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The Mechanism through which
Employee Creativity is Framed by
Considering Individual and
Contextual Factors

by

Maria Mashkooor

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**The Mechanism through which Employee Creativity is
Framed by Considering Individual and Contextual Factors**

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my beloved mother, Dr. Shaheena Hafeez Malik.

Without you Mama, I am nothing. You kept me going when I thought the world stood still. You are my rock, my inspiration, and my biggest blessing.

Alhumdullilah!



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This is to certify that the research work presented in the dissertation, entitled “**The Mechanism through which Employee Creativity is Framed by Considering Individual and Contextual Factors**” was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Lakhi Muhammad**. No part of this dissertation has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This dissertation is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences**. The open defence of the dissertation was conducted on **December 11, 2023**.

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List of Publications

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this dissertation:-

1. Mashkoo, M., & Muhammad, L. (2023). Does ebullient supervision foster thriving, social and creative employees? – It all starts at the top!. *European Journal of Training and Development*, DOI 10.1108/EJTD-05-2023-0074.
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Abstract

This study aims to examine the impact of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision in stimulating employee creativity. Further, considers positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, social capital as possible mediators and proactive personality as a moderator. A useable data of 391 respondents from hospitality industry, in Pakistan, was collected by using a two-time lag approach. PLS-SEM was considered by employing SmartPLS4 for data analysis. Results indicate that nature connectedness and ebullient supervision stimulates positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and employee creativity. While, ebullient supervision impact on social capital was not supported. The results on mediation were supported except of social capital between ebullient supervision and employee creativity. Moderation of proactive personality between perspective-taking and thriving at work, perspective taking and social capital dimensions was also not supported. This study provides valuable insights to shape employee creativity and contributes in literature by proposing and empirically testing the antecedents of employee creativity and the mechanism through which the employee creativity is framed. Further limitations and future research directions are also provided.

Keywords: Nature Connectedness, Ebullient Supervision, Positive Affect, Perspective Taking, Thriving at Work, Relational Social Capital, Structural Social Capital, Employee Creativity, Proactive Personality.

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Abbreviations

AET	Affective Events Theory
ART	Attention Restoration Theory
B&B	Broaden-and-Build Theory
COR	Conservation of Resources Theory
EC	Employee Creativity
ES	Ebullient Supervision
NC	Nature Connectedness
PA	Positive Affect
PP	Proactive Personality
PT	Perspective Taking
RSC	Relational Social Capital
SSC	Structural Social Capital
TW	Thriving at Work

Chapter 1

Introduction

Section 1.1 discusses the background and context of employee creativity and its importance in the hospitality sector. Section 1.2 informs about the gaps. Section 1.3 describes the problem statement, while Section 1.4 details the research questions and the research objectives. Section 1.5 highlights the theoretical and practical significance, Section 1.6 elaborate the supporting theories, Section 1.7 provides the operational definitions of the constructs. Finally, Section 1.8 outlines the structural outline of this document.

1.1 Background of the Study

The 5.0 Industrial Revolution (5IR) has not only shortened the shelf-life of employees' existing skill sets but also altered the required skills. Globally, new job requirements are emerging at a fast pace (Odibat, Erturk, Kumar, & Govindaraj, 2021). This means the job-skill gap is widening (Kaur, Awasthi, & Grzybowska, 2020). There is a need to proactively upgrade employees' skills to fill in the local talent pool shortages (Dirik, 2022; McDonald, Hite, & O'Connor, 2022).

In such a background, the competition has become more intense than ever, and the pressure to achieve sustainable competitive advantage is higher than ever. World Economic Forum trends suggest global employers of today are placing more importance on soft skills in comparison to hard skills (Forum, 2020). Amongst the soft skills, in today's intensely competitive business environment, employee

creativity has gained considerable recognition as being a vital competency that can help firms to become responsive and adaptive towards change, efficiently exploit opportunities, grow and survive (Lua, Liu, & Shalley, 2023; Mejia, D'Ippolito, & Kajikawa, 2021). Hence, research on employee creativity has intensified in recent times with an interest to explore, understand, operationalize, and propel creativity at all levels.

In today's digital era, for humans to remain relevant at work, employee creativity is a critically required skill (Lu et al., 2020; Nasifoglu Elidemir, Ozturen, & Bayighomog, 2020). Developed employees help to develop organizations (Alsafadi & Altahat, 2021). Human capital is a unique resource representing the skills, knowledge, experiences, and creative competencies of employees that are hard to duplicate, and create value by helping to achieve organizational goals and sustainable competitive advantage (Melnyk, Kubatko, Matsenko, Balatskyi, & Serdyukov, 2021).

Employee creativity, an imperative element of human capital, represents generating ideas that are original and beneficial concerning products, processes, and methods (Jain & Jain, 2017). Employee creativity allows the discovery of unique and enhanced operating procedures; it also improves the creative job performance and satisfaction of employees, ultimately playing a key role in both personal development and propelling innovative capabilities of an organization (Adekanmbi & Ukpere, 2021). Thus, nurturing the human capital through enhancing the employee creativity would make the human resource of an organization tacit and diverse, preventing its imitation by the competitors; leading to a sustainable competitive advantage.

Innovation is crucial for organizational survival and employee creativity is a prerequisite for organizational innovation (Lua et al., 2023). Employees are considered an important resource for creativity for a firm (Bakker, Petrou, Op den Kamp, & Tims, 2020). This is because, according to the resource-based view theory, creativity enables gaining a sustainable competitive advantage as it is intangible, unique, inimitable and non-substitutable (Sulaiman, Hashim, Ibrahim, Hasan, & Oluwatosin, 2015; Thawabieh, Saleem, & Hashim, 2016). While routine tasks are being automated, across every industry and every function (Aquilani, Piccarozzi,

(Silvestri, & Gatti, 2021; Kaur et al., 2020), human creativity is immune to automation (Pandya, Patterson, & Ruhi, 2022). Artificial intelligence can facilitate or amplify human creativity, but not replace it (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2022). Employee creativity is that human skill that can't be hired out, imitated or automated by a machine. However, it can be taught, learned, and enhanced over time (Kennedy, Whitehead, & Ferdinand-James, 2022; McFarlane, 2022; Mevarech & Paz-Baruch, 2022). Creative endeavors involve emotional and personal experiences that are in-built in human creative endeavors and thus not possible to be replicated by artificial intelligence. Regardless of this importance, both researchers and practitioners are still pondering on new factors and their related mechanisms that could facilitate framing employee creativity at work.

Although various employee creativity predictors have been investigated by multiple theoretical and empirical studies, some deficiencies and uncertainties still exist. Findings related to employee creativity predictors are not synthesized in a manner that provides clear guidance to employers (Cai, Khapova, Bossink, Lysova, & Yuan, 2020). Scholars share a consensus regarding the prevailing ambiguity related to the interaction among different factors and the mechanism that may predict employee creativity (Gupta & Bajaj, 2017; Zhang & Zhou, 2014). Likewise, while diverse literature on creativity exists, a theoretical ambiguity exists concerning how employee creativity functions and gets influenced in the work context (Jain & Jain, 2017).

While multiple theoretical lines to creativity exist in the present literature, employee creativity remains vague and a complex phenomenon. This has triggered the current study to investigate the previous studies and deduce an employee creativity theoretical framework that can identify a mechanism through which employee creativity can be encouraged at work. The present study adds to the existing literature on employee creativity antecedents by examining the understudied role of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision, which can be aligned systematically to stimulate employee creativity, employing a holistic and integrative framework supported by the attention restoration theory, affective events theory, conservation of resources theory and the broaden-and-build theory. Thus, this study is very significant as it proposes such new combination of both individual

and contextual nature, which can serve as a mechanism to result in employee creativity, backed up by theories.

In sum, for organizations to meet challenges posed by globalization, competitive pressures, and constant technological changes, employee creativity must be encouraged at work. Employee creativity holds strategic importance as it helps in value creation and attaining sustainable competitive advantage for organizations. Regardless of this importance, both researchers and practitioners are still pondering on ways to frame employee creativity, and identifying what factors and their related mechanisms can lead to facilitate it at work. Thus, this study focuses on employee creativity, to suggest new ways for organizations to enhance and stimulate it.

1.1.1 Employee Creativity and the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is inclined to constantly fluctuating customer expectations and growing demands (Backstrom & Bengtsson, 2019). Thus, employee creativity is a critical mainstream resource in the hospitality industry (Lu et al., 2020). Yet, scholars and practitioners are pondering ways to frame employee creativity in the hospitality industry (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). Hence, literature demands greater attention to processes, in the hospitality industry, that may enhance employee creativity. Employee behaviors require greater attention as they tend to influence creative activities that may enhance the offerings, processes, operations, and overall performance of hotels. Accordingly, the present study considered the hospitality sector (hotels and restaurants) where employee creativity may enable the success of hotels by serving as a strategic tool for competitive advantage.

In the last two decades, employee creativity has garnered increased interest in the hospitality literature (Bavik & Kuo, 2022), becoming crucial for this industry due to its ability to facilitate competitive advantage. Globalization and its associated changes have characterized the hospitality sector with intense uncertainty and constant change, building a fiercely competitive business environment (Yikilmaz & Sürücü, 2023). The nature of this sector is very unpredictable and it constantly

seeks innovative ways to successfully cope with ever-changing customer expectations (Peters & Kallmuenzer, 2018). This is because due to globalization, the hospitality sector receives multicultural customers, making each customer's needs and expectations unique (Maslakci & Sesen, 2019). To keep customers satisfied, innovative services are required to meet varied expectations and needs (Surucu & Sesen, 2019). Under such an environment, employee creativity will determine a firm's ability to survive, let alone acquire a sustainable competitive advantage.

The hospitality industry (where every day is a new day) requires unique and useful ideas and solutions; making employee creativity a crucial valuable asset. Particularly, since human relations are the central feature of the hospitality industry, the main aim is guest satisfaction which, in turn, depends upon service encounters quality; making the need to have creative employees very relevant (Styvén, Näppä, Mariani, & Nataraajan, 2022). Creativity is now a characteristic of hospitality organizational culture (Bavik, 2016). Hence, to survive and make money, hotels, and restaurants depend upon employee creativity (Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2021). This makes employee creativity a critical mainstream demand in the hospitality industry (Bavik & Kuo, 2022). Hence to deal with challenges and to exploit opportunities successfully, both internally and externally, employees generating novel and useful ideas is a crucial input (Liu & Ge, 2020). However, as the hospitality industry started receiving attention in the creativity literature only two decades ago, research investigating employee creativity determinants is limited in this domain (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). Organizations are looking for factors, and the interplay among these factors that may propel employee creativity (Inam et al., 2021; Ucar, Alpkhan, & Elci, 2021). Thus, understanding employee creativity framing is crucial. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the individual and contextual factors interaction of affective, cognitive, psychological, and social nature that may shape employee creativity in the hospitality industry.

1.1.2 Pakistan's Hospitality Industry

In Pakistan, the services sector is one of the three main economic growth drivers, the other two being the agriculture and industrial sector. For the past few years,

the services sector has constantly made the largest contribution to Pakistan's GDP. However, this contribution has remained at around 58%. The pandemic in 2020 and the floods in 2022 severely affected the hospitality industry in Pakistan (Moosvi & Ali, 2022). World Bank Group reported Pakistan lost \$3.24 billion in GDP as a result of the pandemic (Twining Ward & McComb, 2020). Economic Survey of Pakistan (2022-2023) reported a 58.01% contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) by the services sector in FY2021, 58.28% in FY2022, and 58.61% in FY2023. However, the hospitality industry's (hotels & restaurants) contribution to total GDP has remained constant, at only 1.40%, between FY2021-2022 and FY2023.

Tourism and the hospitality industry are inextricably interlinked and share interdependence as the latter facilitates local and international tourists and travelers. Tourism influences economic development in the long run (Orhan, Adebayo, Genç, & Kirikkaleli, 2021). Therefore, the performance of the tourism industry also reflects the performance of the hospitality industry. Pakistan's government is keen to develop the hospitality industry as not only a positive image of the country will be projected in the world, but also being a labor-intensive sector, it can provide momentous job opportunities for the youth. The tourism strategy of Pakistan had helped improve the country's hospitality profile in the international market (Burhan, Salam, Abou Hamdan, & Tariq, 2021). Pakistan is considered a highly sought-after destination for those seeking adventure, wanting to explore varied cultures, and having an appreciation for nature. Hence, it ranked number 1 in multiple international travel magazines listing being named as 'The best-kept secret of Asia', and 'The best holiday destination'. 'One of the coolest places', and 'one of the friendliest countries on earth' (Altaf & Hussain, 2021; Shackle, 2020).

Post-pandemic, the hospitality industry of Pakistan is reviving and a major role is being played by the global expats and travel vloggers who are considered reliable in identifying international tourism attractions (Aktan, Zaman, & Nawaz, 2021). Moreover, due to easy visa policies, and allowing tourists from 30 countries to arrive in Pakistan without visas, increased foreign visitor inflow has been witnessed (Yousaf, 2021). Increased tourists' interest in Pakistan has resulted in it becoming the fastest-developing country to experience rapid developments in the hospitality

industry to facilitate incoming local and international travelers (Altaf & Hussain, 2021). Growth in tourism results in the growth of hotels and restaurants. Being a lucrative tourism option, multiple hotel chains, national and international, have opened in Pakistan. The hospitality industry (hotels and restaurants) of Pakistan has multiple categories, ranging from low-budget and economy to luxury hotels. There is significant growth in the hotels and restaurants (average rate and capacity) and this growth is likely to continue (Meo et al., 2023). The hospitality industry, particularly hotels and restaurants signals a country's cordial welcome to foreign guests and local visitors. This illustrates that the hotel industry is growing, post-pandemic.

Although Pakistan's hospitality industry has the potential to contribute to economic growth, it suffers from a skilled labor shortage (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2022). This is because the accelerating pace of digitalization and automation, represented by the 5.0 Industrial Revolution (5IR), is changing the skills that employers need and shortening the shelf-life of employees' existing skill sets. While many changes are being anticipated by this 5IR, having their respective pros and cons; there are likely to be winners and losers and the success responsibility largely lies with the individual. The benefits will only be to those who upgrade their skills. One way of addressing the skilled labor shortage issue is by upskilling and reskilling the existing workforce (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2022).

According to World Economic Forum, Future of Job Report 2023, the most needed skill in Pakistan is employee creativity. In the 21st century, where manufacturing industries have been driven by automated inventions, employee creativity has become a necessary skill for service industries because of its high customer-contact nature, particularly in the hospitality industry (Lu et al., 2020). This makes employee creativity the mainstream demand and most sought-after skill in the hospitality industry, worldwide. Moreover, in Pakistan, employment in the tourism and hotel sector declined by 11.1% in FY21, creating 3,832,000 job losses PACRA, 2022. Worrisome emotions and fears have been produced amongst the hotel employees, making them inadequately meet the expected criteria of creative performance (Khawaja, Sarfraz, Rashid, & Rashid, 2022; Sun, Sarfraz, Khawaja, Ozturk, & Raza, 2022). This shows employee creativity is a prevailing issue in Pakistan's

hospitality industry. The hospitality industry craves creative employees, making the skill of employee creativity a mainstream demand and a critical asset. This is because, at its core, human relations dominate the hospitality industry, leading to challenging tasks and a constantly evolving working environment (Bavik, 2016). Moreover, the demand for personalized or customized experiences has increased more than ever by customers in the hospitality industry (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Shortages in local talent pools and the skills that the hospitality industry needs may be overcome by proactively upgrading employees' creative skills. However, much of the international work on employee creativity includes samples from Western countries, dominated by the U.S., and attempts are made to investigate and apply conceptual models created as per the Western reference. The research on employee creativity needs to go international as globalization paces up. There is a need to look at the international context for detecting and examining factors that can lead to employee creativity beyond Western boundaries, especially in developing countries. Doing so will also outspread the management theories' relevance, globally, which will facilitate the effective management of nationally diverse employees. Local research will greatly facilitate understanding employee creativity, the most important skill required by the hospitality industry today, and that too, from an international perspective. Hence, Pakistan's hospitality industry was chosen for the current research purpose.

1.2 Gap Analysis

Creativity is one of the most sought-after skills today for humans to remain relevant at work. Regardless of this importance, both researchers and practitioners are still pondering on ways to frame employee creativity, and identifying what factors and their related mechanisms can lead to facilitate creativity at work. To answer this question, an in-depth literature review, ranging from years 1983-2023 (see Figure 2.1 in Section 2.1), was undertaken to identify what research has already been done regarding employee creativity, and what lacks and still demands research for examination. For organizations to become creative and innovative, both employees' and leaders' behaviors play a crucial role (Uhl-Bien & Arena,

2018). Therefore, it is crucial to explore and investigate psychological factors, in addition to contextual factors like leadership (Huang & Luthans, 2015). Accordingly, 9 gaps have been identified while conducting a careful literature review on employee creativity.

1.2.1 Nature Connectedness and Employee Creativity

The affinity between humans and nature is innate, across the world and time. According to United Nations, by 2050, the present 55% of the world's population residing in urban areas is expected to rise to 68% (Nations, 2018). Spending so much time indoors may not have made people realize the functioning benefits of connecting with nature (Tuparevska, 2023). Hence, it becomes important to better understand the innate relationship between nature and humans, to fully benefit from its positive outcomes.

Focus on employee creativity antecedents has been a popular area in research (Lua et al., 2023). Notable literature exists investigating individual factor antecedents of employee creativity – (see Figure 2.1 in Section 2.1), yet there Yet there is a paucity of nature connectedness being considered as a predictor. Although nature-wellbeing links have been well deliberated upon in literature, nature's link to work performance-based cognitive outcomes are still insufficiently investigated (Ratcliffe, Gatersleben, Sowden, & Korpela, 2022). The relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity in an organizational context is understudied. Although greater creative cognitive styles are reported among individuals experiencing nature connection (Leong, Fischer, & McClure, 2014; Mayer & Frantz, 2004), knowledge remains limited regarding whether these effects will translate into tangible creative performance. Thus, further clarification is required regarding the nature connectedness and employee creativity relationship. Although, recently, interest has increased in examining the relationship between the natural environment and creativity (Chulvi, Royo, Agost, Felip, & García-García, 2022; Fleury, Blanchard, & Richir, 2021), ambiguity still prevails regarding the person-nature relations in the creativity processes, characteristics of nature that may positively influence creativity processes and its results, and why

(Ratcliffe et al., 2022). Studies have mainly focused on affective and attentional changes while exploring the benefits of nature (see Archary & Thatcher, 2022; Schertz & , 2019). However, the relationship of nature with performance-based cognitive outcomes is not sufficiently investigated (Ratcliffe et al., 2022).

While the fields of environmental psychology have given hints as to how being in contact with the natural environment might relate to individual creativity, the current HRM literature lacks studies investigating the nature-creativity relationship; and a dearth of studies exists linking nature connectedness with employee creativity. One exception is the study of Leong et al. (2014) which has associated nature connectedness with innovative thinking as the former shares similar characteristics of being open to experiences.

Literature (e.g. Brymer, Freeman, & Richardson, 2019; Richardson et al., 2017) highlights the need to understand the mechanisms through which nature connectedness facilitates workplace context. Other studies have also recommended that research protocols may include nature connection and systematically examine nature connectedness with creativity (Craig, Logan, & Prescott, 2022; Ratcliffe et al., 2022). Cleary, Fielding, Bell, Murray, and Roiko (2017) suggest that more broad theoretical frameworks should be developed to understand nature connectedness outcomes. Pritchard, Richardson, Sheffield, and McEwan (2020) suggested the broaden and build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2004) as it is a functional theory of positive affect and well-being. This theory posits that positive affect plays a critical role in the optimum functioning of an individual over the long term by broadening cognitive styles and providing alternative ways to think; along with building personal resources (physical, psychological, intellectual and social). This broadening and building process leads to creative outcomes. Also, a recent interview-based study of Ratcliffe et al. (2022) also recommended investigating the role of nature connectedness (a person's identification with nature) and creativity.

While prior studies suggest that nature connectedness might enhance creative outcomes, the mechanism through which this process takes place remains unclear. The underpinning mechanisms of nature connectedness propelling employee creativity remain generally unexplored (Cleary et al., 2017). The specific routes of nature

connectedness leading to employee creativity have not yet been systematically examined. There is a dearth of generalizability to organizational settings concerning nature connectedness. Thus, to provide insights for managers and policymakers, an investigation into the nature-creativity impact on employees is needed.

Although the fields of environmental psychology give hints as to how nature connectedness might relate to creativity, the current literature on HRM lacks studies investigating the nature-creativity relationship, for instance, there aren't enough studies linking nature connectedness with creative outcomes. More so, how nature is associated with creativity has not been yet sufficiently clarified. Ambiguity still prevails regarding which nature traits may benefit creative output and related processes, in addition to how and why the impact may be transferred. Investigating nature connectedness may prove to be central in discovering how our current urban workplace settings can help to promote employee creativity. Regardless of the growing importance of connecting with nature, in-depth theoretical work which explores the underlying mechanisms through which nature connectedness could promote employee creativity remain largely underexplored. Accordingly, the current study addressed this gap by investigating the relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity.

1.2.2 Leadership and Employee Creativity

Research on contextual factors, hindering or aiding employee creativity, is a new, yet fast-growing area of interest. The important role of context in developing employee creativity has been consistently stressed in existing research ([AlKayid, Selem, Shehata, & Tan, 2023](#); [Sumaneeva, Karadas, & Avci, 2021](#)). Various contextual factors have been examined concerning employee creativity, (see Figure 2.1 in Section 2.1). However, the most examined contextual factor, in the hospitality industry, concerning employee creativity is leadership ([Sesen, Sürücü, & Maşlakçı, 2019](#)). This is because, since employee creativity is challenging and risky by nature, the role of the leader to foster employee creativity becomes crucial ([Yikilmaz & Sürücü, 2023](#)). The working environment created by leaders significantly influences employees' attitudes toward fearing criticism or change ([Yang, 2020](#)).

Leadership represents the behaviors engaged in by leader to inspire the employees, and it greatly influences employees' behavior and performance by determining the working environment, the task nature, and resources allocation (Fischer, Dietz, & Antonakis, 2017; Ivcevic, Moeller, Menges, & Brackett, 2021). This makes leadership an important contextual factor to examine in relation to employee creativity.

Various empirical investigations advocate the importance of leadership style in influencing employee creativity, for e.g. abusive supervision (e.g. Qin, Dong, Li, Chen, & Wang, 2023; C. Shen, Zhang, Yang, & Liu, 2020), authentic leadership (Bracht et al., 2023; Yikilmaz & Sürücü, 2023), authoritarian leadership (Gu, Hempel, & Yu, 2020; Gu et al., 2020), benevolent leadership (Lin, Ma, Zhang, Li, & Jiang, 2018; Xia, Yu, & Yang, 2022), empowering leadership (Hoang, Wilson-Evered, Lockstone-Binney, & Luu, 2021; Mai, Welsh, Wang, Bush, & Jiang, 2021), entrepreneurial leadership (e.g. Cai et al., 2020; Mehmood, Jian, & Akram, 2020; Mehmood, Jian, Akram, & Tariq, 2021) ethical leadership (Arokiasamy, Maheshwari, & Nguyen, 2022; Asif, Miao, Jameel, Manzoor, & Hussain, 2020; Duan, Liu, & Che, 2018), humble leadership (Kelemen, Matthews, Matthews, & Henry, 2023; Maldonado, Carden, Brace, & Myers, 2021; Wang, Liu, & Zhu, 2018), leader-member exchange (e.g. Fang, Meng, Liu, & Liu, 2021), shared leadership (Ali, Wang, & Boekhorst, 2023), spiritual leadership (Khaddam, Alzghoul, Khawaldeh, Alnajdawi, & Al-Kasasbeh, 2023), transformational leadership (e.g. Ma, Jiang, Wang, & Xiong, 2020; Mansoor, Farrukh, Lee, & Jahan, 2021), transactional leadership (Nguyen, Hooi, & Avvari, 2023), paradoxical leadership (Zhang, He, Long, & Zhang, 2022), paternalistic leadership (Gyamerah, He, Asante, Ampaw, & Gyamerah, 2022; Khorakian et al., 2021), servant leadership (e.g. Ruiz-Palomino & Zoghbi-Manrique-de Lara, 2020); visionary leadership (AlKayid et al., 2023; Mascareno, Rietzschel, & Wisse, 2020). According to a recent meta-analysis (see Ouyang, Liu, & Gui, 2021) on creativity in hospitality industry, servant leadership demonstrated the strongest relationship with employee creativity.

