholders, thereby boosting OP (Oyewobi et al., 2019; Silva et al., 2023). Consequently, we suggest the following:

H5. *OC is positively related to OP.*

Furthermore, employees are satisfied if they are involved in decision-making, receive appropriate job training and incentives, and work for a competent manager. Accordingly, JS increases employees' commitment and job performance, thereby contributing to the organisation's productivity and performance (Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020; Mohiya, 2025; Saridakis et al., 2020; Ghasempour Ganji et al., 2021). Moreover, studies found that JS, as a mediating variable, significantly impacted employee engagement and commitment, organisational performance, and citizenship behaviour (Saridakis et al., 2020; Ghasempour Ganji et al., 2021; AlKahtani et al., 2021; Diah & Cahyadi, 2020). Accordingly, we propose the following:

H6. *JS mediates the relationship between EE and OP.*

Likewise, OC, as a mediator, was found to have a significant impact on employee performance (Silva et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2022), OP (García-Juan et al., 2023; Abid & Ahmed, 2020; Nikpour, 2017), turnover intention (Lim et al., 2017; Meng & Han, 2014), job burnout, and competitive advantage (Safari et al., 2020). However, limited research has empirically examined OC's mediating role in the relationship between EE and OP in the hotel sector. Accordingly, it is essential to understand how OC will function as an intermediary between EE and OP in the hotel industry in Bangladesh. Considering the preceding scrutiny, we propose the following:

H7. *OC mediates the relationship between EE and OP.*

2.6. Moderating Role of Organisational Learning (OL)

Organisational learning (OL) is a key process for enhancing knowledge management and behavioural change, thereby improving creativity, performance, and leadership through the effective sharing of information and improved operational procedures, thereby enhancing sustainable OP (Ahsan, 2025; Alkhalaf & Badewi, 2024; Karim et al., 2025). OL builds structures that enable the transfer of knowledge and innovation, and fosters community and collective intelligence through learning and collaboration (Obeso et al., 2020). Equally, OL strengthens a company's adaptability, enabling flexible responses to environmental changes and market demands. The ongoing learning process allows organisations to be resilient and responsive to changes in the market and environment, and to improve their strategic implementation for better OP (Zhu et al., 2025). OL is not only a strong predictor of employee and organisational performance, job satisfaction, and corporate innovation (Soomro et al., 2021; Obeso et al., 2020; Akdere & Egan, 2020); it is also critical for embedding sustainability in an organisation's culture and strategy (Migdadi, 2021; Ullah et al., 2025) and for remaining competitive in the marketplace (Karim et al., 2025).

Furthermore, strong learning cultures in organisations foster innovation, transparent communication, teamwork for solving problems, and continuous feedback, thereby transforming employees' knowledge and experiences into organisational strengths rather than individual ones (Ahsan, 2025; Cropanzano et al., 2017). These settings, in accordance with SET, amplify the benefits of reciprocity by ensuring that the ideas, innovations, and problem-solving efforts of empowered employees are captured and translated into improved organisational processes and performance (Karim et al., 2025). Organisational learning, consistent with SET, strengthens the value of employees' reciprocal contributions. When workers feel empowered and sense organisational trust and support, they are more likely to reciprocate by sharing tacit knowledge, engaging in collaborative learning, and engaging in continuous improvement activities (Alkhalaf & Badewi, 2024; Cropanzano et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2020). In high-learning-capability organisations, these reciprocal behaviours are systematically diffused, integrated, and institutionalised across teams and organisational routines, hence increasing their influence on organisational performance (Argote et al., 2021). Conversely, in organisations without efficient learning systems, employees may be proactive, but the dispersion and underutilisation of knowledge can constrain the performance benefits of empowerment. A recent study has shown that learning-oriented businesses strengthen human resource practices by encouraging knowledge exchange, innovation, employee adaptability and organisational resilience and performance (Brix, 2022; Argote et al., 2021). Thus, organisational learning enables employees to translate their motivation and discretionary efforts into organisational competence and sustained performance (Ahsan, 2025; Cropanzano et al., 2017), as reciprocal contributions create value through organisational learning rather than employee reciprocity. Therefore, we propose the following:

H8. *OL is positively related to OP.*

H9. *OL moderates the association between EE and OP.*

3. Method

3.1. Sample and Procedure

Although the official government websites do not allow access to the exact number of hotels, the existing literature and local media indicate that there are 44 star-rated hotels spread among eight divisions, including many cities (Al Karim et al., 2026; Karim et al., 2026; Karim & Mehzabeen, 2025). To test the study's hypotheses (Figure 1), data were collected using a structured questionnaire from employees working in three-, four-, and five-star hotels in the two most famous tourist cities, including Cox's Bazar and Chattogram.

Based on personal affiliations, human resource managers from 27 hotels in Chattogram and Cox's Bazar were contacted; however, only 22 were interested in participating in the survey, and five hotels declined due to privacy concerns. In addition, some hotels were reluctant to provide information on the visitor list due to privacy concerns, and the total population size of the selected hotels was unknown because the complete visitor lists were unavailable. Therefore, following the recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 384 was considered adequate for an unspecified population. Before the survey was administered to the sample employees, the researchers contacted the participating hotels' human resources (HR) managers to explain the study's objectives. Since hotel managers were uncomfortable providing a list of employees, a convenience sampling technique was used to recruit participants, following Karim et al. (2024) and Rabiul et al. (2025).

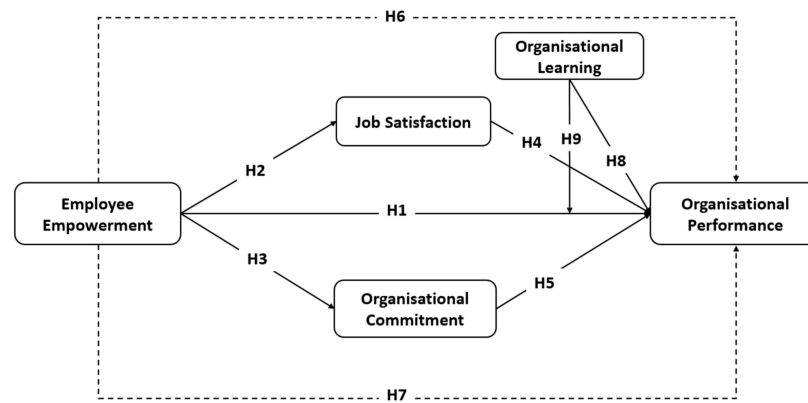


Figure 1. Conceptual framework. Source: Developed by authors.

To obtain the targeted sample size of 384, a total of 600 questionnaires were circulated to the various departments (front office, food and beverage, room division, sales and marketing, HRD, and accounts) of the selected hotels. Researchers and assigned representatives at most hotels distributed the questionnaires directly to participants, along with an open envelope and a pencil. In some hotels, managers (HR, room division, and front office) distributed the questionnaires to prospective respondents. The survey did not entail any personally identifying details to maintain anonymity and ethical principles. After obtaining consent, the questionnaire was administered to eligible participants who had stayed at the sampled hotels, and respondents were at liberty to withdraw from the survey. The researchers and assigned representatives collected all the completed questionnaires from those hotels.

Data collection started in May 2025 and concluded in July 2025. Of the 600 distributed questionnaires, 374 were returned after several follow-ups; of these, 362 were deemed valid after missing data were removed and outliers were excluded, yielding a response rate of 60.33%. In addition, the power analysis in G*Power (version 3.1) with statistical power = 0.95, effect size $f^2 = 0.05$, and alpha = 0.05 for 4 predictors showed that 218 would be sufficient to analyse the model (Faul et al., 2007). To determine a sample size that could detect even smaller effects of the exogenous constructs on the endogenous constructs, we used an effect size of 0.05. The collected 362 usable samples are thus sufficient to test the hypotheses proposed. The gathered data were analysed using PLS-SEM due to its advantages for small sample sizes, non-normal data distributions and minimal constraints on measurement scale. Furthermore, PLS-SEM bridges the gap between confirmatory and predictive research by providing high predictive accuracy and well-developed causal explanations within research models compared with CB-SEM (Hair et al., 2020).