Literature urges researchers to examine further, not previously much-explored constructs, which may lead to employee creativity (Huh & Kim, 2019; Perez-Fuentes et al., 2019). This is supported by a critical literature review on leadership and creativity (Hughes, Lee, Tian, Newman, & Legood, 2018), showing leadership to

be playing a vital role in enhancing or hindering creativity at work, suggesting further studies to identify new mechanisms involving leader behavior that may influence creativity. This is a major persisting gap that must be addressed in how a leadership style or a supervisory behavior that is oriented toward creativity can stimulate employee creativity.

There is a need to look beyond traditional leadership styles because the current workforce is dominated by millennials who, in comparison to previous generations, have different expectations from organizations regarding the work demands that they place on them (Galdames & Guihen, 2022; Kyrousi, Tzoumaka, & Leivadi, 2022; Naim, 2022). In contrast to the Baby Boomers, who may not accept fun at work, and Generation X, who may react neutrally to it, for Millennials and the upcoming generation Z; having fun at work might not only be a benefit but a requirement (Lassleben & Hofmann, 2023; Vollenweider & Jahankhani, 2022). The studies by Tews and his colleagues (e.g. Tews, Michel, Xu, & Drost, 2015; Tews, Michel, & Allen, 2014) suggested that fun interactions at work are a major consideration during a job hunt. Hence, it becomes imperative that managers begin finding ways to incorporate fun at work to attract, retain and maintain millennials (Bakker et al., 2020; E. Goh & Okumus, 2020). This is a major persisting gap that must be addressed in how a leadership style or a supervisory behavior that is oriented toward creativity can stimulate employee creativity.

1.2.2.1 Ebullient Supervision and Employee Creativity

Not much is known about the useful aftermath of having positive leaders ensuring their employees have fun at work, i.e., Ebullient Supervisors. Drawing upon the conservation of resources theory, (Ford, Harding, & Gilmore, 2023) coined the term Ebullient Supervision, and introduced its first scale concluding that an ebullient supervisor enhances job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior; but reduces intention to leave. Accordingly, an ebullient supervisor intentionally facilitates enjoyable activities at work, creating a fun working environment. Since they used cross-sectional design, their analysis didn't show causality and hence they recommended conducting longitudinal studies concerning

ebullient supervision. They also encouraged future researchers to investigate ebullient supervision concerning more positive outcomes for employees and to study its impact on the service industry. Additionally, they also suggested that fun stands alone as a valued outcome and should be considered as such. Moreover, they found that ebullient supervision has convergent validity with a supportive supervisor and represents a supervisor who creates fun working environments through his/her words, behavior, and actions, for employees.

Literature advocates positive outcomes for employees, as well as organizations when leaders create a fun working environment (e.g. [Chan & Simon, 2019](#); [Tsaour, Hsu, & Lin, 2019](#)). Fun at work is a working environment where a variety of enjoyable activities are intentionally encouraged that positively impact productivity at all levels, facilitating corporate survival ([Bilginoglu & Yozgat, 2017](#)). [Glasser \(1999\)](#) choice theory shows a 5-level model of basic needs in which at the highest level is fun. His theory strongly advocates that humans are genetically programmed to have fun at work which improves performance at work ([Huang & Mei-Jun, 2022](#); [Shih & Nguyen, 2022](#)). Fun and creativity go hand in hand ([Boekhorst, Halinski, & Good, 2021](#)) yet it is very surprising how organizations have ignored this key element. Moreover, while, fun at work has garnered much interest in both academic research and practice in the West ([Tews, Jolly, & Stafford, 2021](#)), the concept is also becoming popular in the East ([Ma, Ruangkanjanases, & Chen, 2019](#)). Hence, it becomes important to investigate the generalizability of a leadership style that intentionally encourages fun at work. Accordingly, these gaps were addressed in the present study by exploring ebullient supervision concerning employee creativity, in the hospitality industry; which had not been examined before. All investigated relationships of ebullient supervision with other constructs have not been previously studied.

1.2.3 Creativity Developmental Processes Gap

Being a broad model, the componential model of creativity ([Amabile, 1988](#)) involves three psychological and one social component deemed essential for high

creativity to be displayed. This theory argues that out of three within-individual components of domain-relevant skills, knowledge, skills and strategies that are creativity relevant, and motivation to do the task; one component is outside of the individual known as the social environment in which he/she is working. A meta-analytical study (Hughes et al., 2018), comprising 195 studies, still highlighted a gap suggesting that the current understanding of creativity is imbalanced because nearly all of the prior investigations have ignored the development processes of creativity; over-focusing on the motivational processes. They suggested that employee creativity investigations should include the above-mentioned creativity developmental processes for a better understanding of the mechanisms that lead to it. Accordingly, the current study's theoretical framework involved all four processes by examining the impact of perspective-taking (creativity-relevant skills), thriving at work (domain-relevant skills and motivation), and social capital (social component) on employee creativity.

1.2.4 Gaps in Leadership-Creativity Literature

Multiple leadership-creativity literature gaps have been identified by the current study. First, ample literature exists showing relationships between various traditional leadership styles or supervisory behaviors and employee creativity (Kim, Beehr, & Prewett, 2018; Lin, Luan, Zhao, & Zhao, 2022). Yet, the explanation is weak because of the persistent lack of empirical studies which has led to researchers highlighting that a leadership crisis exists globally as employees are questioning the leaders' style of work (Gerstein & Friedman, 2017; Waters & Seal, 2019).

Organizations are being advised to develop different leadership styles for the present generation at work as they differ from their predecessors (Moller & Gier-nalczyk, 2022; Strielkowski, Firsova, Azarova, & 4, 2022). New leadership styles are being demanded by the current workforce as their work expectations differ from their preceding generation (Berdecia-Cruz, Flecha, & Ortiz, 2022; Ford et al., 2023). Being a fundamental need, individuals tend to allocate substantial resources and time to have fun experiences. Workplace fun is important to the present millennials and to the soon arriving inflow of younger workers, making it

important for leaders and managers to embrace it in organizational setting. Second, the literature also highlights a persistent understanding gap regarding how a leadership style or a supervisory behavior oriented towards creativity may stimulate employee creativity, which has a unique effect and is more strongly linked with creativity (Hughes et al., 2018; Mainemelis, Kark, & Epitropaki, 2015). A careful leader-creativity literature review (Hughes et al., 2018) suggests that most of the mediation research is designed such that it evaluates a single leader variable - a single mediator. E.g., concerning employee creativity, psychological empowerment mediates the impact of servant leadership (Krog & Govender, 2015), transformational leadership (Afsar, Badir, & Saeed, 2014), empowering leadership (Zhang & Bartol, 2010), and LMX (He, Morrison, & Zhang, 2021). This design of a single leader variable – a single mediator puts an assessment limitation regarding which mediators are more significant for employee creativity and which leadership style is respectively significant for each mediator.

Keeping in mind the above-mentioned major gaps in leadership-creativity literature, there was a need to examine the role of leadership, most preferably new and distinct ones, on employee creativity; and also to find which leadership styles best match with which mechanisms. Answering these gaps would develop a more parsimonious framework. Accordingly, in the current study, a recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision was explored in the context of employee creativity along with the mediating mechanisms. Ebullient supervision (Ford, Guzzo, Abbott, & Bowen, 2019) is a recently emerging leadership style representing a supervisor who intentionally provides fun at work through his actions and words. Accordingly, in the current study, ebullient supervision was explored in the context of employee creativity along with the mediating mechanisms.

1.2.5 Understudied Mediation Mechanisms in Leadership-Creativity Literature

Examination of mediational mechanisms becomes fundamental to providing practical recommendations, and hence, the selection of mediators needs to be very systematically carried out. Five distinct mediating mechanisms can explain the

leadership-creativity relation: motivational mechanism, cognitive mechanism, affective mechanism; identification-based mechanism, and relational-based mechanism (Shin, 2015). Researchers are urged to employ these taxonomies as a guidance mechanism for selecting the variables so a stronger, clear, and more useful leadership-creativity literature can be developed. However, Hughes et al. (2018) meta-analysis highlights motivational mechanisms being over-studied, creating the need for other understudied mediating mechanisms to be explored as well. They further argue that there is a lack of examining dissimilar mediators simultaneously (from different mechanisms) and not much is known regarding which mechanism is more or less important for employee creativity.

Employee creativity is a behavior that can be guided by cognitive and affective factors. The existing literature mostly focused on cognitive factors (Gong, Zhao, Wang, & Yu, 2018; Hughes et al., 2018). However, the literature is scant on affective factors. Hence, this study also considered the impact of positive affect on employee creativity, in the hospitality industry. Further, qualitatively or quantitatively, positive affect is an established antecedent of creativity; yet, surprisingly, very limited research exists exploring it as a mediator concerning positive styles of leadership (Hughes et al., 2018).

Positive affect as a key emotional mechanism has been focused upon in this study because not only it is a well-established antecedent of creativity, but also because organizations desire their employees to be happy (DiMaria, Peroni, & Sarracino, 2020). This is because anticipated individual and organizational outcomes are shaped by happy employees (see Diener, Thapa, & Tay, 2020). Accordingly, this gap was addressed by employing the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) to examine positive affect as the mechanism explaining the impact of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision on employee creativity, which at large is still underexplored in the existing literature.

In doing so, the current study also examined the cognitive mechanism through perspective taking, a motivational mechanism through thriving at work, and a relational-based mechanism through structural and relational social capital to understand the pathways via which nature connectedness and ebullient supervision

may influence employee creativity. Hence, following the suggestion of (Hughes et al., 2018), 4 out of 5 suggested mediational mechanisms were employed in the present study. Be it an individual-level study, a team-level, or an organizational one; motivational mechanisms have received the maximum attention in creativity literature. Since creativity requires thinking outside the box and exploring challenging practices, intrinsic motivation is a major driver of employee creativity (Shafi, Lei, Song, & Sarker, 2020). It is a key ingredient for creativity as it involves being motivated to the task for the sake of the task itself and not some other external reason (Muñoz-Doyague, González-Álvarez, & Nieto, 2008). Therefore, just having skills and knowledge is not enough, to be intrinsically motivated is a must for employees to get involved and be persistent in carrying out novel tasks. However, Hughes et al. (2018) point out that although many studies have examined motivational-creativity mechanisms e.g., creative self-efficacy, empowerment, and intrinsic motivation and that there is a need to examine a distinct motivational mechanism. Creative performance is flourished by Intrinsic motivation which represents vitality (Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall, & Zhao, 2011) and flourishes creativity. Although thriving at work includes vitality (intrinsic motivation), yet, Kleine, Rudolph, and Zacher (2019) meta-analysis suggested thriving at work as a distinct construct due to the joint sense of vitality and learning. In other words, for thriving to occur, both learning and vitality must be simultaneously present. Accordingly, this study, being consistent with previous research which stresses considering affective/motivational and cognitive aspects of employee creativity, simultaneously; addressed the above gap by investigating thriving at work to help explain the relation of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision with employee creativity, which at large is still underexplored in the existing literature.

1.2.6 Understudied Relationship of Perspective-Taking with Nature Connectedness and Ebullient Supervision

Much of the research investigating the impact of nature connectedness has focused on its association with well-being (see Martin et al., 2020; Pritchard et

al., 2020). An important link exists between imagination and creativity where, without imagination creativity is not possible (for review see Tsai, 2012). However, a careful literature review during this study suggests that not much has been examined regarding the nature-connectedness and perspective-taking linkage in the work context, and it is still unclear whether nature-connectedness via perspective-taking will lead to employee creativity. One rare study is recently that of Di Fabio and Kenny (2021) where perspective-taking mediated the relationship between openness and nature connectedness. Other non-work context studies include that of (Schultz, 2000b) which found that those participants who could do perspective-taking of an animal harmed by pollution were able to connect with nature. Additionally, Zhang, Piff, Iyer, Koleva, and Keltner (2014) concluded that those with a tendency to perceive nature's beauty experienced more perspective-taking. However, all these studies were not conducted in a work context. There are ample studies linking empathy and nature connectedness. However, empathy and perspective-taking are related but distinct; where empathy is about affect sharing, and perspective-taking is about cognitive sharing (Stietz, Jauk, Krach, & Kanske, 2019). Perspective-taking is one of the dimensions of empathy (others being fantasy, personal distress, and empathic concern) (Davis et al., 1980; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2018). Moreover, there is a persistent gap regarding investigating how leaders can develop the cognitive process of employees while engaging in creative processes (Hughes et al., 2018; Reiter-Palmon & Illies, 2004). Since ebullient supervision is a new leadership style, no studies exist relating it to perspective-taking. Accordingly, this gap will be addressed by investigating perspective-taking as the cognitive mechanism of employee creativity, which at large is still unnoticed in the existing literature.

1.2.7 Lack of Social Capital - Employee Creativity Literature

A workplace's social environment is a feature to be considered while examining employee creativity because creativity gets influenced by the interaction and communication processes between people (Beghetto, Karwowski, & Reiter-Palmon,

2021). Various studies have suggested examining the relationship between social capital and creativity holds great research potential (Liu, 2013; Yang, Chou, & Chiu, 2014). Yet, a careful literature review (Jain & Jain, 2017) highlights that although social capital represents the social networks and the trust level between people which can be a significant facilitator for employee creativity; yet, only 5% of the studies have explored social capital characteristics in this regard. This review also indicated that social networks and interactions positively influence creativity, where, external ties help to generate ideas and internal ties help to implement them. Therefore, organizations should take steps to help social capital emergence by opening such avenues that facilitate their employees to access networks to speed up their creativity. This can help to gain and develop critical resources which can then ultimately offer a competitive advantage for the organization. Further, although an association between positive affect and psychological capital (Da et al., 2021; George, Okon, & Akaighe, 2023; Paliga, Kożusznik, Pollak, & Sanecka, 2022; Peng & Chen, 2022) has been studied, no studies were found investigating positive affect-social capital linkage concerning employee creativity. Also, the impact of structural social capital and relational social capital, particularly in the hospitality industry, is yet to be considered.

Moreover, although having been studied as a single-dimension construct in many studies, literature persistently highlights the need to deeply understand social capital dimensions' impact on employee creativity (Bhatti, Vorobyev, Zakariya, & Christofi, 2021; Oussi & Chtourou, 2020). Based on their in-depth literature review comprising 143 articles, Jain and Jain (2017) conceptual framework also states that employee creativity is significantly and positively impacted by network ties and social interaction. Additionally, in the social-relational mechanism, trust in relationships plays a crucial role in facilitating creativity (Zhang et al., 2014). Thus, social capital requires more attention in creativity literature. Although many studies have examined social capital as a single dimension construct, there is a need to study social capital dimensions' impact on creative abilities (Jain & Jain, 2017). Accordingly, this study examined the impact of structural social capital and relational social capitals on employee creativity and also how positive affect influences each dimension respectively.

1.2.8 Personality-Creativity Literature Gap

An in-depth literature review, in this study, has identified multiple gaps concerning personality-creativity literature. First, it is a well-established fact that cognitive characteristics and personality measures have a positive association (Kwang & Rodrigues, 2002; Shaw, 2022), yet, a persisting issue is that studies have not investigated whether personality and cognitive characteristics contribute independently to creativity or whether there is an interaction between these two that influences the creative responses by individuals (Jain & Jain, 2017; Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Therefore, Jain and Jain (2017) suggest that there must be examinations regarding how different personalities might be related to employee creativity or different creativity processes. Second, extensive research (Jirasek & Sudzina, 2020; Zare & Flinchbaugh, 2019) has examined the Big Five personality dimensions association with creativity, where openness to experience, conscientiousness, and extraversion have been examined. However, beyond Big Five, less is known about other dispositions that influence creative performance as moderators (Jafri, 2020; Jafri, Dem, & Choden, 2016). Creativity is a natural domain of proactive behavior; yet, surprisingly, very little research taking it as a moderator in creativity literature; thus, there is a need to examine how different personalities might be related to employee creativity or different creativity processes (Jain & Jain, 2017). A meta-analysis (Kleine et al., 2019) indicated that a proactive personality was associated with positive affect, thriving, positive leadership styles, and creative performance. A proactive personality was a better forecaster of stimulus learning than the Big Five (Jeong, McLean, McLean, Yoo, & Bartlett, 2017). Proactive employees thrive more at work (Abid, Arya, Arshad, Ahmed, & Farooqi, 2021; Sheng & Zhou, 2021). Accordingly, this study addressed this gap by considering a proactive personality as a moderator.

1.2.9 Contextual Gaps

Multiple contextual gaps have been identified in this study. First, employee creativity is influenced jointly by individual and situational/contextual factors, representing an interplay between process, personality, and environment that results

in a creative outcome that is both useful and original in a social context (Bavik & Kuo, 2022; Shaw, 2022; Yuniawan, 2022). Creativity does not solely depend upon stable characteristics but rather a combination of processes of individual, affective, behavioral, and cognitive nature (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005).

Thus, to make meaningful efforts toward enhancing employee creativity, it becomes imperative to understand both individual and contextual factors that can predict, impact, or explain the entire mechanism. However, a careful literature review suggests that limited studies have examined both individual and contextual factors, together, with employee creativity (e.g. Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017; Li, Jin, & Chen, 2020). Recent meta-analyses and previous studies (Cai et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020; van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2020) on employee creativity also highlight these gaps although, many previous studies have investigated both individuals (e.g., knowledge, intrinsic motivation, creative personalities, self-efficacy) and contextual factors (e.g., supervisory behavior, teamwork) that significantly stimulate employee creativity, but mostly independently; hence ambiguity still prevails regarding the different factors interaction in predicting employee creativity in the workplace. Similarly, a thorough literature review (Jain & Jain, 2017) stated that much of the prior creativity research focused on either individuality of creative people, such as cognitive ability and personality, or contextual features in which creativity takes place; while not examining whether independent impacts on creativity are made by these individual characteristics or if an interaction takes place amongst them which ultimately affects an individual's creativity. The review suggested that both contextual and individual characteristics maybe having independent along with mediated influences on employee creativity.

Thus, employees' creativity can directly or indirectly be influenced through various mechanisms in an organizational context. There is a need to consider them all together for better comprehension of mechanisms that can stimulate employee creativity because creative outcomes do not and can't occur in isolation and depend on the sociotechnical system, resources, and capabilities. There is a need to provide a holistic approach as both contextual and individual factors maybe having independent along with mediated influences on employee creativity. Covering this gap will facilitate both practitioners and policymakers as in the current

business practices there are severe budget constraints. A holistic view can help practitioners prioritize strategies to allocate a budget.

To reiterate, there is a need to investigate how contextual and individual factors, simultaneously interact for fostering employee creativity, along with the intervening mechanisms through which this will take place. Accordingly, the study addressed this gap by examining how various individual (nature connectedness, positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, structural social capital, relational social capital, and proactive personality) and contextual factor (ebullient supervision) impacted employee creativity.

Second, with much focus being on the manufacturing sector, the service industry has largely been ignored in the creativity literature. In service settings, customer needs are personal and exclusive, satisfactory fulfillment of which requires employee creativity. Although literature, including in-depth literature reviews and meta-analyses (Coelho, Evanschitzky, Sousa, Olya, & Taheri, 2021; Gong et al., 2018) have highlighted that employee creativity in modern organizations is not limited to industrial enterprises or manufacturing sector; yet, comparatively, the service industry has, largely, been ignored. Employee creativity is crucial for the service sector, particularly the hospitality industry. Recently, the hospitality industry has been about much more than providing basic needs; it is about giving elevated experiences (Kandampully, Zhang, & Jaakkola, 2018). The hospitality sector is prone to constantly altering customer expectations and ever-growing demands (Backstrom & Bengtsson, 2019; Bani-Melhem, Zeffane, & Albaity, 2018). The hospitality industry constantly seeks innovative ways to successfully cope with the ever-changing customer expectations (Peters & Kallmuenzer, 2018). Thus, employee creativity is a critical mainstream demand in the hospitality sector due to job demand and its being of customer-centric nature (Lee, Hallak, & Sardeshmukh, 2019; Lu et al., 2020). Yet, limited research investigates employee creativity determinants in the hospitality sector (Li & Hsu, 2016; Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). Hence, researchers and practitioners are still pondering when and how employee creativity can be framed in the hospitality industry.

Third, a careful literature review on antecedents of creativity (Gong et al., 2018) suggests that, in comparison to the relatively few studies in eastern countries, the

majority of the studies on employee creativity have a Western context, especially USA or Europe. The research on employee creativity needs to go international as globalization paces up. There is a need to look at the international context concerning detecting and examining factors that can lead to employee creativity beyond Western boundaries. Much of the international work on employee creativity includes samples from western countries, dominantly by the U.S., and attempts are made to investigate and apply conceptual models created as per U.S. reference. It is high time to examine the above relationships in other countries, especially those in Asia because many multinational companies are repositioning themselves in this area of the world. Doing so will also outspread the management theories' relevance, globally, which will facilitate the effective management of nationally diverse employees (Kim & Leung, 2007). Native research will greatly facilitate understanding of the most important asset required by organizations today – employee creativity, and that too, from an international perspective. Hence, a gap exists in understanding the strong role of the cultural context in employee creativity research from an international perspective, in the services sector, especially hospitality industry. Thus, developing countries managers might be unaware regarding how to stimulate the employee creativity. This is an important contextual gap because developing nations are allocating budgets to boost the tourism and hospitality sector (Khan, Bibi, Lorenzo, Lyu, & Babar, 2020). Thus, this sector is a stimulant towards economy development.

Moreover, examining employee creativity in an Asian context is important because where multiple multinational companies are moving their knowledge and creating jobs. Also because there is a paucity concerning proactive personality studies in an Asian context. Moreover, culture influences the way people think about and place importance on nature (Olivos & Clayton, 2017). An earlier meta-analysis suggested that very little evidence exists for cross-cultural validation for nature connectedness and well-being linkage (Capaldi, Dopko, & Zelenski, 2014). This gap is still persistent as highlighted by a recent meta-analysis by Pritchard et al. (2020), suggesting a majority of studies associating nature connectedness with positive outcomes being conducted in the West. Thus, there is limited understanding regarding nature connectedness. Concerning ebullient supervisor, it is a

newly constructed leadership style with an embryonic literature, globally. Accordingly, this study addressed these gaps through examining nature connectedness and ebullient supervision in perspective of employee creativity, in the hospitality sector of Pakistan. Likewise, aiming exclusively on hospitality sector will provide useful awareness regarding how the individual and contextual factors, under this study, may help to flourish employee creativity in particularly this industry type.

Lastly, much empirical evidence on proactive personality has been gathered from the US (Spitzmuller, Sin, Howe, & Fatimah, 2015). Since a proactive personality is not culturally bound, there is a need for cross-validation globally. Some studies have investigated proactive personality in other than Western contexts. For instance, Chan and David (2006) study found that proactive personality was positively correlated with work outcomes in Singapore, while, Kim, Hon, and Crant (2009) reported that among Hong Kong Chinese employees, it has a positive association with employee creativity. Chien, Yang, and Huang (2021) study found that in Taiwan's international hotels, among the front-line service employees, a proactive personality positively affected employee creativity. Wahab and Blackman (2022) studied found that employee well-being in the retail sector of Malaysia was negatively affected by proactive personality. Chae and Choi (2019) study in Korea revealed that through feedback-seeking behavior, a proactive personality influenced creativity.

It is important to study proactive personality and employee creativity in the Asian context. Claes, Beheydt, and Lemmens (2005) found cultural differences concerning proactivity based on Hofstede dimensions, stating that high individualism and small power distance might nurture a proactive personality as both encourage personal responsibility, personal initiative, and innovation. They further added that both masculinity and femininity seem to expedite proactivity while a culture of weak uncertainty avoidance might just allow innovation. The positive relationship between proactive personality and employee creativity, which may or may not be culturally bounded, needs to be validated in Asian contexts, such as Pakistan. There is a possibility that Asians tend to be more affected by situational factors than Westerns. Hence, it is important to examine cross-cultural differences

(Hofstede, 2003). Accordingly, this study undertook the endeavor to fill these literature gaps by conducting the present research in Pakistan, in an Asian context, where, as per Hofstede (1980) high power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance prevail. This is in total contrast to western culture.

1.3 Problem Background

Employee creativity is a prevailing issue in literature (as elaborated earlier in Section 1.2). Further, World Travel and Tourism Council compares different regions contributions of travel and tourism industry to GDP. These regions include North America, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific. The region of Asia-Pacific experienced the largest decline (58.8%) in the contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, in comparison to other regions, like, the Caribbean (53.2%), Middle East (49.8%), Europe (47.1%), Africa (47.1%), North America (45.8%), and Latin America (41.4%) (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2022), as shown in Figure 1. If we consider the recovery of this region, the Asia-Pacific region shows the weakest recovery (16.0%), as compared to the rest of the regions.

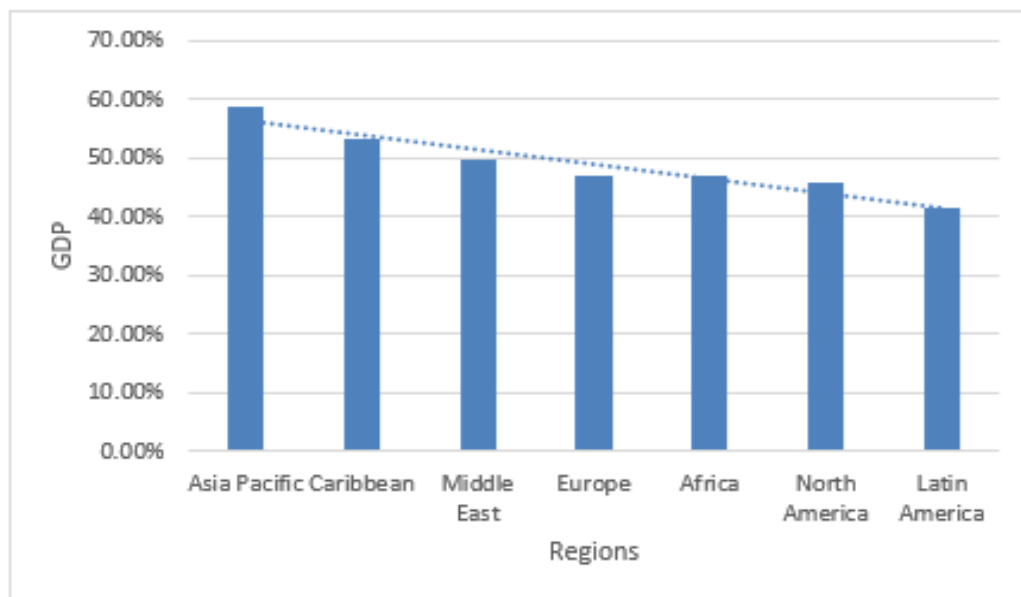


FIGURE 1.1: Regional % decline in GDP contribution by Travel and Tourism Industry

Simultaneously, those regions which show decline are also lower in creativity. Creativity levels of South Asian countries in the Asia-Pacific region, show Pakistan ranked 87 out of 132 countries, struggling in the middle while India at 40, Sri Lanka at 85, Bangladesh at 102, and Nepal at 111 (Global Innovation Index 2020). Employee creativity is a skill that lies in skilled labor. However, there is an immense shortage of skilled labor in the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2022), and the most demanded skill for current and future employees.

1.3.1 Problem Statement

Hence, based on the above arguments, Employee creativity is a prevailing issue in the world, severely in the South Asian region, including Pakistan. Hence, this study takes this endeavor and presents a holistic framework on how employee creativity be framed in the services sector, particularly, the hospitality industry.

1.4 Research Questions & Research Objectives

1.4.1 Research Questions

Answers to the following research questions are sought by the current study:

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity?

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity?

Research Question 3

Whether positive affect mediates the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective-taking?

Research Question 4

Whether positive affect mediates the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking?

Research Question 5

Whether perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work?

Research Question 6

Whether perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital?

Research Question 7

Whether perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital?

Research Question 8

Whether thriving at work mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity?

Research Question 9

Whether structural social capital mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity?

Research Question 10

Whether relational social capital mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity?

Research Question 11

Whether there is a serial mediation effect of positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work and social capital on the relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity?

Research Question 12

Whether there is a serial mediation effect of positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work and social capital on the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity?

Research Question 13

To what extent does a proactive personality moderate the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work?

Research Question 14

To what extent does a proactive personality moderate the relationship between perspective-taking and structural social capital?

Research Question 15

To what extent does a proactive personality moderate the relationship between perspective-taking and relational social capital?

1.4.2 Research Objectives

This study has the following research objectives:

1. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity.
2. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity.
3. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and positive affect.
4. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and positive affect.
5. To find out the relationship between positive affect and employee creativity.
6. To find out the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work.
7. To find out the relationship between positive affect and perspective taking.
8. To find the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital.
9. To find the relationship between positive affect relational social capital.
10. To find out if positive affect mediates the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective taking.
11. To find out if positive affect mediates the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective taking.

12. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective taking.
13. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking.
14. To find out the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.
15. To find the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work.
16. To find the relationship between perspective taking and structural social capital.
17. To find the relationship between perspective taking and relational social capital.
18. To find out if perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work.
19. To find if perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital.
20. To find if perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital.
21. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and thriving at work.
22. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and thriving at work.
23. To find out the relationship between thriving at work and employee creativity.
24. To find out if thriving at work mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.
25. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and structural social capital.

26. To find out the relationship between nature connectedness and relational social capital.
27. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and structural social capital.
28. To find out the relationship between ebullient supervision and relational social capital.
29. To find out the relationship between structural social capital and employee creativity.
30. To find out the relationship between relational social capital and employee creativity.
31. To find out if structural social capital mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.
32. To find out if relational social capital mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.
33. To find out if proactive personality acts as a moderator between perspective taking and thriving at work.
34. To find out if proactive personality acts as a moderator between perspective taking and structural social capital.
35. To find out if proactive personality acts as a moderator between perspective taking and relational social capital.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is important for several reasons. First, although employee creativity is a mainstream demand, yet limited research investigates employee creativity determinants in the hospitality industry ([Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020](#)). Moreover, literature urges to examine not previously much-explored constructs, which may lead to employee creativity and to identify new mechanisms that may influence

employee creativity (Korzynski, Paniagua, & Rodriguez-Montemayor, 2019). This study attempts to explore the impact of nature connectedness and contextual factor or ebullient supervision (a recently introduced leadership style) in stimulating employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Doing so has allowed multiple understudied and new linkages to be investigated, making this study an original. This is the first study to explore ebullient supervision relationship with positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, structural and relational social capital and employee creativity. Similarly, this study makes contribution in the management literature by exploring the understudied relationships of nature connectedness and perspective-taking, nature connectedness and thriving at work, and perspective-taking and thriving at work.

Second, literature highlights the ambiguity regarding the interaction between individual and contextual factors in predicting employee creativity in the workplace (Cai et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020). A holistic view needs to be provided as both contextual and individual factors maybe having independent along with mediated influences on employee creativity. The current study examined how various individual (nature connectedness, positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, structural social capital, relational social capital, and proactive personality) and contextual factor (ebullient supervision) impacted employee creativity. This may facilitate a holistic view, aiding both practitioners and policymakers to prioritize strategies to allocate a budget. Third, by considering positive affect as the main mechanism for transferring the impact of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision on employee creativity, this study attempts to fill the paucity gap related to affective studies in employee creativity literature. In addition to the affective mechanism, this study also employed a cognitive mechanism (by considering perspective-taking), a cognitive-motivational mechanism (by considering thriving at work), and a relational-based mechanism (by considering social capital dimensions). In doing so, hospitality managers are aided to broaden the canvas of strategy formulation of employee creativity.

Fourth, workplace social environment is an important consideration while examining employee creativity yet, only a few of the studies have explored social capital dimensions in this regard. Literature highlights the need to study social capital

dimensions' impact on employee creativity, rather than as a single-dimension construct (Bhatti et al., 2021; Jain & Jain, 2017; Oussi & Chtourou, 2020; Perez-Luno, Medina, Lavado, & Rodríguez, 2011) particularly in the hospitality industry. This study not only investigates the underexplored relationships between positive affect and social capital dimensions but also the impact of each dimension on employee creativity. Fifth, this study employs the complete creativity developmental process (Amabile & Pillemer, 2012) to create a balanced understanding of creativity which the meta-analyses (Hughes et al., 2018) highlighted as being ignored. The current study's theoretical framework involved all four processes by examining the impact of perspective-taking (creativity-relevant skills), thriving at work (domain-relevant skills and motivation), and social capital (social component) on employee creativity.

Sixth, conducting this study on the hospitality industry, in Pakistan; this study is important for filling the contextual gap as much of the existing literature on employee creativity is of Western culture. Thus, this study makes developing countries' managers aware of stimulating employee creativity. Lastly, since service organizations, particularly in the hospitality industry require happy, flexible-thinking, thriving, and creative employees; this study offers practical implications for hospitality managers. The current study's outcomes aid the hospitality industry practitioners in formulating a strategy to have happy employees, who can understand others' perspectives, are learning and feeling energetic, and exhibit creative behavior.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The current study tends to add to the understudied service industry-employee creativity literature, particularly, the hospitality industry (Hotels and Restaurants). For many reasons, this study is of significance. First, the identified gaps allowed considering a recently introduced leadership style of Ebullient Supervision (Ford et al., 2019), as a possible antecedent of employee creativity. In doing so, all of the proposed relationships of ebullient supervision with the rest of the studied constructs, in this study, are new linkages. To the best of the authors' knowledge, the

present study is a pioneer affective research attempt in exploring the role of ebullient supervision in inducing employees' positive affect, generating cognitive skills of perspective-taking, generating psychological resources of thriving at work, and social resources of structural social capital and relational social capital; shaping employee creativity in the hospitality industry. This makes the current study an original, offering empirical evidence of the influence of this recent leadership style on employee work-related outcomes in the creative context. Hence, by exploring ebullient supervision, this study makes novel contributions to the management literature by amplifying literature on leadership, positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, social capital, and employee creativity.

Second, since ebullient supervision is a leadership style that intentionally creates fun at work, and is supportive (Ford et al., 2019), this study also makes contributions to the related literature on fun at work and supportive leadership. Thus, by considering ebullient supervision, this study adds to the underexplored literature on adult playfulness, advocating its beneficial outcomes in terms of generating desired workplace resources like thriving employees and social capital.

Third, research suggests that since individual and contextual factors have been examined concerning employee creativity, but independently; which has led to ambiguity in understanding the interplay among different factors that enhance employee creativity (Cai et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Lee & Tan, 2012; Van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2015; van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2020; Zhang & Bartol, 2010; Zhou & Hoever, 2014). Hence, this study contributed to reducing the literature's inexactness by analyzing the simultaneous interaction of both individual and contextual factors concerning employee creativity which allows an understanding of how different factors interact in predicting employee creativity in the workplace. Hence, this thesis provides an integrated, theoretically supported framework which exhibits a detailed representation of the uncharted mechanisms that can predict employee creativity.

Fourth, even though employee behavior is guided by both affective and cognitive factors; yet there is a lack of affective studies in employee creativity literature (Gong et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2018; Richardson et al., 2017). Such a consideration will help hospitality managers to broaden the canvas of strategy formulation

of employee creativity. Accordingly, drawing upon the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2004), the present study provided a unique framework examining positive affect and its mechanisms of employee creativity. In doing so, two major extensions are made in the broaden-and-build theory. First, the entire mechanism of how positive affects build skills and resources that lead to employee creativity is through perspective taking. This thesis provided a unique way to understand, thoroughly, how both individual and contextual factors, via positive emotions, can influence an interplay of various other factors to achieve employee creativity. Second, this theory would be extended outside the social bonds and linked with nature too.

Fifth, this study investigates the underexplored relation between positive affect and social capital dimensions concerning employee creativity. While examining employee creativity, it is important to consider the workplace social environment because empirical evidence suggest that creativity gets influenced by the interaction and communication processes between people (Hennessey, 2017). In the current technological era, employees are not living in isolation. Consequently, the value embedded in such relationships is being considered as social capital, at multiple levels for example structural and relational (Muhammad & Gul-E-Rana, 2020; Muhammad, Mahadi, & Hussin, 2017). Although social capital represents the social connections and the trust between people which can facilitate employee creativity; yet, only a few studies have explored social capital characteristics in this regard (Jain & Jain, 2017). Literature highlights the need to study social capital dimensions' impact on employee creativity, rather than as a single-dimension construct (Bhatti et al., 2021; Jain & Jain, 2017; Oussi & Chtourou, 2020; Perez-Luno et al., 2011) particularly, in the hospitality industry. The impact of relational social capital and structural social capital is still underexplored (Muhammad et al., 2017). Accordingly, this study contributed to the literature by examining the impact of relational social capital and structural social capital on employee creativity; in addition to how positive affect influences each dimension, respectively. Sixth, this study contributed to the management literature by exploring the understudied relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work, perspective-taking and relational social capital, and structural social capital.

Last, employing a mediating perspective, this thesis contributed by investigating the mechanism through which both individual and contextual factors led to employee creativity. Out of the 5 mediational mechanisms that can explain relationships (Hughes et al., 2018), this study employs 4 and show how they are distinct, yet, interconnected. This results in multiple new linkages, making major contributions to the literature on positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, social capital, and employee creativity. Hence, the present study added to the scarce literature in the context of mechanisms through which employee creativity can be boosted.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

Competition in the service industry is intense, and thus, managers need to stay focused on ensuring a supportive working environment that stimulates employee creativity. The present study highlighted the importance of considering both individual and contextual factors in encouraging employee creativity among employees in the hospitality industry. Hence, the findings of this study may enable practitioners of the hospitality industry in strategy formulation by understanding how, when, and why employee creativity can be stimulated. First, the current study provides an important and much-needed unique insight into how managers can facilitate employee creativity in a fun manner by looking away from traditional leadership styles. By considering a recently introduced ebullient supervision style of leadership as an antecedent to employee creativity, the current study highlights the importance of a positive, fun encouraging supervision style at work place that encourages constructive attitudes and behaviors among hospitality industry employees. In doing so, it provides new ways for hospitality practitioners to formulate strategies for employee creativity stimulation; in addition to vocalizing the need to have fun at work into their mission and vision. Second, as the mediational mechanism examinations play a fundamental role in providing practical recommendations; the current study employs 4 dissimilar mediational mechanisms by considering positive affect (affective), perspective-taking (cognitive), thriving at work (cognitive/motivational), and social capital (relational) as mediators. This

enabled the current study to provide a nuanced understanding through which nature connectedness and ebullient supervision transfer their impact on employee creativity; which at large was still understudied in the present literature. In doing so, the present research provided useful new ways for hospitality industry practitioners in Pakistan to focus on enhancing positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and relational social capital in employees by encouraging nature connectedness and promoting an ebullient supervision style of leadership.

Third, it is important to consider the social environment in which the employees carry out their routine jobs because creativity does not occur in isolation. The current study examined the influence of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision on social capital dimensions, individually. In addition, the current study also examined how positive affect and perspective-taking influence individual social capital dimensions rather than the whole construct; in addition to the individual effect of relational social capital and structural social capital on employee creativity. This provides a broader perspective of social capital to hospitality industry practitioners.

Fourth, by conducting empirical research in Pakistan (Asian/Eastern context), the current study provided valuable insights for employee creativity stimulation to developing countries' managers in the hospitality industry. This is an important contextual contribution because much of the previous studies are based on either US or Europe perspective, whereas, Pakistan has a contrasting culture in comparison (e.g., high power distance, collectivism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance prevail). Thus, this study provides empirical research for cross-validation.

Thus, through the results of this study, the hospitality practitioners and the hotel managers are provided with deep insights and understandings as to how they can enhance employee creativity in the local hospitality industry. The current study findings may help them in devising such HR strategies and practices that create a successful interaction between individual and contextual factors of affective, cognitive, psychological, social, and supervisory nature to stimulate employee creativity in the hospitality industry. The findings of the current study facilitate practitioners in the hospitality industry in strategy formulation to have happy employees, who understand others' points of view, look forward to learning and feel alive, and

show creativity at work. This holds importance for the hospitality industry due to its inclination towards constantly changing and increasing demands for providing unique experiences.

1.6 Supporting Theories

To develop a holistic understanding of individual and contextual factors and their mechanisms impact on employee creativity, the present study's framework adopts the multiple theory approach by integrating the attention restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989), affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), conservation of resources theory, and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2004) to suggest that positive affect is central to understanding how individuals respond to events at work that may translate into employee creativity.

Attention restoration theory (ART) provides support for examining nature connectedness and positive affect relationship. Affective events theory (AET) provides support for examining the ebullient supervision and positive affect relationship. Conservation of resource theory provides support for examining ebullient supervision influence in generating cognitive skills of perspective-taking and building personal resources of thriving at work, structural social capital, and relational social capital. Broaden-and-build theory provides an overarching mechanism theory explaining how and why nature connectedness and ebullient supervision transfer their influence on employee creativity through the affective mechanism of positive affect, cognitive mechanism of perspective taking, cognitive-motivational mechanism of thriving at work, and relational mechanism of social capital dimensions.

1.6.1 Attention Restoration Theory (ART)

ART theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) posits the benefits of being in nature in terms of pleasant feelings and cognitive resource replenishment which enhances the concentration abilities of an individual. This theory suggests that natural environments tend to be restorative as they inherently draw upon attentional

capacities and allow the refurbishment of cognitive resources. Accordingly, during tasks that require high levels of concentration, the attentional and mental resources may deplete; which can be replenished by being exposed to nature, directly or indirectly. Further, to experience the restorative effect, capture attention easily, and make individuals seek nature exposure and appreciation.

1.6.2 Affective Events Theory (AET)

Taking an event-based approach, AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) proposes attitudes and behaviors of people being influenced by their emotional reactions to work events. Hence, workplace events serve as an important affect source. In other words, affective reactions can be directly caused by work events. Work environment features present the central idea of AET as initiating affective responses that then influence the attitudes and behaviors of employees. These affective responses serve as a mediating mechanism between workplace events and employees' behavioral outcomes. Work events are of two types: positive-inducing and negative-inducing (Shehawy, 2022). The workplace event nature determines whether affective responses will be positive or negative. Positive-inducing events will lead to positive emotions which will lead to positive outcomes. Positive moods are experienced by employees when they experience positive work, supervisor, and co-worker-related events (Elfenbein, 2022). Positive-inducing events will lead to positive emotions which will lead to positive outcomes.

1.6.3 Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

Being a widely cited theory in organizational behavior, COR theory enables the development of a wide range of hypotheses that can focus on multiple resources rather than one dominant resource (Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018). Resources are the central ideology of Hobfoll (1989) conservation of resources theory advocating that an individual is motivated to attain, develop, save, and improve their valuable resources. Individuals keenly seek to acquire material, personal and social resources as resources help to generate other resources.

It is important to understand that COR theory is not only relevant or concerned with stressful situations (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993). Fundamentally, being a motivational theory, COR explains that evolutionary need drives human behavior to acquire and preserve resources deemed important for survival. To meet everyday challenges, resources having prospective value must be invested in for which individuals either should already own resources to mobilize or need to have access to them. Further, acquiring and preserving personal and social resources develops a sense of capability among individuals to face challenges. Hence, key resources are employed by individuals not only to react to stress but also to develop a sustainable resource pool to meet current and future needs.

The updated version of COR theories presents multiple corollaries to build, improve, and secure resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). First corollary positions that people possessing adequate resources are in less danger of resource depletion while having further likelihood of acquiring further resources, and vice versa. The second corollary positions that in comparison to resource gain, resource loss holds more significance because it results in stressful conditions; and a spiral of resource loss (both for individual and organization) will occur if resource loss is consecutive. Third corollary positions that comparative resource loss slows down with the gaining of resources. However, resource gaining is a time consuming process whereas resource loss is fast.

1.6.4 Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

Broaden-and-Build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) advocates the occurrence of an upward spiral of emotional well-being, by an individual, upon experiencing positive emotions which expand their thinking tendencies and develop enduring resources (physical, intellectual, psychological, and social). As positive affect makes people feel safe, signaling a non-threatening environment, they bring cognitive flexibility in people by encouraging them to discover and accept new information. This results in building enduring and useful personal skills and resources. Lastly, these resources lead to personal growth and may be termed a transformation stage.

The theory of Broaden-and-build gives two key propositions:

- a) Positive affect will lead to the broadening effect of skills creation and development of resources;
- b) Positive affect encourages the discovery of novel and creative actions.

The theory proposes positive emotions, e.g., joy, help in the long-term optimal functioning development by encouraging the pushing of limits to be creative; while being content leads to new ways of thinking. As thinking widens, that helps individuals to gather more resources and develop psychologically. E.g., when enjoyment is experienced at work, individuals get motivated to push their limits, and enhanced creativity is experienced (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). In other words, this theory proposes that positive affect results in the long-term development of optimal functioning. Positive emotions broaden the horizon by expanding thinking possibilities and availability of actions to an individual which helps them to develop personal resources of an intellectual, psychological, and social nature. Hence, people who experience positive affect can tap into more creative ways of thinking.

1.6.5 Integration

Attention restoration theory (ART) explains that nature promotes positive emotions and improves cognitive processes by restoring attention (Berman, Jonides, & Kaplan, 2008). Especially, when attention is restored over a long period, employee overall well-being improves (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002); which then enables an employee to reflect, to think of solutions to problems; which leads to creative behaviors (Verhaeghen, Joormann, & Aikman, 2014). Being connected with nature produces a sense of awe (emotional response) and this, being consistent with the broaden and build theory of positive emotions, would generate a positive affect that could expand the mental structures and frames of reference of an individual (Fredrickson & Barbara, 2013; Frumkin et al., 2017).

Affective events theory (Cropanzano, Dasborough, & Weiss, 2017) is an explanatory model explaining that supervisor behaviors represent “events” that the subordinates respond to. Leaders influence employee behaviors by shaping the working environment, determining the tasks’ nature, organizing, allocating, and even developing new resources (Fischer et al., 2017). Effective leaders can stimulate

positive affect in their subordinates. An ebullient supervisor is a positive leadership style that intentionally promotes fun at work (Ford et al., 2019). AET has been adopted as a theoretical base for previous fun-at-work research, in addition to being pivotal in understanding leadership (e.g. Salem, Selem, Khalid, Raza, & Valeri, 2023; Yang & Chen, 2023). AET suggests that employees can generate affective reactions towards work events which influences their behavior. A fun working environment tends to be a favorable and positive work event that is more likely to stimulate positive emotional reactions in employees (Michel, Tews, & Allen, 2019). Fun at work is deliberately provided by an ebullient supervisor (Ford et al., 2019), and is expected to generate a positive affect in employees. This study extends AET by proposing that an ebullient supervisor, as a positive work event, assists in generating positive emotions that stimulate employees to engage in creative behavior. It is expected that an ebullient supervisor's characteristics (e.g., use of humor, greeting, encouraging playful behavior) would shape employees' positive appraisals, producing positive emotions; resulting in employee creativity.

Drawing upon the logic of (Ford et al., 2019), COR theory supports the leadership style of ebullient supervision in generating personal skills and resources. According to this theory, individuals value resources as they have an impact on their functioning. Being a motivational theory at its core, COR posits that humans have an internal drive towards acquiring new while maintaining current valuable resources which can be in the shape of personal characteristics, energies, objects, conditions, and social support. Accordingly, employing the lens of COR theory which places great importance on the working environment as being a provider of multiple resources, we propose that an ebullient supervisor helps to generate employees' cognitive skills (perspective-taking), psychological resources (thriving at work) and social resources (relational social capital), and these, in turn, predict employee creativity; thereby, hypothesizing some new linkages.

Further, the broaden-and-build theory provides a useful framework for leaders to generate a positive environment if the main aim of leader is inspiring, and motivating employees. The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) posits that positive emotions expand an individual's frame of mind which increases the

personal resources. This theory argues that positive affect expands the thinking process, bringing flexibility to it, allows individuals to consider multiple alternatives of actions, behaviors, and thinking styles; resulting in the development of resources of psychological, social, physical, or intellectual resources. An ebullient supervisor is a positive leadership style intentionally creating fun at work (Ford et al., 2019). Emotional reactions are stimulated by having fun at work, leading to positive affect which favorably influences individuals (Tews, Michel, & Noe, 2017). Being engaged in fun at work increase positive emotions which results in the generation of personal resources through the process of broaden-and-build. An upward spiral is created when individuals experience positive affect from being engaged in the fun at work that leads to a broadening of their thinking and development of their long-term resources. As a result, positive outcomes emerge such as improved creative problem-solving because being playful, exploring, absorbing new information, sharing experiences, and being creative; all are associated with positive emotions (Bono, Glomb, Shen, Kim, & Koch, 2013). Favorable workplace outcomes are produced by fun at work, like creativity (Lee, Chang, & Chang, 2022). Thus, fun at work leads to positive affect which aids individuals to carry out flexible thinking, be more optimistic, gather information in new ways, be more engaged in learning, have stronger relations, experience improved well-being, perform well and carry out more creative thinking.