3.2. Measures

To measure employee empowerment (EE), a five-item scale established by Humborstad and Perry (2011) was applied. A sample item included “I have the authority to correct problems when they occur.” Job satisfaction (JS) was operationalised with a three-item scale developed by Humborstad and Perry (2011). A sample item was “I am satisfied with my job currently”. Organisational commitment (OC) was assessed using a five-item scale by Hanaysha (2016). A sample item was “For me, this is one of the best institutions for which to work”. To assess organisational learning (OL), a four-item scale was chosen from Karim et al. (2025), and “Learning in my organisation is seen as a key commodity necessary to guarantee organisational survival” was a sample item. Lastly, to operationalise organisational performance (OP), a four-item scale established by Liu et al. (2022) was adopted. A sample item was “In terms of growth in sales, my company is more successful”. All measures were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale, with “1” being “strongly disagree” and “5” being “strongly agree.”

4. Results

4.1. Respondents' Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the participants' demographic information. About 41.2% of participants were women and 58.8% were men, indicating that the hotel sector of Bangladesh is male employee-dominated. The majority of participants were between 31 and 40 years old (30.7%), followed by those between 41 and 50 years old (26.5%) and between 21 and 30 years old (25.4%), and the rest were from other age groups. In addition, 39.0% of participants had a bachelor's degree, 31.8% had a postgraduate degree, 16.5% had higher secondary education, and 7.7% were professionals. In addition, 41.1% of hotels were 4-star-equivalent, 38.6% were 3-star-equivalent, and the remaining 20.2% were 5-star-equivalent hotels. Regarding the department, almost 29.5% of sampled employees were from the front office, 23.5% were from the room division, 20.7% were from the food and beverage division, 9.7% were from sales and marketing, 10.8% were from HRD, and 5.8% were from the accounts department. Lastly, 36.2% of participants had been working in the hotel for between 1 and 5 years, 24.3% for between 6 and 10 years, 31.5% for less than a year, and 8% for more than 10 years.

Table 1. Participants' demographic profile (N = 362).

Demography	Category	N	(%)
Gender	Male	213	58.8
	Female	149	41.2
Age Group	21–30 Yrs.	92	25.4
	31–40 Yrs.	111	30.7
	41–50 Yrs.	96	26.5
	51–60 Yrs.	42	11.6
	Above 60 Yrs.	21	5.8
Education	Higher Secondary	60	16.5
	Bachelor	141	39.0
	Postgraduate	115	31.8
	Professional	28	7.7
	Others	18	5.0
Hotel Rating	3 Stars	140	38.6
	4 Stars	149	41.1
	5 Stars	73	20.2
Department	Front Office	107	29.5
	Food & Beverage	75	20.7
	Room Division	85	23.5
	Sales & Marketing	35	9.7
	HRD	39	10.8
	Accounts	21	5.8
Length of Service	Less than 6 Months	42	11.6
	6–12 Months	72	19.9
	1–5 Yrs.	131	36.2
	6–10 Yrs.	88	24.3
	Above 10 Yrs.	29	8.0

Source: Developed by authors.

4.2. Assessment for Common Method Bias

To assess common method bias (CMB), two statistical procedural remedies were employed. Initially, a single-factor assessment was used. CMB is likely to exist if a single factor explains 50% or more of the total variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). The total explained variance of a single factor was 45.55%, while all factors explained 66.35% of the variance. Both cases demonstrated that common method bias was less likely to exist.

In addition, to address lateral collinearity, we employed a random-dependent-variable approach, as recommended by Kock and Lynn (2012). To achieve this, we created a dummy variable with random values between 0 and 1 and incorporated it as an endogenous variable in the study model. The outcome indicated that the VIF values for all latent variables were below the threshold of 3.3 (Table 2) (ranging from 1.149 to 2.738); therefore, CMB is not a concern for this study.