While leadership literature has examined various leadership styles' roles in promoting positive emotions through broaden-and-build theory (e.g. Abdillah, Wu, & Anita, 2022; Guo, Jin, & Yim, 2023), the leadership style of ebullient supervision, which creates fun at work, remains unexplored. Accordingly, the broaden-and-build theory is extended in this study by proposing that an ebullient supervisor stimulates positive affect in employees that enable their broadening process of perspective-taking and generation of personal resources, resulting in employee creativity. Perspective-taking is a dynamic cognitive skill to become aware of others' inclinations, values, sentiments, or needs (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019). With much focus on experimental psychology, organizations-related research on perspective-taking has been infrequent (Curry, Calvard, Brewster, & Cherlin, 2020). Creativity requires being attentive and perspective-taking provides that cognitive flexibility

of seeing from alternative viewpoints; enabling connecting unrelated ideas, to create different novel solutions to a problem, and may result in creativity (Hui, Chiu, Pang, Coombes, & Tse, 2021). Broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) recommends broaden the traditional ways of thinking due to positive emotions, making one more open to understanding others' points of view; thus, encouraging exploration and integration of information in new ways and leading toward creative outcomes. Accordingly, in this study, perspective-taking represents the broadening hypothesis of the broaden-and-build theory.

The building hypothesis of the broaden-and-build theory focuses on personal resources generation facilitated by cognitive flexibility experienced due to positive affect. Thriving employees are a crucial psychological resource that enables desirable performance outcomes to gain a competitive advantage (Zhai, Wang, & Weadon, 2020). Thriving at work characterizes the simultaneous existence of both learning and vitality which are two constructs of the personal growth process (Porath, Gibson, & Spreitzer, 2022). As per broaden and build theory, positive emotions stimulate the psychological growth of individuals, pushing them towards self-development where they explore novel situations and consequently learn and experience vitality. Accordingly, in the current study, thriving at work is the psychological/intellectual resource that may be generated by the broadening process of perspective-taking, in the broaden-and-build framework. Further, broaden and build theory argues that positive emotions propel more mingling and socialization among individuals. Happy people become more social, develop networks, and have higher-quality social relationships (Diener & Seligman, 2002). As positive emotions broaden one's traditional ways of thinking, it makes them more flexible and empathic; which helps them to build stronger connections socially. These relationships, in the shape of structural and relational social capital, employee social resources. Accordingly, this study considered the dimensions of structural social capital and relational social capital as the social resources that may be generated by the broadening process of perspective-taking, in the broaden-and-build framework. Hence, in this study broaden-and-build theory serves as a central framework explaining how positive emotions expedite desirable outcomes. This theory helps explain how and why positive affect generated due to nature connectedness and

ebullient supervision can lead to long-term benefits. This theory promotes that positive affect would widen an individual's cognitive repertoires, encouraging them to explore new perspectives and build enduring personal resources. As thinking widens, that helps individuals to gather more resources and develop psychologically. E.g., when enjoyment is experienced at work, individuals get motivated to push their limits and enhanced creativity is experienced (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008). Accordingly, in this study, positive affect represents positive emotions, perspective-taking is the broadening process; thriving at work and social capital is the build-up of intellectual and social resources, which then, may, later translate into employee creativity. Further, broaden and build theory suggests individuals having proactive personalities were more prone to be pushed into doing the action by stimulating their positive emotions (Vanwallegheem & Mirowska, 2020). Even though the mentioned theories above differ respectively, they come together to support the notion that human functioning improves when positive affect is experienced.

1.7 Operational Definitions of the Constructs

1.7.1 Employee Creativity (EC)

In this study, employee creativity refers to the creative performance (new useful ideas & solutions) of the hospitality employees according to their supervisor.

1.7.2 Nature Connectedness (NC)

In this study, nature connectedness refers to the beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavior in response to the natural world of the employees in the hospitality sector.

1.7.3 Ebullient Supervision (ES)

In this study, ebullient supervision represents a positive leadership style in which the supervisor intentionally creates a working environment that is perceived as a fun working place by employees in the hospitality sector.

1.7.4 Positive Affect (PA)

In this study, positive affect refers to experiencing positive emotions by employees in the hospitality sector.

1.7.5 Perspective Taking (PT)

In this study, perspective-taking refers to the broadened thinking ability, of the employees in the hospitality sector, to be able to view and understand choices, principles, aims, and opinions of others.

1.7.6 Thriving at Work (TW)

In this study, thriving at work represents the joint presence of vitality and learning hospitality industry employees.

1.7.7 Social Capital (SC)

In this study, structural social capital refers to the networks ties, and relationships through which employees in the hospitality sector can access people and resources. In this study, relational social capital refers to high-quality relationships or social bonds among employees in the hospitality sector.

1.7.8 Proactive Personality (PP)

In this study, proactive personality refers to employees in the hospitality sector tending to identify opportunities, take initiatives, and actions, solve problems; and adapt to the environment.

1.8 Structural Outline of Thesis

In this thesis, Chapter 1 provides an introduction regarding the context of the study by providing the background of the research topic, identifying gaps, research objectives and questions. Also, the importance of this search has been argued.

In Chapter 2, a careful in-depth literature review is presented, carried out to identify the existing research regarding the constructs under study, what still demanded research, and what needed to be examined. In the end, the theoretical framework along with the hypotheses are offered.

In Chapter 3, the research methodology is presented, discussing and justifying the research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, and data analysis method. In Chapter 4, the data analysis results are presented. In Chapter 5, the data has been interpreted and analyzed, discussing what the results meant, especially concerning the research questions and literature. Relationships between variables are discussed. Finally, conclusions are given concerning the research questions. Implications, limitations, and future directions are also discussed. References and questionnaires (Appendix) are provided at the end.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter presents a careful in-depth literature review on the investigated constructs in this research. Section 2.1 to 2.8 discusses the key constructs under this study. Section 2.9 discusses the direct relationships between the key constructs which enables gap identification in the current literature body, thus, helping in the hypotheses development for the current study. Section 2.10 discusses the mediational hypotheses development while Section 2.11 discusses the moderator hypotheses development. Section 2.12 exhibits the current study's research model. Lastly, Section 2.13 sums up the study's hypotheses.

2.1 Employee Creativity

An organization's survival and ability to attain sustainable competitive advantage critically depends on the quality of its human resource. The hospitality industry, by its business nature, is characterized by frequent interpersonal interactions and thus requires its employees to be adept in psychological skills and capabilities. Post-COVID-19 pandemic, employee skills development, particularly in service organizations, has become extremely challenging and critical ([Mikolajczyk, 2022](#)). The skill of employee creativity is of main interest amongst contemporary organizations and scholars, alike; leading to meaningful contributions toward organizational innovation, performance, and overall effectiveness ([Ivcevic et al., 2021](#)).

Employee creativity is the generation of novel and useful ideas regarding products, processes, and working methods (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Jain & Jain, 2017). Service firms of today need to remain innovative to fulfill the constantly changing and increasing customers' expectations (Oh & Jang, 2023). A widespread consensus prevails amongst practitioners and scholars that contemporary organizations must have employee creativity because employee creativity can help firms to become responsive and adaptive towards change, and efficiently exploit opportunities to gain competitive benefit; (Bavik & Kuo, 2022). This is because this sector requires constant seeking of innovative ways to meet and exceed changing customer expectations (Peters & Kallmuenzer, 2018). Factors influencing creativity are of critical importance as it nurtures competitive advantage in today's era of intense competition. Thus, understanding employee creativity and its mechanism becomes crucial. Yet, a careful literature review (Jain & Jain, 2017) suggests that scholars share a consensus regarding the lack of clarity on what factors and mechanisms can stimulate employee creativity. Organizations are looking for factors, and the interplay among these factors that may propel employee creativity (Inam et al., 2021; Ucar et al., 2021). Thus, for both current scholars and practitioners alike, framing employee creativity in the hospitality industry holds a pivotal investigation position (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020).

Having creative employees has been acknowledged as a critical HR resource as they are effective in problem recognition and gathering new information which leads to creative outcomes (Cerne, Batistič, & Kenda, 2018). Thus, to quickly and successfully respond to the changing environmental demands, it becomes imperative for managers to know about employee creativity and how to stimulate it. Hence, it has become imperative and foremost to think of mechanisms that will enable and facilitate employee creativity. Research reveals a strong relationship between employee creativity and firm performance (Pasumarti, Kumar, & Singh, 2022; Yamin, 2020). Therefore, in recent times, empirical research has propelled as variables influencing employee creativity have received great consideration from the organizational research, leading to many investigations examining the antecedents, contextual factors, individual differences, and their interactions concerning employee creativity; that may boost it or hinder it (see Bavik & Kuo,

2022). In the literature, two main research streams exist exploring employee creativity antecedents; one investigates the influence of individual factors, while the other focuses on the impact of managerial actions or contextual factors. A massive corpus of literature exists indicating individual and contextual factors that can both enhance or inhibit, directly or indirectly influence employee creativity; e.g., personality (Abukhait, Shamsudin, Bani-Melhem, & Al-Hawari, 2023; Choi, Ullah, & Kang, 2021; Corazza, Agnoli, & Mastria, 2022; Kapoor & Kaufman, 2022; Michinov & Michinov, 2023; E. K. Nisbet, Shaw, & Lachance, 2020), divergent thinking (Guo, Lin, Williams, Zeng, & Clark, 2023; He et al., 2021; Palmiero, Nori, Piccardi, & D'Amico, 2020; Salas-Vallina, Rofcanin, & Las Heras, 2022), intrinsic motivation (Aristana, Puspitawati, & Ismayanthi, 2023; Karimi, Malek, & Farani, 2022; Saether, 2020; Siyal et al., 2023), risk taking (Bonetto, Pichot, Pavanani, & Adam-Troian, 2021; Harada, 2020), task performance (El-Kassar, Dagher, Lythreatis, & Azakir, 2022; Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021), cognitive characteristics (Khan, Bell, & Quratulain, 2022; Probst, Chizh, Hu, Jiang, & Austin, 2020), self-efficacy (Christensen-Salem et al., 2021; Han & Bai, 2020; Hur, Moon, & Lee, 2021; Raihan & Uddin, 2023; Yoon, Kim, & Yun, 2023) mood (Cai et al., 2020; Park, Choi, & Wu, 2022; Zhu, Li, & Chen, 2022), psychological safety (Chen, Wadei, Bai, & Liu, 2020; Cho, 2022; Fu et al., 2022; Liu & Ge, 2020; Liu, Huang, Kim, & Na, 2023; Vakira, Shereni, Ncube, & Ndlovu, 2023; Yang, Li, Liang, & Zhang, 2021; Khassawneh, Mohammad, & Ben-Abdallah, 2022), knowledge (AlKayid et al., 2023; Khassawneh et al., 2022; Ullah, Ullah, & Jan, 2022), and perceived organizational support (Aldabbas, Pinnington, & Lahrech, 2023; Duan, Tang, Li, Cheng, & Zhang, 2020; Karatepe, Hsieh, & Aboramadan, 2022). **Figure 2.1** shows the antecedents of employee creativity.

Regardless of the plentiful existing literature on employee creativity, scholars agree that ambiguity still prevails regarding the interaction among different factors to predict employee creativity at work because, first, there are diverse possible individual and contextual factors influencing employee creativity; and second, there is a deficiency of such frameworks which assimilate and arrange influences of various factors (Cai et al., 2020). Thus, this study has examined both individual and contextual factors to examine how employee creativity can be facilitated at work.

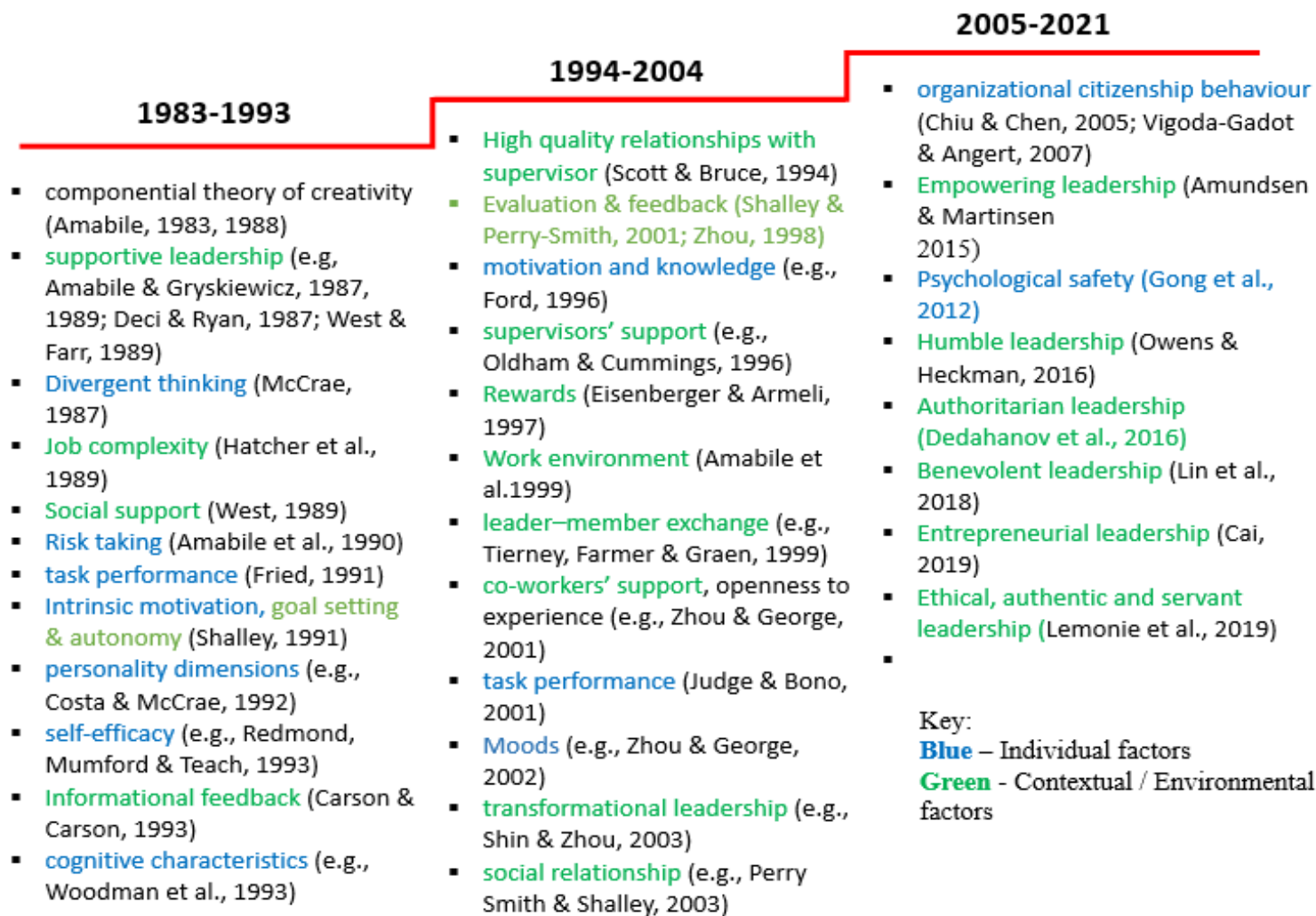


FIGURE 2.1: Antecedents of Employee Creativity

2022	2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceived organizational support (Karatepe, Hsieh, & Aboramadan, 2022) ▪ Knowledge sharing (Khasawneh, Mohammad, & Ben-Abdallah, 2022). ▪ Employee adaptiveness (Żywiołek, Tucmeanu, Tucmeanu, Isac, & Yousaf, 2022) ▪ Work engagement (Ahmad, Ullah, AlDhaen, Han, & Scholz, 2022) ▪ Inclusive leadership, employee polychronicity (Fu, Cherian, Ahmad, Scholz, Samad, & Comite, 2022) ▪ Paradoxical leadership, Subjective ambivalence & employee holistic thinking (Zhang, Zhang, Law, & Zhou, 2022). ▪ Self-sacrificial leadership (Xu, Li, Sun, Cheng, & Xu, 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artificial intelligence (Jia, Luo, Fang, Liao, 2023) ▪ Work curiosity (Zada, Khan, Saeed, Zada, & Jun, 2023) ▪ Workplace bullying (Anasori, De Vita, & Gürkan Küçükergin, 2023) ▪ Organizational inertia (AlKayid, Selem, Shehata, & Tan, 2023) ▪ Enterprise social media, enterprise social media fatigue (Si, Khan, Ali, Amin, & Pan, 2023) ▪ Workplace ostracism (Zhang, Kang, Jiang, & Niu, 2023) ▪ Visionary leadership (Li, Zhao, Li, & Pang, 2023) ▪ Grit (Gonlepa, Dilawar, & Amosun, 2023) ▪ Leader self-deprecating humor (Huang, 2023) ▪ Employee-experienced crisis (Jeong, Gong, & Zhong, 2023). ▪ Obsessive compulsive personality (Abukhait, Shamsudin, Bani-Melhem, & Al-Hawari, 2023) 	<p>Key:</p> <p>Blue – Individual factors</p> <p>Green - Contextual / Environmental factors</p>

Continued Figure 2.1 Antecedents of Employee Creativity

2.2 Nature Connectedness

Spanning the last three decades, both behavioral and social sciences have published a considerable literature body investigating the human-nature relationship. Nature relaxes the mind and improves wellbeing, stimulating it to continue good performance (Daniels et al., 2022).

Wilson (1984) biophilia hypothesis projects an intrinsic need to connect with nature to take benefits from its exposure. Multiple terms and measures have been established to depict the psychological association of an individual with his/her natural environment. Mayer and Frantz (2004) conceptualize nature connectedness as an emotional element of the human relationship with nature, a psychological attachment. They defined nature connectedness as a person's observed sense of oneness, belongingness, or seeing oneself as part of the natural environment. Pritchard et al. (2020) meta-analyses define nature connectedness as the subjective relationship with the natural world. Being an acknowledged psychological concept, nature connectedness includes beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavior in response to nature.

Nature connectedness is a fairly established individual characteristic and is widely accepted for improving well-being (physically or psychologically). Literature, including meta-analysis and reviews, suggests that nature connectedness yields many beneficial effects, such as greater vitality, positive affect and personal growth, mental health, mood, life satisfaction, happiness, personal growth, meaningfulness, mindfulness, and emotional self-regulation (Pritchard et al., 2020; Sheffield, Butler, & Richardson, 2022).

2.2.1 Difference between Nature Contact and Nature Connectedness

It is important here to distinguish between nature contact and nature connectedness. Nature contact represents physical exposure to the natural world (Frumkin et al., 2017). Studies investigating the nature-creativity relationship have focused on physical exposure to nature (nature contact) and have been conducted in the

educational domain with samples existing of university students, advocating the use of outdoor activities to boost creativity (e.g. [Yildirm & Akamca, 2017](#)).

Nature connectedness moves beyond physical nature contact and captures the psychological relationship between the natural environment and an individual ([Pritchard et al., 2020](#)). Nature exposure is readily and quite cheaply, if not free, available. It is a cost-effective way to develop well-being and nature connection. A recent meta-analysis concluded that simple interventions like nature contact and mindful practices can enhance nature connectedness (see [Barragan, de Mazancourt, Parmesan, Singer, & Loreau, 2022](#)). Hence, nature exposure or nature contact is an antecedent of nature connectedness.

Studies have suggested much of the literature examining the human-nature relationship has focused more on having contact with nature, rather than nature connection; thus, the benefits provided by nature connectedness might not be well captured ([Schweitzer, Glab, & Brymer, 2018](#)). Therefore, there is a need to develop more broad theoretical frameworks should be developed to understand nature connectedness and its outcomes. Further, a recent meta-analysis ([Pritchard et al., 2020](#)) suggested using the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)) as it is a functional theory of positive affect and well-being. This theory posits that positive emotions play an important role in the optimal functioning of an individual over the long term by broadening cognitive styles and providing alternative ways to think; along with building personal resources, such as, physical, psychological, and social.

2.3 Ebullient Supervision

Ebullient supervision is a relatively new form of supervision, and not much is known about its antecedents and outcomes. Based on the conservation of resources theory, [Ford et al. \(2019\)](#) coined the term Ebullient Supervision, depicting a positive leadership style that intentionally, through his/her actions, creates a fun working environment. They do this by greeting employees, encouraging them to be playful at work, using an appropriate sense of humor, and attempting to make

people laugh. They also use cheerful tones, smile and look for reasons to celebrate. Additionally, an ebullient supervisor is supportive, willing to share routine responsibilities, and goes out of the way to bring ease and make people feel enthusiastic about their work. Lastly, such supervisors give compliments and appreciate the achievements of employees.

The limited literature on ebullient supervision suggests that it produces desirable work-related outcomes like organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, work engagement, and reduced intention to leave (Ford et al., 2019) and boosts life satisfaction by promoting workaholism (Hassan et al., 2021). To fully grasp the potential impact of ebullient supervision, Ford et al. (2019) advocated identifying and examining this leadership style with other work-related outcomes. Thus, to empirically examine unexplored relationships of ebullient supervision with the proposed variables of this study, it was helpful to use literature on the fun at work, in addition to supportive leadership and humor.

Fun events and activities at work make employees happy, hence, now, scholars are emphasizing the need to focus on employee positive psychology by creating such working environments that have a fun climate (see Michel et al., 2019). Moreover, the hospitality industry has been revolutionized by the fun at work concept, with literature widely recognizing the benefits of a fun working environment. These studies suggest that fun at work leads to various positive outcomes at work, such as, it attracts applicants more than salary or advancement opportunities, increasing constituent attachment and work engagement, enhancing learning, and improving performance. Another study Tsaour et al. (2019) on the hospitality industry showed that fun at work and psychological capital is significantly and positively associated. With fun at work becoming a critical organizational practice, particularly in the hospitality industry, it becomes important to enhance understanding in this domain.

2.4 Positive Affect

Affect or emotions are constantly present in our daily lives, relationships, and problem-solving. They permeate individuals and organizations. Organizations are

laden with emotions (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Organizational research has experienced an affective revolution as positive organizational scholarship highlighted the critical role that positive affect play at work (Diener et al., 2020). There is theoretical evidence of affect playing a prominent role in organizational processes, as well as, empirical studies validating the influence of emotions on various outcomes at work, such as productivity, efficiency, and quality (Isham, Mair, & Jackson, 2020). Generally, the term affect is used to explain the emotional phenomenon of subjectively feeling long-lasting moods, positive or negative (Frijda, 1993). Positive affect includes cheerful, joyful, happy, and pleasant feelings and organizations seek happy employees because happy employees perform better, generating happy customers which means more profit for the service provider (Hogreve, Iseke, Derfuss, & Eller, 2017; Pressman, Jenkins, & Moskowitz, 2019).

Positive affect is known to enhance well-being, both psychologically and physically, and signal satisfaction which makes an individual relaxed, think flexibly, and be willing to explore new alternatives. Positive affect leads employees towards optimal performance by bringing cognitive flexibility and building thought-action repertoire, resulting in personal resources development, such as, physical, psychological, intellectual, and social (Fredrickson, 2004; Petitta, Härtel, Ashkanasy, & Zerbe, 2018). Broaden and build theory advocates individuals being inspired by positive emotions to explore and be more open towards new information which enhances their thinking flexibility and creativity. Additionally, they can buffer negative emotions effects, building resources and resilience over time (Garland et al., 2010).

2.5 Perspective Taking

Being an effortful cognitive process, perspective-taking enables individuals to adopt to others' way of thinking to understand their needs, likings, and beliefs (Parker & Axtell, 2001). Perspective-taking involves accurately imagining what others are thinking and feeling related to a particular situation (Zhou, Majka, & Epley, 2017). It demands attentional resources, motivation, and time; the absence of

these resources can lead to bias and heuristics (Eyal, Steffel, & Epley, 2018). Employees can better inform about their perspective-taking because being an internal psychological practice that is not often openly exhibited, it is not easy to observe perspective-taking (Grant & Berry, 2011).

It is important to differentiate between perspective-taking and empathy at this point. Perspective-taking and empathy are related, yet distinct social competencies. Perspective-taking is about imagining from others' point of view, whereas, empathy is having an emotional connection with others' and feeling what they are feeling (Davis, 1983). In other words, perspective-taking enables one to actively imagine how others see the world, their intentions, thoughts, emotions, or motivations. Perspective-taking is more of a cognitive process, while, empathy is more of an emotional reaction that enables an affective connection (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015). In comparison to empathy, perspective-taking is more useful for social interactions and creativity and it is known to reduce social bias, and stereotyping, improve negotiation skills, and problem-solving, and strengthen social bonds by increasing the perception of similarity which facilitates understanding with each other, fortifying social bonds, and producing compassion (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin, & White, 2008).

2.6 Thriving at Work

Organizations keenly seek thriving employees as they are desirably productive and aid in achieving competitive advantage, making them a crucial resource (Liu & Ge, 2020). Hence, exploring factors that can facilitate thriving at work becomes of critical significance. Thriving at work embodies learning and vitality happening together, which not only determine performance and employees' well-being, but also help to achieve organizational competitiveness (Kleine et al., 2019). In today's fast-paced, complex, fierce, and increasingly competitive working landscape, it has become critical for employees to develop at their job for organizations to be successful, let alone, survive, and that too profitably. Thriving at work is not just merely a surviving technique by individuals. Rather, it is an upward trajectory

in which employees grow, thus garnering a lot of interest among researchers in recent times (Goh et al., 2022). Vitality and learning occurring together indicates thriving at work by employees (Kleine et al., 2019). Vitality represents a personal growth component, that epitomizes feeling alive, passionate, and energized at work; while learning, being a cognitive ability, represents the acquisition and application of newly attained knowledge and skills (Porath et al., 2022). Thriving at work enables learning (acquiring and applying useful skills and knowledge) and a sense of vitality (a positive feeling of being energetic, alive, being involved in tasks wholeheartedly) at the workplace among employees; giving a sense of momentum, progress, and a keenness for work (Eisenberger, Rockstuhl, Shoss, Wen, & Dulebohn, 2019). Although each dimension contributes some progress to development and growth at work, for thriving at work to take place, both vitality and learning must be jointly experienced. If an employee is full of energy (vitality) but is not learning anything, then he/she won't experience thriving. Thus, if one of these is missing, it is said that thriving has not occurred because vitality and learning, together, grasp personal growth's affective and cognitive dimensions (Kleine et al., 2019). Being connected to many workplace positive outcomes, thriving at work renowned among both academics and practitioners. An important suggestion in the study of Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, and Grant (2005) was thriving employees will not automatically develop. It was after this conceptualization that interest and empirical studies investigating thriving at work grew rapidly and have been aided by the two-dimensional measuring instrument developed by (Porath et al., 2022). Using their scales, Porath and his colleagues showed that thriving at work is not same as proactivity, affect, core self-evaluations, and goal orientation and that it predicts imperative employee outcomes, like health, job attitudes, and performance.

2.7 Social Capital

Jacobs (1961), coined the term 'social capital' stating that to survive, there needs to be a network of durable personal relationships, which provide trust and cooperation, that get established over some time (Hospers, 2006). Later on, social capital

theory (Coleman, 1988) was developed stating that social capital is an asset and whoever owns it will get benefit from it. Social capital is embedded in interpersonal relationships, combination of social resources, denoting the trusting relationships and networks, formed both within and outside of organizations (Chen, Yu, Yuan, Lu, & Shen, 2021). When investment is made in human relations, time and resources are needed, and from this social capital emerges (Lin & Nan, 2008), in which intangible asset accumulation occurs, such as easier information access, effective coordination, and easier decision-making. Being a binding force, holding institutions together, and being a creativity determinant, social capital has recently attracted liberal theoretical consideration in human resource management (Sözbilir, 2018). In simpler terms, social capital means who you know and how well.

2.7.1 Rational for Selecting Structural Social Capital and Relational Social Capital Concerning Employee Creativity

Although having been studied as a single dimension construct in many studies, Perez-Fuentes et al. (2019) suggest that there is a need to deeply understand social capital dimensions' impact on creative abilities. Conducting an empirical study, Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) examined the association between these three social capital dimensions and identified that the structural dimension is manifested by social interaction, trust is manifested by the relational dimension, and the cognitive dimension is manifested by shared goals. They further added that among these manifestations, trust (relational) and social interaction (structural) were linked, more significantly, with innovation. This was also supported by other studies (Barczak, Lassk, & Mulki, 2010; Bidault & Castello, 2009; Chen, Chang, & Hung, 2008; Fleming, Mingo, & Chen, 2007; Zhu, Gardner, & Chen, 2018). Similarly, the empirical study of (Liu, 2013) further extended the literature, concluding that social capital predicts individual creativity, by investigating relationships between the three dimensions of social capital; concluding that relationship quality (relational social capital) was positively and more significantly related to employee

creativity. Therefore, for this study, the focus is on structural and relational dimensions concerning employee creativity.

2.7.2 Structural Social Capital

The structural social capital that represents network ties, the social connections or linkages between people, as part of the social system (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Being tangible, it can be easily witnessed by observing the presence of roles, network ties, rules, and procedures (Claridge, 2018). Structural social capital has begun to attract a lot more attention in the business world due to the increasing significance of networks. Structural social capital is multidimensional since it encompasses all of the interpersonal connections existing within a social network of relationships (Zhao, Ritchie, & Echtner, 2011). The structural dimension consists of social networks, within which social bonds or ties exist serving as the social interaction source that determines the flow of resources and information, structural holes and configurations in networks (Muniady, Mamun, Rosli Mohamad, Yukthamarani Permerupan, & Binti Zainol, 2015). Burt (2002) work on structural social capital has gained much importance and concerns with who you connect to and how you connect to them. Structural social capital emphasizes the number and strength of ties a person has, in addition to with whom these ties exist.

2.7.3 Relational Social Capital

Relational social capital is a work resource that represents the quality of interpersonal connections, bonds, and expectations (Zainoddin et al., 2022). More precisely, it denotes the value of positive personal relationships built over a history of social exchanges (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Built-in a supportive working climate, relational social capital is affective, variable, and highly subjective (Claridge, 2018). Thus, friendship, mutual trust, respect, and shared history play an important role in this dimension (Muniady et al., 2015).

Relational social capital is deemed the most important social capital dimension due to its ability to transfer inter-organizational knowledge (Van Wijk, Jansen, &

Lyles, 2008). Moreover, it is also considered to be crucial for innovation-related tasks (Moran, 2005). Mutual trust leads to repeated contact between people that enables achieving lower operation costs and facilitates open sharing of information due to the element of mutual trust (Huang, Lin, & Lin, 2009). Also, when relational social capital is high, levels of cooperation and teamwork are higher (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). However, building relational social capital is not an easy task and requires long-term commitment and effort (Steinmo & Rasmussen, 2018).

2.8 Proactive Personality

The success of contemporary organizations critically depends upon proactive behaviors where employees take personal initiatives to anticipate problems and identify opportunities (Liu, Tangirala, Lee, & Parker, 2019). Proactive personality talks about the ability of an individual to influence his/her environment by taking initiatives that bring meaningful change, and empirically it has been tested and proven that such personality enhances employee creativity (Li, Zhang, & Guo, 2021). Proactive employees like to be ready with resources to meet anticipated changes (Gong, Cheung, Wang, & Huang, 2012). Individuals with this disposition initiate change, are not constrained by contextual forces, and, rather, try to persistently influence their surrounding environments till a meaningful change follows (Jiang & Gu, 2015). Proactive individuals tend to take initiative, identify opportunities, and be persistent in their actions to bring a change and hence have the ability to transform their environment, challenge existing conditions, and shift the status quo (Zhao, Zhou, Liu, & Kang, 2016). Rather than passive, individuals with proactive personalities have an active approach towards their work; where they try to change the circumstances in their environment instead of adapting to, and are intrinsically motivated (Chen, Farh, Campbell-Bush, Wu, & Wu, 2013).

Constantly, studies have validated that proactive personality results in positive outcomes, both at the individual and organizational level, such as employee creativity (Thao Tai & Quynh Mai, 2016), job satisfaction (Liao, 2015), enhanced job performance job (Chan & David, 2006), organizational citizenship behavior

(Jawahar & Liu, 2016), networking behavior and voice behavior (Liang & Gong, 2013), innovation and career outcomes (Chen et al., 2013), and career adaptability (Jiang & Zhou, 2017).

2.9 Hypotheses Development of Direct Relationships

2.9.1 Nature Connectedness and Employee Creativity

Nature inspires people, leading to creations that end up being a resource. Given the increased focus on creativity in the world of today, it is critical to understand the nature-employee creativity relationship in an organizational context. However, the nature-creativity literature has focused much on the influence of nature contact or physical exposure to nature, and thus, not much is known about the relationship of nature connectedness with employee creativity. Nature connectedness is about feeling emotionally near to nature (Mayer & Frantz, 2004). Employee creativity is considered to be a vital resource. Wellbeing and affect predict creative outcomes (Baas, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2008), and nature connectedness is positively related to both wellbeing and affect (Capaldi et al., 2017). Hence, there is a possibility that nature connectedness may foster employee creativity.

In recent years, interest in relationships between the natural environment and creativity has increased (Chulvi et al., 2022; Palanica & Fossat, 2022; Williams et al., 2018) but much of it has focused on nature exposure. Ample research suggests that nature exposure has beneficial outcomes related to creativity. Nature exposure is known to be positively associated with creativity, after being exposed to some natural stimuli, or even virtually, such as plants or green colors, an individual's creative performance gets enhanced (Palanica & Fossat, 2022; Pasanen, Neuvonen, & Korpela, 2018; Tang, Klotz, McClean, & Lee, 2023; Simon & Hsieh, 2020). Nature connectedness is related, yet distinct, to nature exposure (Capaldi et al., 2017; Wyles et al., 2019). Various studies found that nature connectedness improves with nature exposure and helps to improve behaviors, attitudes,

and thinking styles (Hamlin & Richardson, 2022; Lengieza & Swim, 2021; Nisbet, Zelenski, & Grandpierre, 2019; Sheffield et al., 2022). Thus, it is proposed that nature connectedness may also be associated with employee creativity. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H1: Nature connectedness has a positive relationship with employee creativity.

2.9.2 Ebullient Supervision and Employee Creativity

Amongst contextual factors influencing employee creativity, the leadership behavior influence on employee creativity has gained extreme importance for both practitioners and researchers, alike (Liu & Ge, 2020). A recent careful review suggested that researchers should justify which leadership style exploration, concerning creativity, is being chosen and why (Hughes et al., 2018).

The association of ebullient supervision and employee creativity is underexplored. Hence, this is a new linkage being proposed based on the following arguments. Careful literature reviews and meta-analyses advocate that leaders with positive characteristics have a positive influence on employee creativity (Gong et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2020).

An ebullient supervisor is a positive leadership style who intentionally, through his words and actions, enables and encourages pleasurable and enjoyable activities that create a fun working environment (Ford et al., 2019). Limited research on ebullient supervision suggests it is positively related to desirable work outcomes, such as work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction and reduced intention to leave (Ford et al., 2019); life satisfaction and workaholism (Hassan, Abid, Ali, Rehmat, & Zafar, 2021); and job crafting (Forbes, 2022). However, no prior literature exists investigating the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity. Yet, since an ebullient supervisor intentionally creates fun at work, and fun at work is closely linked to creativity (Boekhorst et al., 2021; Yang & Chen, 2023), it is being proposed that ebullient supervision will positively influence employee creativity. Fun, being a need, is desired by employees (Glasser, 1999). Fun at work is a behavior process that

stimulates creativity because playfulness allows freedom to try out new, alternative methods of carrying out a task (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). Literature suggests that when leaders fulfill this need by creating fun at work, employees become more creative (Djastuti, 2019; Sumayya, Amen, & Imran, 2021). Ebullient supervision has not been examined before concerning employee creativity, hence this study considered this positive leadership style as the contextual factor.

Strengthening the creative capacity in a business through crafting such working environments that encourage employee creativity is perhaps one of the top concerns in the business world today. Workplace behaviors are highly influenced by organizational settings. Leaders influence employee behaviors by shaping the working environment, determining the work and tasks nature, organizing, allocating, and even developing new resources; hence becoming a crucial antecedent to employee creativity (Fischer et al., 2017). An ebullient supervisor is supportive and purposely provides a fun working environment (Ford et al., 2019). Thus, to empirically explore and comprehend the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity, it will be helpful to use literature on related concepts; such as fun at work and supportive leadership.

Creative work is non-routine and tends to involve fun (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). Having fun at work doesn't mean being careless or ignoring work, rather it involves deliberate attempts, through structured fun events; to have recreational moments and play with ideas to form new combinations (Lamm & Meeks, 2009). A plethora of research exists reporting the negative impact of abusive supervisors who create a negative working environment (see Fischer, Tian, Lee, & Hughes, 2021; Goute, Goute, & Jan, 2021). However, a careful literature review suggests that not much effort has been dedicated to understanding the conditions under which fun-at-work operates.

Research advocates that when employees are allowed to have fun at work, they become more involved in their tasks which increases their creativity (Celestine & Yeo, 2021). Ford et al. (2019) concluded that an ebullient supervisor facilitates pleasurable activities and creates a fun working environment. Leaders can influence employee creativity by creating such working environments that favor creativity in the workplace. Creativity requires employees to be free-range thinkers and to

think outside the box for solutions, and this requires the working environment to have a fun culture that will enable creative solutions. Hence it becomes important to study how a leadership style or a supervisory behavior that is oriented toward creativity can stimulate employee creativity. Accordingly, an ebullient supervision style of leadership has been considered for exploration concerning employee creativity.

Literature shows that when a supervisor supports and encourages employees, their creativity flourishes (Lee et al., 2020). When employees fear being criticized and are not sure of whether they will be rewarded or punished, they do not present new ideas and are risk averse. Creativity requires risk-taking behavior where the status quo is challenged, traditional procedures and ways of thinking are abandoned, dread of being condemned for failure and making mistakes is overcome (Younas et al., 2020). Doing so requires support from leadership. Creative employees require a working environment that makes them feel safe and motivated to carry out flexible thinking, thus, employees exhibit higher creativity in a supportive and non-controlling working environment (Aldabbas et al., 2023; Zhao, Liu, Xi, Zhu, & Liu, 2023). Employees get interested to take initiative and share progressive ideas with leaders who tolerate mistakes, invite innovative viewpoints, and celebrate or reward successful ideas; resulting in employee creativity (Javed, Naqvi, Khan, Arjoon, & Tayyeb, 2019). Hence, leaders can facilitate their employees to exhibit increased creativity levels at work by providing them a supportive working environment that propels creativity, by providing guiding principles to enable creative processes; and by rewarding creative performance.

An ebullient supervisor is supportive by being willing to take on routine responsibilities, using cheerful tones, trying to make people feel better, and publicly appreciating the achievements of employees (Ford et al., 2019). Accordingly, an ebullient supervision style of leadership has been considered for exploration concerning employee creativity. Thus, based on the above arguments advocating that employee creativity is facilitated by fun at work, use of humor, and support from the leader; it can be concluded that an ebullient supervisor who, intentionally, creates fun at work, uses humor, and also support employees should stimulate employee creativity.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H2: Ebullient Supervision has a positive relationship with employee creativity.

2.9.3 Nature Connectedness and Positive Affect

Nature connectedness reflects an individual's emotional response to nature (Mayer & Frantz, 2004). Our feelings, thinking, and behavior may get influenced positively by nature connectedness, leading to effective functioning. Meta-analyses studies have provided evidence reporting positive linking of nature connectedness leads to better psychological functioning and flourishing, linking it with various well-being indicators, both hedonic and eudemonic (see Barragan et al., 2022; Pritchard et al., 2020). Significant research on the positive effects of nature, based on the theoretical foundation of the biophilia hypothesis, exists which states that the need to have an affiliation with other living things is innate. When this need is satisfied and one feels connected with nature, various psychological benefits emerge that enhance the positive affect and reduce the negative affect (Dalay & Aytac, 2022; Z. Li, Zhang, Wang, Liu, & Liu, 2022). A meta-analysis (McMahan, Estes, Murfin, & Bryan, 2018) consisting of 30 experimental studies that have been conducted over the last five decades concluded that when people connect with nature, positive affect increases. Be it short-term experience or long-term exposure to nature, nature connectedness enhances producing improved emotional well-being and positive affective results have been witnessed (McMahan et al., 2018). This suggests nature connectedness as the mechanism through which nature has a positive impact on well-being and puts them in a good mood.

A recent study (Vanwallegem & Mirowska, 2020) concluded that positive emotions were experienced by the investors by showing them environmental images and they participated more in investment. Another recent study (Nisbet et al., 2019) also supported this suggesting that more nature-connectedness led to higher positive moods. Taken together, an ample research body, repeatedly, recommends that nature connection helps to optimize both the functioning and feelings of humans and, thus, improves the positive affect in individuals.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H3: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on positive affect.

2.9.4 Ebullient Supervision and Positive Affect

The relationship between ebullient supervision and positive affect has not been explored yet. Hence, this is a new linkage being proposed based on the following arguments. Ebullient supervisors exhibit such behaviors which make employees perceive a fun working environment (Ford et al., 2019). Being an emotion-inducing factor, a leader's emotions resonate amongst organizational members (Fredrickson, 2016). An ebullient supervisor greets, smiles, is cheerful, extraordinarily helpful, and uses appropriate humor. This may positively affect employees' emotions. The use of humor signals the supporting nature of leaders and this can elicit positive emotions (Tan, Wang, & Lu, 2021). Having fun at work leads to employees experiencing positive affect. Fun at work represents having pleasurable interpersonal and social activities that relax employees, making them happy (Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight, & Pullin, 2010). This can be justified by the affective events theory and the broaden and build theory.

How a subordinate appraises the workplace event is of particular relevance. Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) advocates the creation of individuals affective reactions in response to events experienced at work, that directly influence their behaviors and attitudes. AET provides a theoretical foundation in workplace fun literature. Studies (Patzelt, Gartzia, Wolfe, & Shepherd, 2021; Reynolds Kueny, Francka, Shoss, Headrick, & Erb, 2020) suggest that supervisor behaviors represent 'events' for subordinates to which they react; and that when positive interactions occur at work, such as between supervisors and employees, the later experiences positive affect. Since workplace fun is a positive event, based on affective events theory, one can conclude that experiencing it may result in positive affect and the generation of better moods among employees (Boekhorst et al., 2021).

Effective leaders can stimulate positive affect in their subordinates. An ebullient supervisor purposely provides fun at work and is supportive of employees (Ford

et al., 2019). They do this by encouraging employees to be playful, attempting to make them laugh, and using appropriate humor. They have a greeting attitude and are cheerful during communication with subordinates. Moreover, an ebullient supervisor provides support to subordinates by taking on routine responsibilities, motivates employees, puts them at ease and brighten their day, keeps a smiling demeanor during meetings and discussions, praises individual achievements, compliments the employees publicly and initiates celebrations frequently. When leaders provide support to their subordinates, a positive emotional working culture that induces a positive affect on employees (Patzelt et al., 2021). Hence, we can conclude that when people are being playful, have fun at work, and are supported by leaders, positive affect is experienced. Based on the above arguments, drawn upon affective events theory, we propose that under ebullient supervision, people have fun at work, are playful, and have support; hence, positive affect is experienced.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H4. Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on positive affect.

2.9.5 Nature Connectedness and Perspective-Taking

Our thinking and behavior are critically influenced by our environments. While nature connectedness captures the psychological relationship an individual shares with the natural environment (Pritchard et al., 2020), perspective-taking is an ability that enables one to understand and adopt preferences, needs, and values of others which not only helps to generate novel ideas but also useful ones (Grant & Berry, 2011). Research examining nature-connectedness and perspective-taking is limited (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2021) but some evidence exists suggesting that having nature-connectedness is significantly related to perspective-taking. For example, Schultz (2000a) documented a positive connection of nature connectedness and perspective-taking. Mayer and Frantz (2004) research which also suggested nature connectedness as a significant predictor of perspective-taking. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2014) and (Leong, Fischer, & McClure, 2014) predicted nature connectedness and perspective-taking sharing a positive relationship. The study by Fido

and Richardson (2019) also suggested that nature connectedness and perspective-taking share a positive relationship.

Supported by Attention Restoration Theory (ART) (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989), studies show that nature connection boosts various psychological constructs, including resilient memory for long-term (Pilotti, Klein, Golem, Piepenbrink, & Kaplan, 2015), improved directed attention (Berman et al., 2008), reduced impulsiveness (Berry, Sweeney, Morath, Odum, & Jordan, 2014), and enhanced attentional capacity (Passmore & Holder, 2017). These studies suggest that connecting with nature influences our cognitive performance. A recent study based on ART (Burn & Passmore, 2022) suggested that nature exposure enabled individuals to connect better with nature and gain different perspectives.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H5. Nature connectedness has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

2.9.6 Ebullient Supervision and Perspective-Taking

Since ebullient supervision is a relatively new variable, nothing is regarding its association with perspective-taking. Thus, to propose an empirically unexplored relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity, it will be helpful to use literature on related concepts; such as supportive leadership and fun at work.

A qualitative study (Sonenshein, Dutton, Grant, Spreitzer, & Sutcliffe, 2013) advocates that through perspective-taking, supervisor support promotes employee growth because a supportive supervisor creates a mentally non-threatening working environment. Such an environment encourages divergent thinking (Kostopoulos & Bozionelos, 2011) which is associated with perspective-taking. Divergent thinking enables an individual to generate new connections amongst existing ideas or relationships which were not previously considered (Ziv, 1989). Perspective-taking is cognitive flexibility (Parker & Axtell, 2001) that enables generating multiple alternative viewpoints, enabling employees to feel empowered, take initiative, and

speak up (Liu & Ge, 2020). It helps them to embrace non-traditional styles and seek or rather explore diverse solutions. Humor also increases mental flexibility and leads to unconventional thinking which involves a perspective shift generating novel and unique ways of problem addressing (Dixon, 1980). Fun at work involves the use of humor and an ebullient supervisor uses humor at work (Ford et al., 2019). The use of humor makes a pleasant working environment in which individuals can relax, experience cognitive flexibility, and improve decision-making (Gonot-Schoupinsky, Garip, & Sheffield, 2020). Thus, the above literature suggests that a supportive leadership style and a fun working environment will encourage cognitive flexibility, promoting perspective-taking.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H6. Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

2.9.7 Nature Connectedness and Thriving at Work

A careful literature review recommends that the linkage of nature connectedness and thriving at work is underexplored. Thriving at work is a joint presentation of learning and vitality (Kleine et al., 2019). Vitality represents one being energetic, alert, and alive (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). A recent study (Nisbet et al., 2019) also suggests that nature connectedness and vitality share a very strong positive association. The restorative effects of nature help to explain the strong relationship between nature connectedness and vitality. Drawing on ART theory, in their meta-analysis, (Capaldi et al., 2014) suggested that due to nature's restorative effects, nature connectedness and vitality are strongly associated.

Recently, although amongst students, multiple evidence has emerged that nature connectedness enhances learning (e.g. Kuo, Klein, Browning, & Zaplatosch, 2021; Norwood, Lakhani, & Kendall, 2021). Connecting with nature allows more freedom to be risk-taking which has been associated with learning paths (Maynard & Waters, 2007).

Moreover, nature exposure leads to high nature connectedness (Nisbet et al., 2019), which then makes individuals interact more with nature (Whitburn, Linklater, &

Milfont, 2019). Nature exposure enhances attention, reduces cognitive stress, and leads to higher vitality (Wolf & Wohlfart, 2014); it also helps promote experimental and interconnection learning, increases learning opportunities to learn; builds enthusiasm toward learning, and increases reasoning and observational capabilities (Kuo et al., 2021; Tuparevska, 2023).

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H7. Nature connectedness has a positive influence on thriving at work.

2.9.8 Ebullient Supervision and Thriving at Work

Ebullient supervision association with thriving at work is underexplored. Ebullient supervisor, being a contextual factor, encourages employees to be playful at work, and may generate positive psychological outcomes (Ford et al., 2019). The suggestion that ebullient supervision may facilitate thriving at work can be justified by the COR theory positing that contextual factors aid the development of personal resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Drawing upon COR theory and empirical evidence, Petelczyc, Capezio, Wang, Restubog, and Aquino (2018) argue that play generates psychological resources that lead to desired work outcomes. Thriving at work is a positive psychological resource made up of both vitality (energy) and learning (attaining and applying knowledge and skills) (Kleine et al., 2019).