4.3. Assessment of the Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed through the computation of Cronbach's Alpha (α), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion and HTMT ratio) using the SmartPLS algorithm, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2020). Table 2 indicates that all the values of Cronbach's Alpha (>0.7), composite reliability (>0.7), and AVE (>0.5) met the recommended values of Hair et al. (2020). In addition, following Vinzi et al. (2009), all items were retained because the constructs' AVEs exceeded 0.50. Moreover, to assess discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker Criterion and HTMT ratio approach were applied (Henseler et al., 2016). Table 3 confirmed both the Fornell–Larcker Criterion and the HTMT ratio approach (all HTMT ratio values were below the threshold of 0.90), indicating discriminant validity.

Table 2. Construct validity, reliability, and model fit indices.

Construct	Items	Loading	α	CR	AVE	R ²	Q ²	VIF
Employee Empowerment	EE1	0.772	0.845	0.890	0.620			1.768
	EE2	0.757						2.719
	EE3	0.878						1.613
	EE4	0.694						1.898
	EE5	0.823						1.149
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.692	0.715	0.805	0.580	0.376	0.370	1.456
	JS2	0.835						1.353
	JS3	0.752						1.600
Organisational Commitment	OC1	0.752	0.868	0.905	0.655	0.581	0.579	2.017
	OC2	0.813						2.339
	OC3	0.851						1.949
	OC4	0.797						2.035
	OC5	0.831						2.738
Organisational Learning	OL1	0.889	0.883	0.919	0.740			1.828
	OL2	0.817						2.299
	OL3	0.843						2.635
	OL4	0.888						1.396
Organisational Performance	OP1	0.765	0.808	0.873	0.634	0.427	0.286	2.737
	OP2	0.881						1.677
	OP3	0.705						1.977
	OP4	0.823						1.870

Source: Developed by authors.

Table 3. Discriminant validity.

Construct	Fornell–Larcker Criterion					HTMT ₉₀ Ratio				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Employee Empowerment	0.787					-----				
2. Job Satisfaction	0.613	0.762				0.831	-----			
3. Organisational Commitment	0.762	0.629	0.809			0.882	0.844	-----		
4. Organisational Learning	0.654	0.662	0.702	0.860		0.750	0.872	0.799	-----	
5. Organisational Performance	0.506	0.612	0.531	0.524	0.796	0.591	0.842	0.602	0.587	-----

Source: Developed by authors.

The R^2 , f^2 , and PLS prediction values were used to evaluate model quality, according to Hair et al. (2020). Table 2 indicates that JS, OC and OP have R^2 values of 0.376, 0.581 and 0.427, which are considered as moderate explanatory power in line with the threshold values (0.19 > small; 0.33 > medium; and 0.67 > large) (Hair et al., 2020). Cohen (1988) further stated that effect size values of $f^2 = 0.35$, 0.15, and 0.02 represent large, medium, and small effects, respectively. The results in Table 4 show that EE has a large effect on JS and OC and a small effect on OP, with effect sizes of 0.603, 1.386 and 0.023, respectively. Similarly, JS has a moderate effect on OP (0.144), whereas both OC and OL have small effects on OP (0.025 and 0.02, respectively). Furthermore, it is shown in Table 2 that the PLS prediction values (Q^2 values) were greater than 0 (zero) (JS = 0.370; OC = 0.579; OP = 0.286), indicating that the model has predictive power (Hair et al., 2020).

Table 4. Summary of hypothesis results.

Hypothesis Path	β	<i>t</i> -Values	<i>p</i> -Values	95% CI (BC)		Decision	<i>f</i> ²
				LL	UL		
Direct Effect							
H1: EE → OP	0.141	2.089	0.018	0.035	0.257	Supported	0.023
H2: EE → JS	0.613	14.408	0.000	0.534	0.676	Supported	0.603
H3: EE → OC	0.762	25.909	0.000	0.708	0.805	Supported	1.386
H4: JS → OP	0.410	6.499	0.000	0.306	0.513	Supported	0.144
H5: OC → OP	0.132	1.711	0.044	0.013	0.272	Supported	0.025
H8: OL → OP	0.125	1.969	0.024	0.020	0.227	Supported	0.020
Mediating Effect							
H6: EE → JS → OP	0.252	5.856	0.000	0.186	0.327	Supported	
H7: EE → OC → OP	0.101	1.689	0.046	0.011	0.212	Supported	
Moderation Effect							
H9: EE × OL → OP	0.074	2.699	0.003	0.028	0.118	Supported	
Control Variables							
Gender → OP	0.080	1.003	0.158	−0.048	0.217	Not Supported	
Age → OP	−0.020	0.451	0.326	−0.094	0.051	Not Supported	
Education → OP	0.034	0.814	0.208	−0.034	0.103	Not Supported	
Hotel Rating→ OP	−0.044	1.026	0.153	−0.114	0.023	Not Supported	
Department → OP	−0.052	1.274	0.101	−0.118	0.017	Not Supported	
Service Length → OP	0.045	1.166	0.122	−0.021	0.108	Not Supported	