Further, Ford et al. (2019) using COR theory also suggest that an ebullient supervisor deliberately arranges tasks and social activities in such a manner that creates a fun working environment that facilitates the acquisition of valued resources. They do so by making employees feel enthusiastic about their job, encouraging them to be playful at work, giving compliments, and appreciating their achievements. Compliments and appreciation by a supervisor are conducive to employees' learning and development, encouraging them to acquire knowledge and skills (Wang, Wu, He, & Gu, 2022; Xiao, Liu, & Dai, 2021). Thus, we argue that ebullient supervision should help to build a personal psychological resource of thriving at work by stimulating both learning and vitality, simultaneously.

Thriving at work represents the presence of both learning and vitality (Kleine et al., 2019). An ebullient supervisor purposefully creates fun at work (Ford et al., 2019). Moreover, fun activities promote learning because having fun leads to a greater acquisition of skills and knowledge (Lee et al., 2022). Fun at work influences performance indicators like safety, goal achievement, and productivity (Michel et al., 2019). When such work contexts are provided where employees are encouraged to be autonomous and have a sense of control, they become confident to make decisions; agentic behavior will emerge, leading to thriving at work (Spreitzer et al., 2005). This is because agentic work behavior serves as the engine of thriving as such behaviors call for being more active and having meaning at work, thus, they learn and remain energetic. A recent study also advocated that playful activities during work make employees energetic (Scharp, Bakker, Breevaart, Kruup, & Uusberg, 2023).

Further, Ford et al. (2019) study concluded that a fun working environment is supportive where employees are encouraged to take initiative through such enjoyable activities. Hence, it can be concluded that an ebullient supervisor is a supportive supervisor. Recent studies (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021; Elahi, Abid, Arya, & Farooqi, 2020; Zhai et al., 2020) suggest that a supportive supervisor promotes vitality by providing a feeling of competence and doing something meaningful. A meta-analytical study (Kleine et al., 2019) also advocates that supportive supervision is positively associated with thriving at work because it creates a sense of a safe working environment that encourages employees to take risks, which in turn enables learning and increased participation in developmental activities. Moreover, a supportive leader not only facilitates employees but also appreciates their efforts and contributions; providing beneficial feedback and boosts up positive energy (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). Also, supportive leaders directly influence learning (Lundqvist, Wallo, Coetzer, & Kock, 2022). Therefore, supportive leadership helps to stimulate a pool of resources for the employees that enables the acquisition of a personal resource, i.e., thriving at work (Gerbasi, Poth, Parker, Spreitzer, & Cross, 2015). Hence, based on the above arguments, we propose that an ebullient supervisor facilitates both learning and vitality amongst employees, making them thrive at work. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H8. Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on thriving at work.

2.9.9 Nature Connectedness and Social Capital

Literature is limited in exploring the relationship of nature connectedness with social capital (Moreton, Arena, & Tiliopoulos, 2019).

Nature connectedness is an essential prerequisite for natural capital (Mackay & Schmitt, 2019). Natural capital is the natural ecosystem, the combined stock of all natural resources, or goods and services provided by nature that benefit people (Costanza, Atkins, Hernandez-Blanco, & Kubiszewski, 2021). Everything depends on natural resources for survival, be it the economy or society. Improved natural capital can have a positive influence on social capital (Pretty, 2003).

Those who would care about the natural environment would feel connected to it (Frantz & Mayer, 2014). Thus, consistently, nature connectedness, which is an individual characteristic, has been linked with pro-natural capital behavior; having a significant positive relationship (McEwan, Ferguson, Richardson, & Cameron, 2020; Richardson et al., 2020). Social capital is also a must-have for natural resource development (Pretty, 2003). While natural capital is related to connectedness with nature, social capital talks about connectedness with people and the trust between them. Since, all other capital, including social capital, depends on natural capital; thus, we can propose that nature connectedness will lead to social capital.

Paying attention is a valuable resource possessed by humans and it facilitates effective social interactions (Duvall & Sullivan, 2016). Attention restoration theory advocates natural environment exposure enhances the concentration levels of an individual by providing a healing break from routine or habitual activities (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Nature exposure facilitates social interactions, particularly helping to build stronger ties; thus serving as a social lubricant for increasing structural social capital (Hadavi, 2017). Moreover, in an experimental study by (Weinstein, Przybylski, & Ryan, 2009), individuals having nature exposure exhibited more trust in others by giving them more money than keeping for themselves. Nature-relatedness strongly mediated this relationship. Similarly, Zelenski, Dopko, and

Capaldi (2015) found individuals became more caring, appreciative towards others, and cooperative after nature exposure. Nature exposure is an antecedent to nature connectedness (Barragan et al., 2022). Therefore, it can be concluded that nature connectedness will also lead to building network ties, and thus, structural social capital.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H9: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on structural social capital.

H10: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on relational social capital.

2.9.10 Ebullient Supervision and Structural Social Capital

Ebullient supervision association with structural social capital is underexplored. Structural social capital represents a network of people and resources that are accessible to individuals (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). An organization's social structure determines the opportunities to build network ties (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Employer-sponsored fun activities can help shape such opportunities (Boekhorst et al., 2021). An ebullient supervisor provides fun at work and extensive literature on the fun at work (see Michel et al., 2019) argues that a fun working environment enhances organizational social embeddedness by focusing on relationships through management supporting a combination of fun activities, and socializing amongst coworkers.

Further, COR theory states that individuals strive to acquire and secure social bonds and personal strengths (Hobfoll, 1989). Being a resource, fun at work is a crux of social and interpersonal activities that promote social relationships. Social relationships are built through social-oriented activities at work and a supervisor initiates them to create a fun working environment (Michel et al., 2019). Fun activities at work supported by management, both task, and non-task related, may facilitate the development of extensive social links as they provide opportunities for employees to socialize, resulting in network ties (Tews et al., 2021). Even

virtual fun helps to create professional ties (Ghosh, Sinha, & Sharma, 2023). An ebullient supervisor intentionally creates fun at work that provides opportunities to celebrate events and achievements (Ford et al., 2019). Hence, based on the above arguments, it is proposed that an ebullient supervisor creates social ties at work. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H11: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on structural social capital.

2.9.11 Ebullient Supervision and Relational Social Capital

Ebullient supervision association with relational social capital is underexplored. However, a fun working environment not only focuses on accomplishing the task, enjoyably; but also pays attention to interpersonal relationships. Relationships matter at work (Makela, Tanskanen, & De Cieri, 2021). Relational social capital represents the feelings of mutual trust between individuals leading to high-quality relationships (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Camaraderie and open communication is nurtured by having fun at work (Tews et al., 2015). Fun activities, along with providing a platform for employee interaction, also enable the development of closer bonds as pleasurable social interactions to break down communication barriers. Fun at work fosters interpersonal trust and cohesion among groups as they practice the freedom to do tasks, improving the relationship quality among employees (Georganta & Montgomery, 2022; Han, Kim, & Jeong, 2016).

A leader who promotes and practices open two-way communication is thoughtful and attentive toward employees and is likely to build trust in the workplace, and focus on fostering high-quality relationships with employees by being open to ideas and even accepting responsibilities when required (Chen & Hou, 2016). An ebullient supervisor while creating a fun working environment, encourages people to be playful at work and happily take on routine task responsibilities, and looks for reasons to celebrate (Ford et al., 2019). Celebrations at work not only are amusing events, but they also communicate employer concern which boosts employees that their efforts are being acknowledged and celebrated (Jamaludin, Ahmad, Mohammad, & Shobri, 2016; Sumayya & Raziq, 2019). This helps employees to enjoy and

to build friendly relations at work, all with management support. When leaders are supportive and encouraging, that improves the quality of relationships at work. A light-hearted working environment is created when supervisors promote enjoyable activities, which in turn, leads to employees having fun interactions with each other; building trust and strong interpersonal relationships (Soundarapandiyan, Kumar, & Priyadarshini, 2018).

Further, the understudied suggestion of ebullient supervision facilitating relational social capital can be justified by the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989). The recent literature trends of employing COR theory beyond stress and strain have helped in making theoretical and practical contributions toward diverse contexts, including interpersonal interactions at work (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Especially, the contemporary focus of applying COR theory has been on leadership styles as it has implications both for the leader and also related individuals (Lam, Walter, & Huang, 2017). One of the extended COR theory principles is that of resource investment to acquire more resources (Hobfoll, 2001). Supervisors may invest resources in their subordinates to make them more functional (Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011).

Drawing upon COR theory, ebullient supervision may represent the provision of resources because an ebullient supervisor deliberately creates fun at work (Ford et al., 2019); which is a resource itself, involving social and interpersonal activities that promote social relationships and support. Fun interactions among employees may signify social resources (Bono et al., 2013). Further, Spreitzer et al. (2005) also argue that relational resources are built in a supportive working climate. An ebullient supervisor is a supportive leader who is helpful and willing to take on routine responsibilities (Ford et al., 2019). Therefore, we argue that since having fun at work enhances interpersonal trust and cohesion among groups (Han et al., 2016), an ebullient supervisor, who intentionally provides fun at work, may propel the generation of relational social capital. Hence, based on the above arguments, it is proposed that an ebullient supervisor would generate high-quality relationships among employees. Thus,

H12: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on relational social capital.

2.9.12 Positive Affect and Perspective-Taking

Positive affect enlarges the attention and cognition scope leading to cognitive flexibility which promotes unusual perspectives (Wang, Chen, & Yue, 2017). The notable experimental findings (see Isen, 2000) have repetitively established that positive affect makes people open-minded, enabling them to think unusually and flexibly. Further, the broadening hypothesis of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) also advocates that feeling good makes people secure and safe, expanding their scope of attention and thinking. This theory argues that positive emotions broaden the thought-action repertoire of an individual, bringing flexibility to the thinking process. When people experience a positive mood, they get a feeling of being in a safe environment, thus they process information more freely, think more divergently, seek novelty, and like to play around with ideas. Positive affect enhances originality and flexible intellect because positive moods make a person feel safer and more comfortable, enabling divergent thinking, and seeking more variety in choice-making, without feeling any threat (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

Based on the above, the following argument is built. When positive affect is experienced, the attention and cognition scope enlarges, leading to cognitive flexibility (Gip, The Khoa, Guchait, Fernando Garcia, & Pasamehmetoglu, 2022; Kuhnel, Bledow, & Kiefer, 2022). This cognitive flexibility enables fast switching between multiple information, which promotes unusual perspectives (Wang et al., 2017). Perspective-taking, is a cognitive broadening process, enabling awareness of others' preferences, values, or needs (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019). Increased perspective-taking is displayed by people feeling positive emotions which greatly impacts one's thought process by increasing cognitive flexibility which, in turn, enables the formulation of new strategies which help to adopt a solution-oriented perspective (Nelson, 2009; Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). A recent meta-analysis study (Acar, Tadik, Myers, Van der Sman, & Uysal, 2021) also suggests that individuals experiencing positive affect are enabled to derive more connections between different variables, thus often recognizing problems and integrating multiple information. Thus, positive affect may enable perspective-taking by bringing flexibility to the

thinking process of an individual which allows them to consider multiple alternatives of thoughts and actions. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H13: Positive affect has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

2.9.13 Positive Affect and Thriving at Work

Thriving at work describes employees engaged in agentic work behaviors which enable the joint experience of learning and vitality (Zhang, Kang, Jiang, & Niu, 2023). A recent study Jiang, Di Milia, Jiang, and Jiang (2020) advocates that positive affect is positively linked to thriving. Meta-analytical studies along with other researchers have argued that although positive affect and thriving are positively related, they are distinct as vitality (one of the components of thriving) is the highly activated display of positive affect (Kleine et al., 2019; Porath et al., 2022). Hence, while thriving at work means the joint presence of both vitality and learning, vitality alone represents an extraordinary active manifestation of positive affect.

Recent literature, including meta-analytical studies, suggests positive affect as an antecedent of thriving at work (Kleine et al., 2019; Liu, Zhang, Wang, Xu, & Yan, 2021). Further, in the light of broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), positive affect expands the thinking and attention state of individuals, enabling them in building personal resources. Positive affect encourages individuals to be engaged and adaptive in their environments (Fredrickson, 2001). When employees feel happy, they become more enthusiastic, energetic, and motivated toward learning. This may lead to workplace learning. Positive affect and vitality also share a positive relationship (Ryan & Frederick, 1997).

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H14: Positive affect has a positive influence on thriving at work.

2.9.14 Positive Affect and Structural Social Capital

An in-depth literature review suggests that the relationship between positive affect and social capital dimensions is understudied.

Social capital talks about being connected socially, and that itself, envisages well-being, and when people are happy, they socially connect (Diener & Seligman, 2002). Structural social capital refers to a network of social links in access to an individual (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Social interactions are consistently related to positive affect in a way that social links develop when positive emotions exist (Diener et al., 2020). The notable laboratory experiments by Isen and his colleagues (Isen, 2000) provide ample causal proof that positive emotions develop social connections.

Additionally, the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) recommends fostering social bonds by positive affect. Positive emotions, by stimulating thoughts and making individuals more receptive towards multiple options, help them to build stronger connections socially. This theory suggests that positive affect escalates cognitive flexibility, thus increasing the chance of the diverse variables becoming related, making individuals more receptive towards multiple options; helping them to build stronger connections socially. When employees socially interact, it reinforces their affiliative tendencies and increases a sense of interconnection (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Hence, based on the above arguments, it is posited that positive affect facilitates social interactions, building structural social capital. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H15: Positive affect has a positive influence on structural social capital.

2.9.15 Positive Affect and Relational Social Capital

An in-depth literature review suggests that the relationship between positive affect and social capital dimensions is understudied.

People experiencing positive emotions tend to have enhanced interpersonal relationship quality (Sels, Tran, Greenaway, Verhofstadt, & Kalokerinos, 2021). As people experience positive emotions, their interpersonal interactions become more pleasant, creating lasting alliances (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Previous literature suggests that happy people become more social and friendly and have higher-quality social relationships (Satici, Uysal, & Deniz, 2016). Positive emotions are

affiliative signals projecting cooperation and warmth (Richardson, McEwan, Maratos, & Sheffield, 2016; Park et al., 2017). Moreover, trust plays a central role in relational social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Positive affect may influence the trust development and cooperation between employees; leading to high-quality relations (Cuadrado, López-Rodríguez, & Constantin, 2020; Yu, Berg, & Zlatev, 2021). According to broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), positive emotions (e.g., gratitude) build trust in social relationships and strengthen them. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H16: Positive affect has a positive influence on relational social capital.

2.9.16 Positive Affect and Employee Creativity

Positive affect, being an internal psychological resource, represents the subjective experience of positive emotions that intrinsically motivates individuals towards the endeavor of risky new ideas and methods, and hence, may facilitate employee creativity (Hwang & Choi, 2020). Affect has signaling functions (Dignath, Eder, Steinhauser, & Kiesel, 2020). The literature shows that positive affect, in comparison to negative affect, triggers more creativity (Baas et al., 2008). Exploring the association between affect and work creativity, through both qualitative and quantitative data, the study of Amabile et al. (2005) concluded that positive affect and creativity share a positive relationship; and interestingly found four temporal patterns of affect and creativity: affect can be an antecedent, a direct consequence, an indirect consequence, and a simultaneous occurrence of creativity. This showed the interwoven nature of emotions and creative thinking of people.

Positive affect is a well-established, widely recognized predictor of employee creativity, with literature suggesting that people tend to be more creative when experiencing positive emotions and producing new and useful ideas (Diener et al., 2020). Literature advocates that positive affect enhances employee creativity by intrinsically motivating them to produce novel and useful ideas/methods, adopting risky ways of carrying out a task, and thereby, facilitating employee creativity (Hwang & Choi, 2020; B. C. Major, Le Nguyen, Lundberg, & Fredrickson, 2018).

Further, in the light of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), positive emotions bring cognitive flexibility, providing multiple alternatives to actions, and developing skills and personal resources which may result in creative outcomes. This theory proposes that positive emotions, e.g., joy, it helps in the long-term optimal functioning development by pushing the limits to be creative; while being content leads to new ways of thinking. As thinking widens, it helps individuals to develop psychologically and gather more resources. E.g., when enjoyment is experienced at work, individuals get motivated to push their limits, and enhanced creativity is experienced (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Positive emotions encourage individuals to explore, making them more open to new information which enhances their thinking flexibility and creativity. This theory argues that positive emotions expand the thought-action repertoires of an individual, bringing cognitive flexibility which helps in developing skills and personal resources which may result in stimulating employee creativity. Empirical evidence supports the broaden-and-build theory stance of positive affect leading to creative performance (e.g. Binyamin & Brender-Ilan, 2018; Peñalver, Salanova, Martínez, & Schaufeli, 2019). In other words, people who experience positive affect can tap into creative behaviors. Positive affect signals satisfaction making individuals relaxed, improving their thinking function, and making them more willing towards exploring new alternatives and be creative (Tan et al., 2021).

In sum, the above-mentioned empirical results offer ample proof in favor of positive affect inducing such cognitive process changes that enhance creativity. The above literature provides a solid basis for acclaiming that through positive affect employee creativity can be enhanced.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H17. Positive affect is positively associated with employee creativity.

2.9.17 Perspective-Taking and Thriving at Work

A careful literature review suggests that perspective-taking association with thriving at work is an underexplored area. Recent careful literature reviews and meta-analytical studies (Abid & Contreras, 2022; Goh et al., 2022; Kleine et al., 2019;

Liu et al., 2021; Shahid, Muchiri, & Walumbwa, 2020), examining antecedents and consequences of thriving at work, show the absence of perspective-taking association with thriving at work. However, according to (Bandura, 1977) learning involves the cognitive ability to view and imagine the world from other's multiple sides through perspective taking. Lozano, Martin Hard, and Tversky (2006) suggest that perspective-taking is a key process to enhance learning. Similarly, Lindgren (2012) argues that perspective-taking promotes learning by providing strength to the objective account of events, thus filling the comprehension gaps; in addition to suggesting that effective learning involves considering alternative perspectives and not just obtaining the right or sufficient information.

Moreover, thriving at work depends on social interactions (Spreitzer et al., 2005). At the core of prosperous social interactions is the ability to comprehend the opinions or perspectives of others. This can be done by two broad approaches: perspective-taking and empathy. Empathy is an indispensable part of social interactions (Neumann, Chan, Wang, & Boyle, 2016). There are two alternative routes to understanding others, empathy and perspective-taking. Empathy and perspective-taking are related but distinct; where empathy is about affect/emotion sharing and perspective-taking is about cognitive sharing (Stietz et al., 2019). Perspective-taking is one process that may result in cognitive empathy (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019), representing the cognitive mechanism that aids in understanding others by enabling an individual to take the perspectives of others (Stietz et al., 2019). However, literature linking empathy with learning is also scarce (Delgado Bolton, San-Martín, & Vivanco, 2022). Longmire and Harrison (2018) carried out a quantitative meta-analysis to explore the dissimilarities between empathy and perspective-taking and found that they are separate procedures of interpersonal learning. If the aim is to build social support, then empathy should be considered; if the goal is to solve a problem or develop new creative solutions, then, perspective-taking should be employed.

Further, the linkage between perspective-taking and thriving at work can be justified with the help of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). This theory states that broadened momentary thoughts can build resources as flexibility in thinking styles makes individuals more receptive to multiple information;

pushing them towards self-development by exploring new knowledge and intellect to shape learning. Hence, perspective-taking promotes learning. In addition, perspective-taking improves communication by reducing dissimilarity perceptions (Zappala, 2014), and stimulating feelings of aliveness and vitality (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009) (Quinn, 2007) to shape vitality. Hence, perspective-taking promotes vitality. Thriving at work showcases the simultaneous presence of both vitality and learning (Shahid et al., 2020). Hence, based on the above arguments, we can conclude that perspective-taking may lead to thriving at work. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H18: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on thriving at work.

2.9.18 Perspective-Taking and Structural Social Capital

A careful literature review suggests that paucity prevails in examining the perspective-taking relationship with structural social capital. Structural social capital is embedded in network ties or social connections between individuals (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), and thus is a personal resource. The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) claims that the expansion of thoughts and inventory actions can lead to the development of personal resources. This theory advocates that as positive emotions broaden cognitive style, making it more flexible, it may help individuals to be more open to socializing and build stronger connections socially (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019). Positive emotions widen the perceptual access of individuals, increasing their social connections (Fredrickson & Barbara, 2013). Expansion of thoughts and inventory actions can lead to the development of social resources as positive emotions encourage individuals to mingle or socialize with their environments. As people imagine others' points of view and try to understand the different perspectives, cognitive gaps resolve; fostering mutual understanding, shared identity, building trust, and stronger social bonds.

Perspective-taking, being a broadening process, successfully reduces attribution error bias and stereotypes, enhances perceptions of others, and promotes communication and helping behavior which may facilitate building social connections (Hooper, Erdogan, Keen, Lawton, & McHugh, 2015). Being critical to social

functioning, perspective-taking plays a central role in generating social bonds by bringing psychological and cognitive closeness to others (Ku et al., 2015). Studies investigating the perspective-taking impact on interpersonal interactions suggest that it improves interpersonal relations, promotes social bonds, and expedites social coordination by facilitating social understanding (Davis, 2018). As perspective-taking enables understanding and approaching others, social resources are acquired, establishing social bonds (Yu et al., 2021). All these studies indicate that perspective-taking facilitates building network ties and thus leads to structural social capital.

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H19: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on structural social capital.

2.9.19 Perspective-Taking and Relational Social Capital

Organizations are taking a lot of interest in perspective-taking because it has a strategic impact on organizations by improving interpersonal relations and fortifying social connections (Galinsky et al., 2008). Perspective-taking is a prerequisite for productive interpersonal relations because it develops trust (Jeon, 2020), and thus, may lead to improved quality of social interactions. High quality of relationships characterized by trust represent relational social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Perspective taking improve interpersonal relations, and promote and expedites social coordination by facilitating social understanding (Davis, 2018). Perspective-taking also increases the similarity between individuals by enhancing the positive perceptions of each other because perspective-taking, being an effortful and broadening cognitive process, pursues diverse multiple perspectives by successfully reducing attribution error bias and stereotypes; enabling individuals to accurately imagine and adapt to others' way of thinking to understand their needs, likings, beliefs, and principles feeling related to a particular situation (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). Perspective-taking is a social skill involving engaging with others' viewpoints which helps in creating and maintaining high-quality social relationships (Taylor & Edwards, 2021).

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H20: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on relational social capital.

2.9.20 Perspective-Taking and Employee Creativity

With much focus on experimental psychology, organizations-related research on perspective-taking has been infrequent and ambiguity remains regarding how it may develop as a problem-solving resource (Curry et al., 2020). Concerning employee creativity, perspective-taking needs to be considered. Employee creativity results in novel and useful ideas that can solve problems and considering the perspectives of others can aid in developing such novel and useful ideas (Wang et al., 2017).

Cognitive flexibility enables individuals to undertake multiple and diverse available information and to process them effectively to find solutions and generate new ideas. Perspective-taking, being a cognitive flexibility, enables employees to obtain and integrate new information and ideas while filtering them to determine their usefulness (Galinsky et al., 2008). Cognitive flexibility fortifies employee creativity by broadening the thinking patterns of employees. enables people to view and embrace the thoughts, mental states, and emotions of others; allowing them to reach novel solutions to a problem, thus promoting creativity (Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2012). Thus, employees with cognitive flexibility perform better on creative problem-solving tasks. Further, the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) suggests that positive emotions expand the traditional ways of thinking, making one more open to understanding others' points of view; thus, encouraging exploration and integration of information in new ways and may lead to creative outcomes. Creativity requires being attentive to others and perspective-taking provides that cognitive flexibility of seeing from alternative viewpoints; enabling divergent thinking which allows connecting unrelated ideas, creating different novel solutions to a problem, and may result in employee creativity (Hui et al., 2021). Moreover, perspective-taking also ensures a more constructive evaluation of those ideas and makes comparisons amongst them;

helping employees to choose new and more useful ideas, thus fostering employee creativity (Wang et al., 2021).

Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that:

H21: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on employee creativity.

2.9.21 Thriving at Work and Employee Creativity

Thriving at work is an established predictor of employee creativity (Alikaj, Ning, & Wu, 2021; Kleine et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2021). Since thriving employees are learning at work and improving themselves, they tend to have a mindset that is conducive to recognizing problems and generating creative solutions (Amabile, 1988). Further, employees become more energetic at work when they experience thriving and thus become encouraged to be creative (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009).

While learning helps to develop new skills and knowledge, making employees more confident and initiative takers; vitality promotes physical and mental energy; helping in the exploration of new processes at work and problem-solving that may lead to employee creativity (Yang et al., 2021). Thriving employees feel that their present behaviors and experiences at work intrinsically motivate them and support their self-development which is positively related to creativity (Kleine et al., 2019). Once, individuals become thrilled about work activities and show interest are likely to exhibit creativity, by taking risks (Wang et al., 2021). Thus, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H22: Thriving at work has a positive influence on employee creativity.

2.9.22 Social Capital and Employee Creativity

Literature advocates that social capital fosters employee creativity. however, very few organizational studies have examined the link between social capital's individual dimensions and employee creativity (McKay, Grygiel, & Karwowski, 2017; Oussi & Chtourou, 2020).

2.9.22.1 Structural Social Capital and Employee Creativity

Structural social capital represents the social interactions or social connections between individuals (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Individual creativity gets highly influenced by social connections (e.g. Baer, Evans, Oldham, & Boasso, 2015). Yet, very few organizational studies have examined the social connections and employee creativity link (McKay et al., 2017). There is an argument that since the social interaction process among people plays an important role in creativity, rich network ties may enable new ways to solve emerged problems and, thus, may contribute to creativity (Liu, 2013). Creativity is a social process where social networks and their openness in sharing different novel ideas may lead to employee creativity (Perry-Smith, 2006). To adeptly generate new and useful ideas, flexibility pursues diverse multiple perspectives that may facilitate social connections (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). Social interaction allows the building of network ties which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and resources that may help to acquire new and creative ideas (Chen, Zhang, & Fey, 2011). Further, other studies also argued that social networks and social connections are beneficial and when people have better interactions in their working environment, it may influence employee outcomes, boosting creativity (Hsu & Fan, 2010).

Social networks are embedded with crucial information and knowledge which critically facilitate an individual's creativity. A meta-analysis (Jain & Jain, 2017) gave a conceptual work proposing that employee creativity is significantly and positively impacted by network ties and social interaction. Being surrounded by large network ties can enable an individual to access the external pool of knowledge, guidance, and social support; which in turn may facilitate the generation of new and useful ideas (Allameh, 2018). Creativity is essentially a social interaction process and gets facilitated when an individual gets exposed to diverse social networks and ties, ideas, and information; unexplored arenas get attention, and new ways to solve problems emerge. Thus, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H23: Structural social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.

2.9.22.2 Relational Social Capital and Employee Creativity

Relational social capital represents an important social resource in the shape of high-quality interpersonal relationships built on high trust and mutual respect (Al-Tabbaa & Ankrah, 2016). Creativity is risky behavior and having high-quality relationships at work reduces the fear of the unknown, encouraging taking creative risks without hesitation (Shen, Hommel, Yuan, Chang, & Zhang, 2018). Employees become more involved in creative tasks when they feel psychologically safe and secure (Ahmad, Ullah, AlDhaen, Han, & Scholz, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2020). Having high-quality relationships at work reduces the perceived risks, creating a mentally safe environment and making employees more willing to be engaged in creative actions (Zhang et al., 2014).

Being inherently impulsive and risky endeavors, employee creativity gets encouraged once there exists high trust in the relationships at work (Chen et al., 2021). The increased trust level between employees improves the knowledge flow within an organization, leading to skills exchanges between employees and, thus, creating a significantly positive relationship with creativity (Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005). Liu (2013) argues that high-quality relationships facilitate employee creativity. The high-quality relationship facilitates knowledge sharing, decreases goal conflicts, and increases mutual expectations which allow individuals to focus more on creativity-related activities and outcomes. In other words, trust in interpersonal relationships may act as a social lubricant, connecting people and making them more willing to act innovatively; thus, facilitating employee creativity.

Strong social bonds and cooperation may lead to creativity (Ku et al., 2015). Strong relationships, characterized by trust, reduce uncertainty concerns and encourage risk-taking, exploring novel ideas and information sharing along with increasing an employee's willingness to take creative risks without any apprehensions (Shen et al., 2018). Evidence shows that trustworthy relationships at work result in employee creativity (Chen et al., 2021).

Thus, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H24: Relational social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.

2.10 Mediation Paths

2.10.1 Nature Connectedness, Positive Affect, and Perspective Taking

Though the direct relationship between nature connectedness and positive affect work is well established, currently, no empirical evidence exists indicating the mediating role of positive affect between nature connectedness and perspective taking. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning. According to broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), positive affect broadens cognitive thinking, bringing more flexibility in thinking styles, and generating multiple alternative routes of doing things. Further, according to attention restoration theory, connecting with nature allows for restorative effects and improves cognitive process functionality, promoting better thinking (Howell, Dopko, Passmore, & Buro, 2011). The restorative effect of nature generates a positive affect (Ulrich, 1983), and when people are happy, it better enables them to link ideas and identify multiple connections between variables (Isen, 2000). Moreover, Mayer and Frantz (2004) study suggested an expressive linkage between nature connectedness and perspective-taking. Meta-analytical studies argue that nature connectedness generates a positive affect (Capaldi et al., 2014; Pritchard et al., 2020). Research shows that even momentary interaction with natural environments produces positive outcomes, such as better cognition (Berman et al., 2008) and improved mental health (Cole & Hall, 2010). Hence, similar traits are shared between people who practice perspective-taking and people who experience nature connectedness. Hence, this study proposes that positive affect might serve as the mechanism to help explain the relation of nature connectedness with employee creativity, which at large is still unnoticed in the existing literature. This study proposes positive affect as the mediating mechanism through which nature connectedness leads to perspective-taking.

Thus, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H25: Positive affect mediates the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective taking.

2.10.2 Ebullient Supervision, Positive Affect, and Perspective Taking

No direct relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking exists. This is a new relationship being proposed in this study. Similarly, no empirical evidence exists indicating the mediating role of positive affect between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning, and the use of related literature on fun at work and supportive leadership.

A fun working environment is open and supportive, encourages spontaneity in thinking, divergent thinking, and originality, and enhances cognitive flexibility (West, Hoff, & Carlsson, 2013). Sonenshein et al. (2013) qualitative study identified the significance of supporting supervisors in employee growth promotion through perspective-taking. An ebullient supervisor has a supporting style and deliberately creates a fun working environment (Ford et al., 2019). Playful employees experience more positive affect and exhibit more flexibility in their thinking styles (West et al., 2013). When people are in a happy mood, in comparison to people in a neutral or unhappy mood, they display enhanced cognitive variations, coming up with more diverse responses in situations that involve flexible problem resolving. Hence, this study proposes that positive affect might serve as the mechanism to help explain the relation of ebullient supervision with perspective, which has not been explored till date. Thus, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H26: Positive affect mediates the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective taking.

2.10.3 Positive Affect, Perspective Taking, and Thriving at Work

Meta-analytical studies confirmed that positive affect and thriving at work are positively related. Hence, the linkage between positive affect and thriving at work

is well established (Kleine et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2020). Though the direct relationship between positive affect and thriving at work is well established, currently, no empirical evidence exists indicating the mediating role of perspective-taking between positive affect and thriving at work. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning.

This study considers this linkage for contextual contribution and more ponder on the mechanism through which positive affect transmits effect via perspective taking by considering broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). Positive affect broadens the thinking and action inventories of an individual which allows them to consider multiple alternatives of actions, behaviors, and thinking styles; resulting in the development of resources of psychological, social, physical, or intellectual resources. According to this theory, positive affect can be said to be the first stage, which may lead to the second stage of expansion of thoughts and inventory actions. The second stage stimulates the third stage which is the development of personal resources. Hence, based on this argument, the current study argues that positive affect can transmit the effect on thriving at work via perspective-taking. In addition, positive affect encourages exploratory thinking and feeling that may serve as a mechanism to stimulate information expansion and diverse views (Hoever et al., 2012). This expansion and diverse view may serve as a key mechanism to being energized and feeling lively (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009; Dutton, 2003) along with facilitating learning (Fredrickson, 2009).

Hence, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H27: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work.

2.10.4 Positive Affect, Perspective Taking, and Structural Social Capital

Both social contacts and positive interactions play a key role in human resource management because these processes, through enabling employees to communicate and collaborate more effectively, may improve employee performance (Moqbel &

Nah, 2017). However, an in-depth literature review suggests that the relationship between positive affect and social capital dimensions is understudied. The direct relationship between positive affect and structural social capital is underexplored. The mediating effect of perspective-taking between positive affect and structural social capital is yet to be examined. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning.

This study considers the mechanism of perspective-taking through which positive affect transmits the effect on structural social capital by considering the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). This theory supports the notion that positive affect can enable perspective-taking by broadening the thinking and action inventories of an individual which allows them to consider multiple alternatives of thoughts and actions. Perspective-taking involves understanding the viewpoint of others by looking through their lens which may help to build social bonds (Buffone et al., 2017). Thus, this theory argues that positive emotions broaden the understanding of others' points of view, in the form of perspective-taking that may then act as a mechanism to transmit the impact of positive affect by stimulating personal resources in the shape of structural social capital.

Hence, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H28: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital.

2.10.5 Positive Affect, Perspective Taking, and Relational Social Capital

An in-depth literature review suggests that the relationship between positive affect and social capital dimensions is understudied. The direct relationship between positive affect and relational social capital is underexplored. The mediating effect of perspective-taking between positive affect and relational social capital is yet to be examined. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning. The mediating role of relational social capital may be justified by considering the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004).

This theory argues that positive affect can broaden the inventory of thoughts and actions which can develop social resources. Consistent with this argument, understanding others' points of view; positive affect may build personal resources in the shape of relational social capital via perspective-taking. Further, perspective-taking is a social skill involving engaging with others' viewpoints which helps in creating and maintaining high-quality social relationships (Taylor & Edwards, 2021). Studies investigating the perspective-taking impact on interpersonal interactions suggest that it may improve interpersonal relations, and expedite social coordination by facilitating social understanding (Davis, 2018). Positive affect may evoke a sense of exploration that enables integrating information in new ways (Hobfoll et al., 2018) reducing prejudices, stereotyping, and negative perceptions of others, and generating and strengthening social bonds (Hooper et al., 2015). Perspective-taking may lead to improved quality of social interactions as once others' points of view are considered and efforts are made to understand the different perspectives, cognitive gaps may resolve and foster mutual understanding, shared identity, building trust, and stronger social bonds.

Hence, based on these arguments it can be hypothesized that:

H29: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital.

2.10.6 Perspective Taking, Thriving at Work and Employee Creativity

In creativity literature, thriving at work has been studied as a mediator between connectivity and innovative behaviors (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009); and between regulatory focus and innovation (Wallace et al., 2016). However, the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work is understudied. Also, the mediating effect of thriving at work between perspective-taking and employee creativity is yet to be examined. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning.

The mediating role of thriving at work between perspective-taking and employee creativity can be justified with the help of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson,

2004). According to this theory, the expansion of individuals' mindsets increases their enduring personal resources (intellectual, social, psychological, physical), which then leads to personal growth in the final transformation stage. Hence, we propose that the broadening process of perspective-taking will help build the intellectual resource of thriving at work, which then will enhance employee creativity. [Kleine et al. \(2019\)](#) argue that thriving at work can yield positive results; hence, making the impression that it may act as an important mechanism for transmitting the impact of perspective-taking on employee creativity.

Accordingly, it can also be hypothesized that:

H30: Thriving at work mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.

2.10.7 Perspective Taking, Structural Social Capital and Employee Creativity

Structural social capital as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity is yet to be examined. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning. To justify the mediating role of structural social capital between perspective-taking and employee creativity, the broaden-and-build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)) can be supportive. According to this theory, broadening thought actions inventory can lead to the development of social resources which then later leads to personal growth in the final transformation stage. Perspective-taking enables pursuing the understanding of multiple points of view that may facilitate social connections ([Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017](#)). Social connections allow network ties that enable the exchange of knowledge and resources; which may facilitate the generation of new and useful ideas ([Baer et al., 2015](#)). Perspective taking, in this study, represents the broadening cognitive process that may lead to the development of personal resources in the shape of structural social capital that may transmit the effect on employee creativity. Hence, structural social capital may act as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity. In addition, perspective-taking may be employed if one

intends to build social networks for problem-solving or developing creative solutions (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). Since perspective taking, being a broadening process, successfully reduces attribution error bias, stereotypes, and prejudices, it contributes towards creating social connections or social bonds (Hooper et al., 2015) which may be supportive of creativity.

Hence, based on the aforementioned arguments it can be hypothesized that,

H31: Structural social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.

2.10.8 Perspective Taking, Relational Social Capital and Employee Creativity

The mediating effect of relational social capital between perspective-taking and employee creativity is yet to be examined. Therefore, the development of mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning. The mediating role of relational social capital may be justified by considering the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). This theory argues that the inventory of thoughts and actions can transform into personal growth via social resources. Consistent with this argument, understanding others' points of view; perspective-taking may transmit the effect on employee creativity via personal resources in the shape of relational social capital. Further, perspective-taking is a social skill involving engaging with others' viewpoints which helps in creating and maintaining high-quality social relationships (Taylor & Edwards, 2021). Perspective-taking may lead to improved quality of social interactions as once others' points of view are considered and efforts are made to understand the different perspectives, cognitive gaps may resolve and foster mutual understanding, shared identity, building trust, and stronger social bonds. Creativity is risky behavior and having high-quality relationships at work reduces conflicts and the fear of the unknown, developing mutual trust, encouraging common goals, and taking creative risks without hesitation (Shen et al., 2018). Evidence shows that trustworthy relationships at work result in employee creativity (Chen et al., 2021). Hence, based on the aforementioned arguments it can be hypothesized that,

H32: Relational social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.

2.10.9 Sequential Mediations between Nature Connectedness and Employee Creativity

At present, no empirical evidence exists regarding the sequential mediating role of positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, and social capital dimensions (structural and relational) between nature connectedness and employee creativity. Therefore, the development of a sequential mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning, justifiable by considering attention restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) and broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004).

According to attention restoration theory, nature connectedness promotes positive emotions and improves cognitive processes by enhancing attentional capacity (Passmore & Holder, 2017). This enables reflection on problem solutions in a new manner, gaining different perspectives, and leading to employee creativity (Burn & Passmore, 2022). Creativity literature, theoretically, highlights that when positive moods are experienced, the cognitive processes improve and high creativity is exhibited (Gip et al., 2022; Kuhnel et al., 2022; Meoupphakarn, Neanchaleay, & Chuathong, 2022). Thus, drawing upon attention restoration theory and broaden and build theory, we propose that positive affect will initiate the broadening process of perspective-taking that will build the personal psychological and intellectual resources of thriving at work, and social resources of structural social capital and relational social capital. These personal resources will then stimulate employee creativity.

Hence, based on the aforementioned arguments it can be hypothesized that,

H33a: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work.

H33b: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.

H33c: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.

2.10.10 Sequential Mediations between Ebullient Supervision and Employee Creativity

Ebullient supervision is a positive style of leadership, intentionally creating fun at work and being supportive toward employees (Ford et al., 2019). Examination of all of its relationships, in this study, presents new linkages. At present, no empirical evidence exists regarding the sequential mediating role of positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and social capital dimensions (structural and relational) between ebullient supervision and employee creativity. Therefore, the development of a sequential mediating hypothesis in this regard depends only on theoretical reasoning, justifiable by considering affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004).

According to affective events theory, ebullient supervision will result in positive affect because an ebullient supervisor purposely creates fun at work, which is a positive event and likely to lead to positive affect and the generation of better moods among employees (Michel et al., 2019). Further, the broaden-and-build theory can provide a framework for an ebullient supervisor, being a supportive leader, to build a positive emotional environment. According to this theory, an upward spiral is created when individuals experience positive affect due to being under the leadership of an ebullient supervisor who engages them in fun at work and provides support, leading to broadening of their thinking and development of their long-term resources through the process of broaden-and-build. These resources result in employee creativity. This is because being playful, exploring, absorbing new information, sharing experiences, and being creative; all are associated with positive emotions (Bono et al., 2013; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005).

Hence, drawing upon affective events theory and broaden and build theory, we propose that ebullient supervision will induce positive affect in employees that will initiate the broadening process of perspective taking which will result in the building of psychological and intellectual resources of thriving at work, and social resources of structural social capital and relational social capital. These personal resources will then stimulate employee creativity.

Hence, based on the aforementioned arguments it can be hypothesized that,

H34a: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work.

H34b: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.

H34c: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.

2.11 Hypotheses Development of Proactive Personality as a Moderator

Beyond the Big Five, not much is known regarding the moderating role of other personalities in creative performance (Jafri, 2020; Jain & Jain, 2017). A meta-analysis study (Fuller Jr & Marler, 2009) suggested that proactive personality, being a compound personality trait, is different from the Big Five. This meta-analysis study concluded that while it is a compound personality construct, it is beyond being a linear composite of the Big Five. The results showed that a proactive personality was strongly associated with openness to experience, conscientiousness, and extraversion and is negatively linked to neuroticism and not related to agreeableness. Hence, while it is a compound personality, a proactive personality can't be completely captured by the Big Five.

Creativity is somewhat related to pro-risk behavior involving experimenting with new ideas and processes and this risk-taking attitude is much related to a proactive personality (Amabile, 1998). Proactive personality and employee creativity are positively associated (Liu & Ge, 2020; Liu et al., 2021; Tai & Mai, 2016). Proactive individuals can identify opportunities to do things in new ways, and have the confidence to ensure their ideas see through; they are persistent in their actions, seeking out new useful information and identifying opportunities; resulting in creative performance (Huang & Luthans, 2015). Yet, a meta-analysis study (Jain & Jain, 2017) argued that although creativity naturally falls in the domain of proactive behavior, yet, limited creativity literature considers proactive personality as a moderator. Another meta-analysis (Kleine et al., 2019) shows proactive personality is related to positive leadership styles, positive affect, thriving, and creativity. Therefore, for this study, a proactive personality is chosen as the moderator.

Proactive employees thrive more at work (Abid et al., 2021; Sheng & Zhou, 2021). Vitality and learning, the two elements of thriving, both are backed up by a proactive personality (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012). Vitality is a positive energy and a sense of well-being and since proactive individuals tend to enjoy challenges and face adverse situations well, they can deal with high job demands and don't take much job stress thus they enhance vitality at work (Cunningham & De La Rosa, 2008). Instead of taking demands as stressors, proactive individuals see them as challenges that, ultimately, fuel vitality; resulting in a meaningful relationship between vitality and proactivity (both in respect of task and relationship) (Hahn, Frese, Binnewies, & Schmitt, 2012). Such people can positively react to adversity and can influence circumstances to find their selves out of undesirable circumstances, which leads to a sense of well-being and satisfaction, thus, enhanced vitality. Proactive individuals eagerly want to learn new things and enhance their skills (Major, Turner, & Fletcher, 2006).

In comparison to the Big Five, proactive personality is a better predictor of stimulus learning (Jeong et al., 2017). Being proactive facilitates learning as people having this personality tend to probe, especially when they are unsure of something.

They actively engage in generating information about their tasks and coworkers. Individuals having proactive personalities thrive more at work, are very active and purposeful, full of energy (high vitality), and have a higher orientation to learn (Jeong et al., 2017; Niessen, Mäder, Stride, & Jimmieson, 2017). Proactive employees thrive more at work (Abid et al., 2021; Sheng & Zhou, 2021). An active learner is motivated and willing to take part in developmental activities to learn. Thus, those who have a proactive personality, and are keen to learn tend to acquire knowledge, and skills and learn at work as they seek self-improvement opportunities (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014).

Hence, the above literature shows that people having proactive personalities are risk-takers, challenge the status quo, want to bring a change in their surroundings, and interact with their environment to grow and develop and thus display vitality. In addition, they observe the environment, take challenges head-on, come up with new ideas, invite feedback, and are keen to acquire new skills, thus are active learners.

Based on the above review, individuals having proactive personality display both vitality and learning and thus are more likely to facilitate thriving at work. Hence, it would be reasonable to propose that individuals having a proactive personality will help to enhance thriving at work. Alternatively, those low on proactive personalities tend to have low vitality levels at the workplace.

Hence, it can be hypothesized that,

H35a: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

Further, proactive people are comfortable with social interactions, and hence, work relationships emerge. Hence, those with proactive personalities may strengthen social capital, which represents assets implanted in interpersonal associations. As proactive people are motivated to gather information through creating a relationship web, those who are high in proactivity are likely to have more exchanges of information (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). Proactive employees seek feedback and information exchange (Chen & Hou, 2016). Proactive behavior is

related to taking charge, and to do so, such individuals do networking building to gain informational resources and identify opportunities and social capital (Li, Liang, & Crant, 2010). Hence, it can be hypothesized that,

H35b: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective - taking and structural social capital such that a highly proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

Lastly, since proactive people anticipate future outcomes, to bring out constructive changes they plan and make counteractive arrangements to collect resources (Grant & Ashford, 2008). By communicating with others, they gather resources like trust and information, which in turn, facilitates creativity. They develop a supportive environment to carry out risky creative actions. Proactive individuals may be able to build social resources and interpersonal relations, by acquiring information from both within and outside their work. Proactive employees can build strong relationships, based on trust, with their colleagues and supervisors as they engage more in information exchange, thus, increasing employee creativity (Gong et al., 2012). Proactive employees can create a trustworthy friendly work environment (Crant, 2000). Proactive people anticipate and plan for the future and try to gather resources, like trust and information, to facilitate conducive changes by taking remedial actions. To make a risk-taking supportive environment, proactive individuals can gather informational resources by communicating with others and, hence, build trust relationships. Hence, it can be hypothesized that,

H35c: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective -taking and relational social capital such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

Figure 2.2 shows the deduced theoretical framework of nature connecteness, ebullient supervision, positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, structural social capital, relational social capital, proactive personality, and employee creativity.

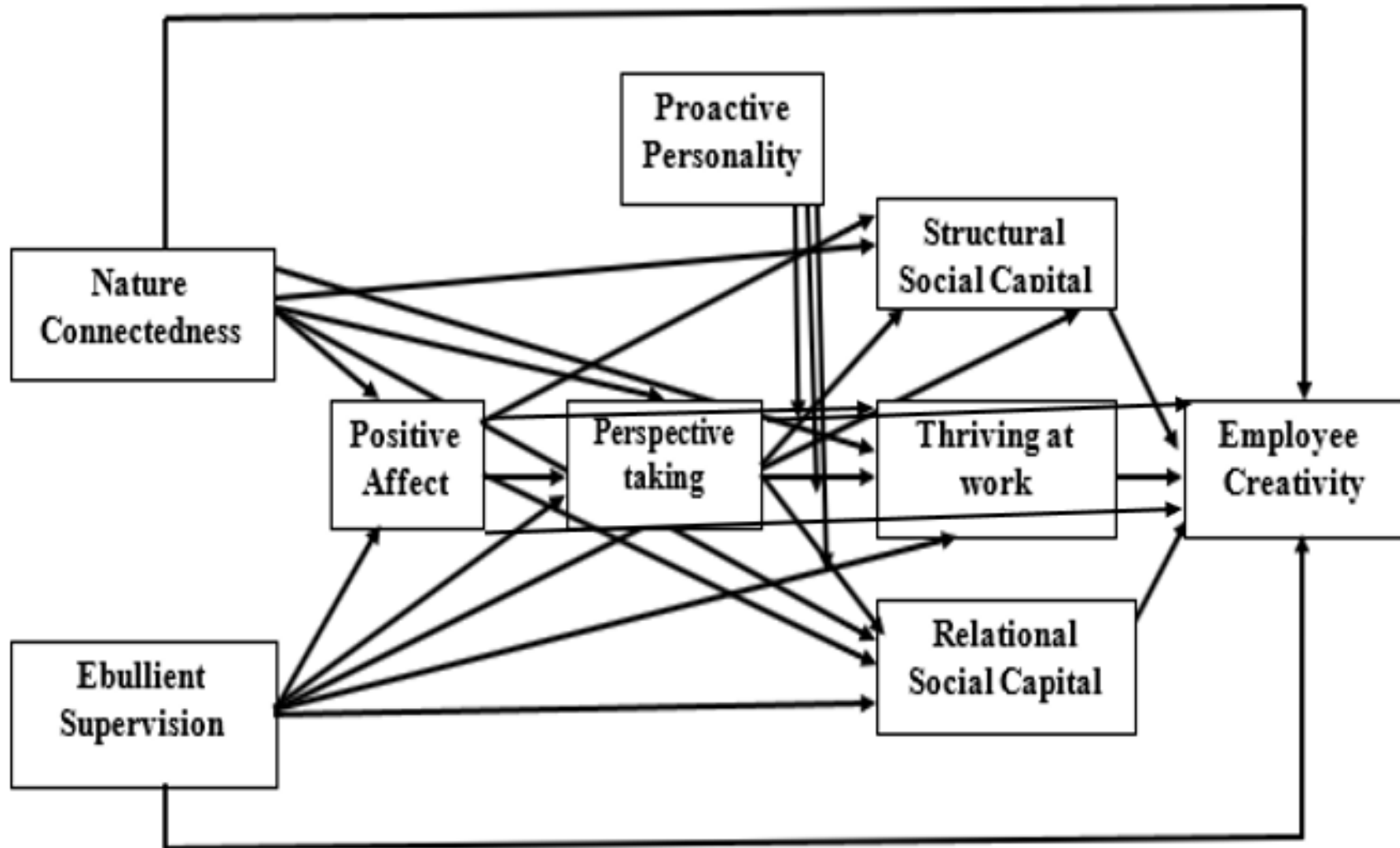


FIGURE 2.2: Theoretical Framework

Drawn upon attention restoration theory, affective events theory, conservation of resources theory and the broaden-and-build theory; a holistic and integrative framework is presented that aligns individual and contextual factors and their mechanisms, systematically, to stimulate employee creativity, in the hospitality industry. This model suggests that positive affect is central to understanding how individuals respond to nature connectedness and ebullient supervision that may translate into employee creativity.