Note(s): β = path coefficient; CI (BC) = confidence interval (bias-corrected); LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit. Source: Developed by authors.

4.4. Assessment of the Structural Model

As suggested by Hair et al. (2020), the hypotheses were tested using the structural model of the path coefficient, *t*-value, *p*-value and confidence interval. The structural results were based on 5000 bootstrap samples, with a 95% confidence interval after a comprehensive, bias-corrected, one-tailed test (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Since the hypotheses indicated the direction of the impacts (i.e., positive), the study used a one-tailed test. The findings in Table 4 confirm that all hypotheses were supported (Figure 2).

As expected, the findings show that EE positively and significantly impacts OP ($\beta = 0.141$; $t = 2.089$; $p < 0.05$), JS ($\beta = 0.613$; $t = 14.408$), and OC ($\beta = 0.762$; $t = 25.909$). Accordingly, hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 were supported, suggesting that the greater the empowerment given to employees, the higher the satisfaction, commitment and performance of the hotel organisation. In addition, the results demonstrated that JS ($\beta = 0.410$; $t = 6.499$), OC ($\beta = 0.132$; $t = 1.711$), and OL ($\beta = 0.125$; $t = 1.969$) have positive associations with OP. Thus, H4, H5 and H8 were validated, establishing that JS, OC and OL collectively increase the performance of the hotel industry in Bangladesh.

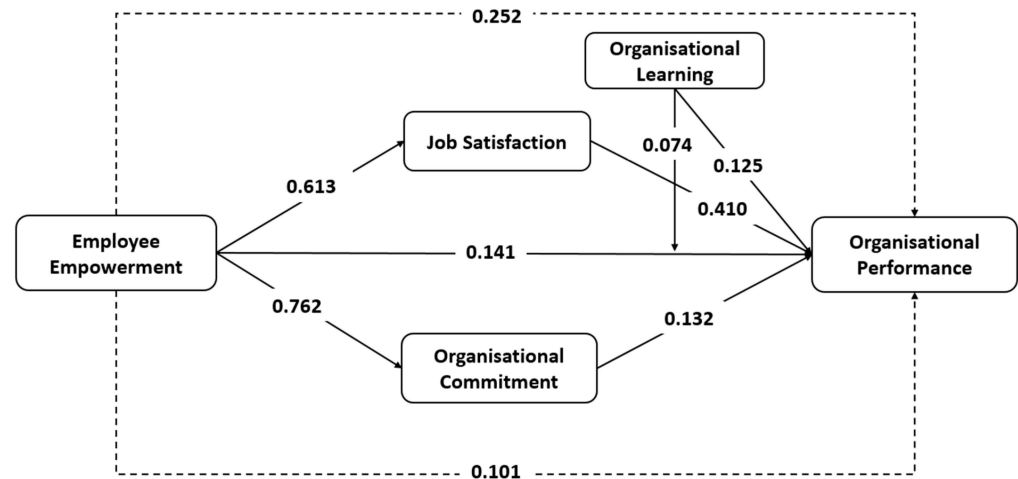


Figure 2. Estimated structural model. Source: Developed by authors.

Moreover, the findings reveal that JS ($\beta = 0.252$, $t = 5.856$) and OC ($\beta = 0.101$, $t = 1.689$) mediate the relationship between EE and OP with a 95% bootstrap confidence interval ($CI_{.95} = 0.186, 0.327$; $CI_{.95} = 0.011, 0.212$), supporting hypotheses H6 and H7. Following Nitzl et al. (2016), JS and OC partially mediate the relationship between EE and OP since both the direct and indirect hypotheses were supported. In addition, the VAF (variance accounted for) values for hypotheses H6 and H7 are 0.641 and 0.417, respectively; this accordingly confirms partial mediation ($VAF = 20\text{--}80\%$: partial mediation) in line with Hair et al. (2020). Finally, Table 4 also shows that OL ($\beta = 0.074$, $t = 2.699$) significantly moderates the association between EE and OP with a 95% bootstrap confidence interval ($CI_{.95} = 0.028, 0.118$), supporting hypothesis H9. A visual presentation of the moderation effect is shown in Figure 3.

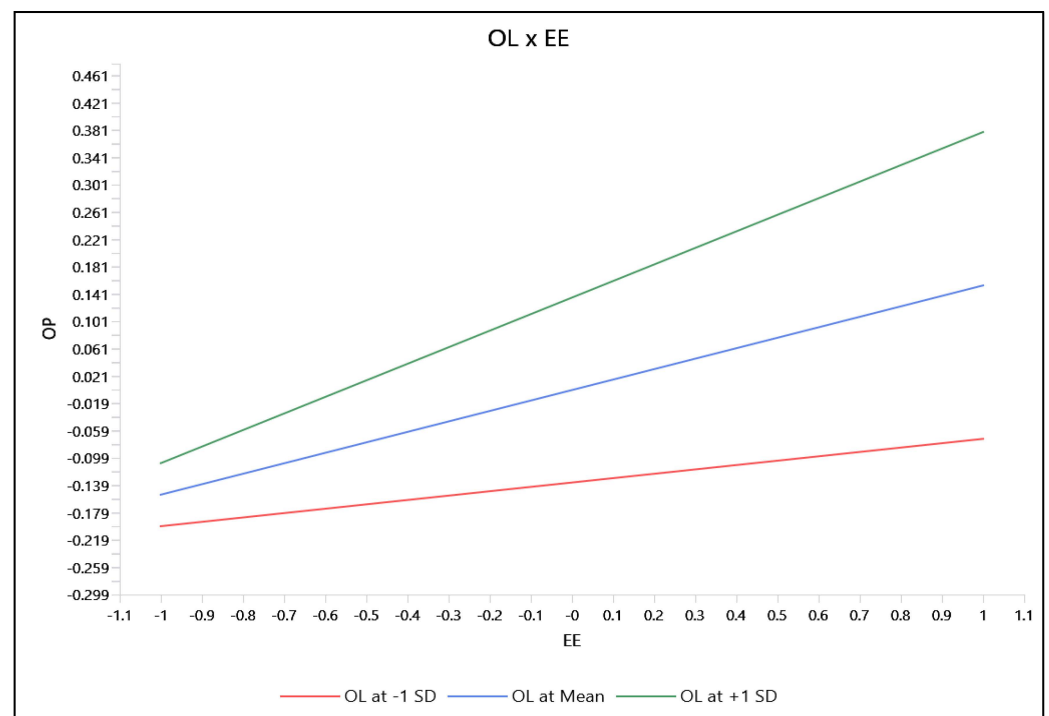


Figure 3. Moderation slope. Source: Developed by authors.

4.5. Endogeneity and Unobserved Heterogeneity Analysis

It is important to demonstrate that the conceptual model is not affected by endogeneity, which can be a problem in structural equation modelling when testing hypotheses. One solution to this problem is to add control variables to the model, as proposed by Hult et al. (2018). In line with the guideline, we controlled for variables in our study. Interestingly, OP was not significantly related to any of the control variables (i.e., age, gender, education, hotel rating, department and service length) (Table 4).

Moreover, we investigated the Gaussian copula approach to address potential endogeneity issues in the PLS-SEM context, following Hult et al. (2018). In our model, we introduced Gaussian copulas for each independent (EE, JS, OC and OL) variable connected to the dependent variable (OP), and the results (Table 5) indicated that all the Gaussian copulas included in the model were highly insignificant (Table 6), suggesting that endogeneity was not a problem in our model (Becker et al., 2022; Hult et al., 2018).

Table 5. Gaussian copula results on OP.

Variable	Model 1 Copula in EE → OP		Model 2 Copula in JS → OP		Model 3 Copula in OC → OP		Model 4 Copula in OL → OP		Model 5 Copula in ALL Paths	
	β	<i>p</i> -Values	β	<i>p</i> -Values	β	<i>p</i> -Values	β	<i>p</i> -Values	β	<i>p</i> -Values
Copula EE	0.037	0.394							0.037	0.394
Copula JS			−0.052	0.144					−0.052	0.144
Copula OC					0.109	0.080			0.118	0.070
Copula OL							0.030	0.735	0.035	0.723

Source: Developed by authors.

Table 6. FIMIX-PLS segmentation.

Criteria	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3	Segment 4
AIC3 (modified AIC with factor 3)	2425.668	2303.865	2238.324	2207.992
AIC4 (modified AIC with factor 4)	2435.668	2324.865	2270.324	2250.992
BIC (Bayesian information criterion)	2454.585	2364.589	2330.856	2332.333
CAIC (consistent AIC)	2464.585	2385.589	2362.856	2375.333
MDL5 (minimum description length with factor 5)	2690.25	2859.487	3084.987	3345.696
EN (normed entropy statistic)	0	0.723	0.713	0.671

Source: Developed by authors.

Moreover, we also conducted an unobserved heterogeneity test using FIMIX-PLS. The fit indices for the one- to four-segment solutions are ambiguous (refer to bold numbers in Table 6). According to Sarstedt et al. (2011), if AIC3 and CAIC indicate the same number of segments, the results are likely to indicate the correct number of segments. Therefore, we assume that unobserved heterogeneity is not at a critical level, which supports the results of the whole-dataset analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2020).

5. Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

The findings demonstrate a significant relationship between EE and OP and highlight the necessity of increasing employee empowerment in hospitality organisations. These findings are consistent with previous research (Baird et al., 2018; Otero et al., 2019). In addition, EE had a substantial impact on JS and OC, as evidenced by the findings. The more that employees are empowered by their employers, the more satisfied and committed they will be with the organisation. Prior research (e.g., AlKahtani et al., 2021; Baird et al., 2018)

also found a similar association among EE, JS, and OC, paralleling the current result. EE has been found to enhance OP by increasing employee satisfaction and commitment (AlKahtani et al., 2021). EE benefits an organisation's performance and employee retention by raising JS and OC. Providing decision-making power and authority for task- and work-related concerns is what empowerment is all about (Nadeem et al., 2018; Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021).

Additionally, the study's findings prove that JS, OC and OL are significantly associated with OP. Consistent with previous studies, satisfied and committed employees perform better than other employees and contribute to improving the performance of hotel organisations (Abid & Ahmed, 2020; Odero et al., 2019). Equally, OL instils a development attitude in empowered employees, encouraging them to regard hurdles not as obstacles, but as chances to improve, fostering their loyalty towards the firm and contributing to its sustained organisational performance (Ahsan, 2025; Karim et al., 2025).

Moreover, the findings demonstrated that both JS and OC mediated the link between EE and OP, supporting past studies (Abid & Ahmed, 2020; Diah & Cahyadi, 2020; Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020). Employees are satisfied when they are involved in decision-making, receive appropriate job training and incentives, and work for a competent manager. Accordingly, JS increases employees' job performance, contributing to the organisation's productivity (Ruiz-Palomo et al., 2020). Similarly, employees committed to the organisation are more likely to work towards its goals and objectives and devote their efforts to the organisation and its stakeholders, thereby boosting OP (Abid & Ahmed, 2020). Finally, as OL strengthens the connection between EE and OP as a moderator, the organisation must ensure ongoing learning and tuning to enhance its capacity to empower its employees to develop effective business strategies that enhance sustainable OP (Zhu et al., 2025).

5.2. Theoretical Implications

This study has several theoretical implications. Limited research has examined the relationships among EE, JS, OC, and OL in explaining OP. The current study has integrated these variables into a conceptual model for hotel organisations and their management, contributing to the substantial body of knowledge on these variables in the hotel sector in Bangladesh. In previous works, the direct and indirect influences of JS (García-Juan et al., 2023) and OC (Abid & Ahmed, 2020; Nikpour, 2017) on OP have been considered. Accordingly, this study contributes to social exchange theory (SET) by investigating the effect of EE on OP through the simultaneous mediation of JS and OC, a relatively unexplored subject for the hotel sector of Bangladesh.

Furthermore, the current study examined the moderating role of OL in the relationship between EE and OP in the hospitality industry, whereas several studies (Alkhalaf & Badewi, 2024; Ullah et al., 2025; Zhu et al., 2025) have investigated the mediating role of OL in different contexts. Hence, the moderation finding also adds to the extant literature on EE, OL and OP and social exchange theory (SET) in the context of the Bangladesh hotel sector. This research is among the few studies that have examined JS and OC as concurrent mediators of the moderating influence of OL on the relationship between EE and OP in the hotel industry of a developing nation such as Bangladesh, consequently making the study noteworthy in its scope.

5.3. Managerial Implications

The study's findings have several management implications. In a developing country such as Bangladesh, facilitating the empowerment of employees is beneficial for successful employee and organisational outcomes (i.e., satisfaction, commitment and performance). As the findings showed that EE had a positive relationship with OP,

this research recommends that managers across hotel departments provide adequate empowerment to their workforces based on their roles. Line managers may delegate strategic decision-making authority to their subordinates in line with the hotel's hierarchy and give employees the freedom to make day-to-day job-related decisions to perform at their best. If employees can show their skills, they are more independent and adaptive while handling situations. Nevertheless, it is suggested that line managers ensure that individual employees can work independently and handle situations (Baird et al., 2018).

Moreover, this study identified pathways to bridge the gap between EE and OP. For instance, increasing employees' commitment and satisfaction is an underlying factor in higher organisational performance. Hence, the findings of this study urge hospitality managers to believe that employee empowerment is vital for committed and satisfied employees. Additionally, the findings suggest that committed and satisfied employees drive the organisation's performance. Satisfaction and commitment to the organisation could be boosted by enhancing fair job evaluation, implementing a promotion policy or a 360-degree feedback program, increasing health and medical facilities, and implementing a career growth program (Lim et al., 2017).

Furthermore, when managers grant employees the authority to act autonomously without seeking approval from higher-level management, empowered behaviour will inherently increase. As a result, empowered employees will have a greater capacity to generate and execute innovative ideas within the service organisation (García-Juan et al., 2023; Lathabhavan & Kuppusamy, 2024). EE can also be achieved by implementing training programs, using a reward system, adopting various management styles (e.g., treating managers and employees as adults), and ensuring employee contentment. In addition, managers must ensure enduring organisational learning and fine-tuning to enhance the organisation's capacity to empower its workforce to develop effective business strategies that boost OP (Zhu et al., 2025). To conclude, these findings can guide hotel managers in emerging markets in designing empowerment, learning, and retention strategies that are likely to improve performance. Thus, other service organisations may consider empowering employees to further commit, learn, satisfy, and perform.

5.4. Limitations and Future Scope

The present study has limitations. Hence, the results should be interpreted while considering them. Firstly, only 22 rated (3-, 4-, and 5-star) hotels from Chittagong and Cox's Bazar were included in the survey. Accordingly, the present study only received 362 employees' opinions after following up repeatedly with HR managers. Forthcoming studies may consider the whole hospitality industry by increasing the sample size to reflect the hospitality industry in Bangladesh. The convenience sampling method, though employed, has its limitations. It cannot accurately represent the whole population and may yield biased findings. This highlights the need to shift to a probability sampling approach for more generalised results in future investigations. Additionally, upcoming investigations may consider dimensions of empowerment, such as psychological and structural empowerment, since this study focused on overall employee empowerment. Also, this study considered job satisfaction and organisational commitment as mediating variables and organisational learning as a moderating variable; thus, future studies may consider other mediating/moderating variables such as employee engagement, culture, employee motivation, organisational learning capability, team cohesion, etc. Future studies may also consider a multi-group analysis by hotel rating, since the present study did not assess the clustering effects of hotel rating.

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study before participating in the survey.

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