2.13 Summary of Research Hypotheses

H1: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on employee creativity.

H2: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on employee creativity.

H3: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on positive affect.

H4: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on positive affect.

H5: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

H6: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

H7: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on thriving at work.

H8: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on thriving at work.

H9: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on structural social capital.

H10: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on structural social capital.

H11: Nature connectedness has a positive influence on relational social capital.

H12: Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on relational social capital.

H13: Positive affect has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

H14: Positive affect has a positive influence on thriving at work.

H15: Positive affect has a positive influence on structural social capital.

H16: Positive affect has a positive influence on relational social capital.

H17: Positive affect has a positive influence on employee creativity.

H18: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on thriving at work.

- H19: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on structural social capital.
- H20: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on relational social capital.
- H21: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on employee creativity.
- H22: Thriving at work has a positive influence on employee creativity.
- H23: Structural social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.
- H24: Relational social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.
- H25: Positive affect mediates the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective-taking.
- H26: Positive affect mediates the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking.
- H27: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work.
- H28: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital.
- H29: Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital.
- H30: Thriving at work mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.
- H31: Structural social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.
- H32: Relational social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.
- H33a: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work.
- H33b: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.

H33c: Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.

H34a: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work.

H34b: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.

H34c: Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.

H35a: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

H35b: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and structural social capital such that a highly proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

H35c: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and relational social capital such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Overview

Discussed in this chapter are the methodical choices, the strategy of research, and chosen time horizon of the current study. Section 3.1 highlights the employed research philosophy. Section 3.2 details the research design elements including the study purpose, the study type, the researcher interference level, the setting of the study, the unit of analysis, and time horizons. Section 3.3 contains information on the target population, sampling technique, and sampling size. Section 3.4 entails the data collection method and time lags. Section 3.5 provides information on the data collection instruments employed. Section 3.6 discusses the statistical technique for data analysis.

3.1 Research Philosophy

In this study, the positivist approach was used to deduce the relationship among constructs. This form of research has remained constantly popular and central in the business and management discipline (Bell & Dymont, 2008). Supporting the empiricist view, the philosophy of positivism considers knowledge to be factual and trustworthy only if it is obtained and measured via observation (Collins, 2018). Hence, the positivistic approach relies on quantifiable explanations that

result in generalization through statistical examinations. Constructs must be operationalized to be measured. Research findings in a positivistic approach tend to be visible and measurable.

3.2 Research Design

Also known as a research strategy, the research design enables the answering of research questions with the use of empirical data (McCombes & Bhandari, 2021). It is a blueprint detailing how the data was collected, measured, and analyzed (Hair, Page, & Brunsveld, 2019). The research design needs to be well-planned to ensure the matching of research methods to research objectives and to employ appropriate data analysis techniques. A well-designed research design is a pre-requisite for determining hypothesized relationships results successfully. Important elements of research design, regarding which rational decision-making is of critical importance, include the study purpose, study type, setting of the study, researcher interference level; the unit of analysis, and time horizons (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). At each mentioned research design component, critical choices are to be made that determine the effectiveness of research findings and are of significant deliberation concerning bias (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

3.2.1 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at hypothesis testing to determine whether the supposed relationships between variables have been supported or not; to obtain answers to the research questions. Hypothesis testing study intends to explain the change in the outcome variable which enables an enriched understanding regarding the relationships (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019).

3.2.2 Type of Study

A deductive approach is adopted in positivist research (Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020). This study was causal to form cause-and-effect relationships by employing

directional hypotheses. Moreover, principally, in the positivist approach, quantitative research is associated with either survey or experimental research strategies (Saunders & Lewis, 2019). Being causal research, to carry out an empirical investigation, the data was collected through questionnaires. relies on measurement, and uses statistical analyses for the generalizability of the findings (Mukherji & Albon, 2022). In this methodology, research is detached from the observations to be objective and avoid bias. This study was undertaken to describe causal relationships, hence, following the positivist research philosophy, it employed the deductive approach and quantitative method for relationships examination.

3.2.3 Extent of Researcher Interference

This study was conducted in its natural environment (visiting the restaurants and hotels during their normal operations). The only disruption by the researcher in the routine functioning of work was perhaps the administering of questionnaires. In the positivist approach, the researcher's role is that of an objective analyst, confined to data collection and unbiased data interpretation.

3.2.4 The Study Setting

This was non-experimental and non-contrived research. No changes were introduced in the normal flow of work by the researcher. No artificial changes in the working environment of respondents were made that could influence the variables' nature under the current study. The questionnaires (closed and structured) were filled by the respondents in their natural working environment as they proceeded normally at work during routine working hours.

3.2.5 Unit of Analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis were the supervisors and subordinates working in the working the hotels and restaurants. Supervisors rated employee creativity, while the subordinates rated their nature connectedness, positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, social capital, proactive personality, and also

ebullient supervision.

3.2.6 Time Horizon

Hotel and restaurant employees provided the data in two time lags. There was a 4-week interval between the time lags. Data confidentiality was assured to the respondents for obtaining honest responses.

Time Lag 1 – T1: At T1, data were collected for independent variables (nature connectedness and ebullient supervision), mediator variables (structural social capital and relational social capital), and moderator variable (proactive personality). These were rated by the subordinates. Data were also collected for the outcome variable (employee creativity) which was rated by the supervisor. Both supervisor and subordinates also provided their demographics.

Time Lag 2 – T2: At T2, data were collected for the remaining mediator variables (positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work).

3.3 Data Collection

Being crucial in research, the data gathering technique requires sound judgment since how the data was obtained would not only contribute towards better theoretical framework understanding; but also because improper data collection can't be covered up by any analysis amount. For data collection, a self-administered questionnaire survey was employed in this study. Due to being more useful in comparison to mailed or online surveys, questionnaire surveys are commonly used for data collection (Bell et al., 2022). This is because rapport with respondents is established due to the availability of personal interaction with the researcher which makes the respondents more comfortable and motivated to participate, in addition to enabling easy clarification in case of any concerns or doubts about the questionnaire (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). Moreover, being inexpensive, this method also ensures respondents' confidentiality is maintained. Questionnaires were directed in English for it is Pakistan's official language, and the majority of the employees in the hospitality industry can easily read and understand English,

and have Bachelor's degrees (Nawaz & Sandhu, 2018). Moreover, no language difficulties were faced by past researchers collecting data from hotel and restaurant employees in Pakistan (e.g. Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020; Zia, Bashir, Mangi, & Shamsi, 2022).

3.3.1 Procedure

Consistent with previous literature on the hospitality industry (e.g. Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021), data was collected from hotels and restaurants. Profusely efforts were exerted to reach the target population for obtaining maximum responses. In total, 61 hotels and restaurants were approached out of which 52 agreed to facilitate data collection (see Appendix A). At each hotel and restaurant, a list of their full-time employees (from different departments but involved in creative tasks in their work routine) and their respective supervisors were provided to avoid any problems during data collection in different time lags. After getting consent from the competent authorities and respondents to participate; questionnaires were then distributed during regular working hours among the supervisors and their subordinates.

At T1, a total of 500 questionnaires were distributed amongst the subordinates (measuring ebullient supervision, nature connectedness, structural and relational social capital, and proactive personality), and their immediate supervisors (measuring employee creativity). 410 questionnaires were returned out of which 6 had missing supervisors' ratings, and thus, were discarded. 404 were in usable condition (two-source data) which were, then, circulated at T2 (measuring positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work). After T2, 13 incomplete ones were discarded due to incomplete information. Thus, in total, 391 complete two-source surveys were received and 78.2% was the useable response rate. These 391 subordinates were divided between 87 supervisors. For questionnaire matching, previous studies' coding method of requesting employees to mention their maternal grandparents was employed (e.g. Zia et al., 2022).

3.3.1.1 Research Ethics

Through personal and professional contacts, owners, HR managers, floor managers, and general managers of hotels and restaurants were contacted to discuss and share research details; and to get their consent for participation in this study. The purpose of the study, the relevant respondents' criteria, and the data collection method were explained by the research to obtain participation consent. Managers were informed of data that needed to be collected from the supervisors and their subordinates to match the responses.

To avoid the risk of common method bias (CMB) multiple techniques can be employed (Tehseen, Ramayah, Sajilan, et al., 2017). On the suggestion of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff (2012), data was collected from supervisors and their subordinates (two source data) to avoid the possibility of CMB. Accordingly, two separate questionnaires were designed, where, nature connectedness, ebullient supervision, positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, structural social capital, relational social capital, and proactive personality were part of the subordinate survey (see Appendix B, Form A); and employee creativity was included in the supervisor survey (see Appendix C, Form B). A cover letter accompanied the questionnaires explaining the scope of the study, and ensuring strict confidentiality to the respondents. Responses were kept confidential by the researchers by not sharing the collected data of supervisors and subordinates with each other. During any stage of data collection, the respondents were given the freedom to decline further participation. The subordinates who willingly gave participation consent were taken into confidence for questionnaire completion at two-time lags.

3.3.2 Data Collection in Two-Time Lags

For eliminating the possibility of common method bias which may occur during cross-sectional data collection, the two-time lag approach was employed for data collection (Palmatier, 2016; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Time Lag 1

In the first time lag, data collected on nature connectedness, ebullient supervision, structural social capital, relational social capital, and proactive personality were subordinate reported. Employee creativity data was supervisor reported and also collected in the first time lag. Both supervisor and subordinate also provided their demographics. Initially, 500 questionnaires were distributed among the employees. 410 questionnaires were returned at T1, out of which 404 were in usable condition (two-source data).

Time Lag 2

After four weeks, at T2, 404 subordinates were contacted to fill out the questionnaire on positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work. Out of 404, 391 subordinates filled the questionnaires, accounting for a 78.2% response rate.

3.4 Instrumentation

All constructs of the current study were operationalized by adopting the validated measures from the existing literature. English is easily spoken at the middle-upper managerial level, especially in the hospitality industry as many foreigners frequently visit (Yasmin, Sarkar, & Sohail, 2016) and the majority of the employees have bachelor's degrees (Zia et al., 2022). Therefore, the data was operationalized in English. Scales are attached at the end in Appendix A.

3.4.1 Nature Connectedness

To measure nature connectedness, at T1, the scale of Rosa, Collado, Profice, and Pires (2022) was adopted; comprising of 7 items. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). An item example is "I think of the natural world as a community to which I belong."

The original scale consisted of 14 items (Mayer & Frantz, 2004) which was recently adapted into a shorter 7 items scale to reduce the respondents' fatigue that occurs during filling lengthy questionnaires and to be more effective (Pasca, Aragonés, & Coello, 2017). This CNS 7 items scale was found to have both internal consistency

and convergent validity. Recently, this 7-item scale was further tested and results found it to be of unidimensional structure, having better structural and known-group validity, internal consistency, and predictive validity in comparison to the 13 items version (Rosa et al., 2022). These researchers concluded that the tested and refined 7 items CNS scale was much more accurate for nature connectedness estimation.

3.4.2 Ebullient Supervision

To measure ebullient supervision, at T1, a 13 items scale was employed from (Ford et al., 2019). Employees filled out this survey about their supervisor. Items examples are “Your supervisor Lets people know that it’s OK to be playful at work”; “Your supervisor goes out of his/her way to brighten the day at work”; “Your supervisor compliments employees in front of others”. A seven-point scale measured all items with “never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “occasionally”, “often”, “frequently” and “always”. During data analysis, the rating scale was converted from 7 point Likert scale to 5 point. The conversion of scales from 7 point to 5 point Likert scale is consistent to previous literature (Lewis & Sauro, 2020). This scale ranges from 1 to 5 where 1=1, 2= 1.67, 3= 2.33, 4=3, 5=3.67, 6=4.33, and 7=5.

3.4.3 Positive Affect

To measure positive affect, at T2, a 10 items scale from Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) was adopted. Items examples are “Indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week...excited”; “Indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week...enthusiastic”; “Indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week...attentive”. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale of “very slightly or not at all”, “a little”, “moderately”, “quite a bit” and “extremely”.

3.4.4 Perspective Taking

To measure perspective taking, at T2, a 7 items scale developed by [Davis \(1983\)](#) was adopted. Items examples are “I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both”; “I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective”; “When I’m upset at someone, I usually try to ”put myself in his shoes” for a while.” All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale of “does not describe me well”, “does not describe me enough” “neutral”, “Describes me somewhat” and “describes me well”.

3.4.5 Thriving at Work

At T2, [Porath et al. \(2012\)](#) 10-item scale was employed to measure thriving at work. It includes items like “At work, I continue to learn more and more as time goes by”, “At work, I have developed a lot as a person”; “At work, I feel alive and vital”; “At work, I have energy and spirit”. A five-point Likert scale measured all items (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

3.4.6 Social Capital

Social capital dimensions, at T1, were measured by employing a 5 items scale adopted from ([Liu, 2013](#)). First, relational social capital was measured using three items. It includes items like “In this relationship, neither side takes advantage of the other colleagues even if the opportunity arises.” Second, structural social capital was measured using two items. It includes items like “The colleague has ‘opened the doors’ of other colleagues for me.” A five-point Likert scale measured all items (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

3.4.7 Employee Creativity

Employee creativity, at T1, was measured employing a 13 items scale adopted from [Zhou and George \(2001\)](#). Items example is “The employee is a good source of creative ideas”; “The employee comes up with creative solutions to problems.” A five-point Likert scale measured all items with “not at all characteristic”, “disagree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “agree”, and “very characteristic”. Supervisors rated employee creativity.

3.4.8 Proactive Personality

At T1, a 10 items scale was adopted from [Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer \(1999\)](#) to measure proactive personality. An item example is “If I see something I don’t like, I fix it”. A five-point Likert scale measured all items (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

3.5 Pilot Study

In research, conducting a pilot study is critical as it facilitates determining the research design feasibility. It is like a rehearsal on a small scale or a trial in which the intended methods can be tested and the results can guide better concerning methodology for the larger investigation. Pilot studies may warn about what could go wrong with the main research, especially concerning intended methods, questionnaire design, and measurement procedures ([Bougie & Sekaran, 2019](#)). Conducting a pilot study before the main research is recommended for assessing the research instrument ([Baker, 1994](#)). In this study, a recently introduced variable of ebullient supervision ([Ford et al., 2019](#)) was also examined through its newly introduced scale. Thus, for the above-mentioned reasons, a pilot study was conducted before moving on to the large-scale investigation.

Acknowledging the significance of a pilot study, 110 respondents were targeted out of which 85 respondents and their immediate supervisors match questionnaires were obtained. 77.27% was the response rate.

SMART PLS 4 was employed for reliability analysis under pilot testing. In PLS-SEM, the measurement model was assessed to evaluate the scales for reliability. To evaluate internal consistency, composite reliability was assessed. The required threshold for composite reliabilities should be a minimum of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020). In the pilot study, the composite reliability values for all constructs were above 0.80. **Table 3.1** shows that all constructs' AVE was greater than 0.50.

TABLE 3.1: Reliabilities for Measures in the Pilot Study

Measures	Source	No. of items	CR
Nature Connectedness	Rosa et al. (2020)	7	0.942
Ebullient Supervision	Ford et al. (2019)	13	0.969
Positive Affect	Watson et al. (1988)	10	0.931
Perspective Taking	Davis (1983)	7	0.939
Thriving at Work	Porath et al. (2012)	10	0.940
Relational Social Capital	Liu (2013b)	3	0.851
Structural Social Capital	Liu (2013b)	2	0.907
Employee Creativity	Zhou and Oldham (2001)	13	0.958
Proactive Personality	Seibert et al. (1999)	10	0.956

The results of this pilot study demonstrated the reliability, thus, the adequacy and usability of the chosen measures. Moreover, upon seeking feedback, the respondents did not find any ambiguities or difficulty in answering the survey in English which elaborates the adequacy of the chosen language. It also ensured the likelihood of the chosen research process to work in reality and appropriateness of the selected instruments with regard to the target population. No research design or practical issues were highlighted, thus, providing affirmation of study's feasibility.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed by employing partial least structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). No missing values or outliers existed in the data. PLS-SEM is a two-stage model evaluation process. First, the measurement model is assessed for

calculating the reliability and validity of the scales. Second, hypotheses testing is carried out under structural model, including mediation and moderation analysis. PLS-SEM was employed for data analysis for certain reasons. First, recent studies have shown that for exploratory research, where new linkages are being examined, and when studies are prediction-oriented, it is the most suitable technique (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021). Second, the mediation relationships analysis shows lesser contradictory results than the regression analysis; thus, making it a better approach for identifying mediation effects (Baker, 1994). Third, Shmueli et al. (2019) presented an out sample prediction technique, further justifying the use of PLS-SEM. Lastly, it has been used in multiple business administration-related research, including human resource management (Ringle, Sarstedt, Mitchell, & Gudergan, 2020).

3.7 Population and Sample

3.7.1 Population

Defining the research population is vital before any data can be collected or analyzed. The research population represents the “who” or “what” is the researcher interested in for generalizing the results of the study (Sheppard, 2020).

The population for the current study included employees working in two to five-star hotels and restaurants in Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. These incorporated local and multinational brands. Moreover, For Northern areas, Islamabad and Rawalpindi serves as the connecting hub. Accordingly, by considering this connectivity-hub, the data was collected from Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The study’s purpose was informed to the participants to obtain their informed consent before survey participation. No incentives were offered to this study’s respondents.

The rationale for choosing Pakistan’s hospitality industry, particularly, the food service sector was that it has a very strong globalized competitive market and hence it becomes vital for employees to be creative to not only achieve competitive advantage but also to survive. Due to intense competition in the hospitality

industry, service employees are under pressure to improve their job performance to boost their firm's functioning (Lee et al., 2020).

A society's socioeconomic well-being is facilitated by the hospitality industry (Baloch et al., 2022; Dube, Nhamo, & Chikodzi, 2021). While the pandemic activated a global crisis for the hospitality industry, the hotels, and restaurants in Pakistan were allowed to partially function during the crisis and fully operate, later on, well before other businesses (Baloch et al., 2022).

The hospitality industry has a lot of potential in Pakistan as it has a rich diverse heritage and beautiful landscapes that attract tourists, both at local and international levels. Pakistan is known for its distinguished culture of hospitality (Ali, Puah, Ayob, & Raza, 2020). For tourist facilitation, the hospitality industry, including hotels and restaurants, has developed at a fast pace; making local and national economic contributions (Nazir, Caldeira, & Seabra, 2023). Thus, the population sample was chosen from Pakistan's hospitality industry, particularly, the food services sector.

3.7.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Employees from hotels and restaurants were participants in the study. Data collection from two to five-star hotels is commonly considered in the hospitality industry. Hence, consistent with previous literature (e.g. Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021), this study's sampling frame also consisted of two to five-star hotel and restaurant employees in Pakistan.

The probability sampling technique is applied when all population members are known and have an equal chance of selection (Sharma, 2017). However, on a practical basis, it was not achievable to take a random sample of all the employees working in hotels and restaurants. Non-probability sampling technique is employed when access to the entire population is not possible (Dixon, Singleton, & Straits, 2016). Though purposive sampling may be used in qualitative research, however (Chan, Darko, & Ameyaw, 2017; Siddique et al., 2024). In purposive sampling, individuals are chosen based on them being fit the category of people that

the researcher needs to reach to answer the research problem as per research objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2019). The technique is fairly straightforward in that the research simply rejects those who are not fit the particular profile under research. Thus, employing purposive sampling is more appropriate over convenience sampling since, through constant refining of the sample, it reduces bias (Smith & Noble, 2014). Accordingly, this study employed a purposive sampling technique (non-probability) for research objectives matching. Subordinate participants had two eligibility criteria to meet: first, that their work role required creative tasks (e.g., executive chefs, sous chefs, supervisors, director sales & marketing, assistant hotel managers, concierge, spa managers, catering servers, restaurant managers, food and beverage managers, receptionists, floor managers, event planners), and second, they at least had worked for 6 months under their direct supervisor for their creativity to be gauged properly. This was to ensure that the supervisors were fairly acquainted with their respective subordinate's creative performance. In this study, employee creativity was operationalized as creative performance (novel and useful ideas/solutions) of hospitality employees, thus representing the intertwined nature of novelty and usefulness. Hence, creative employees were expected to be reported as providing both novel and useful ideas by their supervisors.

For sample size, a G*Power calculator was employed which has gained importance in the literature (Muhammad & Gul-E-Rana, 2020; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020). The minimum required sample size was 190. However, the target sample was 500 and the collected sample was 391, using a purposive sampling technique, which was more than the required 190.

3.7.3 Sample Characteristics

3.7.3.1 Gender

Table 3.2 shows the respondents' gender. Among the employees, male employees accounted for 85.9%, while 14.1% were female. Male employees being in the majority is common in Pakistan's hospitality industry and has also been reported in recent studies (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021).

TABLE 3.2: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Male	336	85.9	85.9
Female	55	14.1	100
Total	391		

3.7.3.2 Age

Table 3.3 shows the age brackets respondents belonged. According to this study's sample, 19.9% of the employees were below 25 years of age, 40.9% of employees were aged 25-30, and 24% belonged to the age category of 31-34. Further, 10.5% were of 35-40 age, 3.1% were 41-44 age, and 1.5% of employees were of 45 years and above. Therefore, the majority of employees belonged to 25 to 30 years of age, while the least number of employees belonged to the 45 and above age bracket. Young employees being in the majority is common in Pakistan's hospitality industry and has also been reported in recent studies (Bhutta, Afzal, Hussain, & Hashmi, 2021; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021; Zia et al., 2022).

TABLE 3.3: Age

Age	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
<25	78	19.9	19.9
25-30	160	40.9	60.9
31-34	94	24	84.9
35-40	41	10.5	95.4
41-44	12	3.1	98.5
45 and above	6	1.5	100

3.7.3.3 Qualification

Table 3.4 shows the qualification of the respondents. According to this study's sample, 27.1% held an Intermediate degree, 48.1% had a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree holders 18.4%, 0.5% held Doctorate and 5.9% had other degrees. Therefore, the majority of employees had Bachelor's degrees. Studies conducted in Pakistan's hospitality industry have reported respondents majority hold Bachelor's degrees (Nawaz & Sandhu, 2018; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020, 2021; Zia et al., 2022).

TABLE 3.4: Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Intermediate	106	27.1	27.1
Bachelors	188	48.1	75.2
Masters	72	18.4	93.6
Doctorate	2	0.5	94.1
Others	23	5.9	100

3.7.3.4 Experience Under Current Supervisor

Table 3.5 shows the working experience of respondents and their current supervisor. According to this study's sample, 34.3% of the employees had 6 months to 1-year experience, 47.8% had 1 to 5 years of experience, and 17.9% were 5 and above years of experience. Hence, none of the employees considered in this study had been working under their immediate supervisor for less than 6 months.

TABLE 3.5: Experience of Respondents under Current Supervisor

Experience	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
6 months to 1 year	134	34.3	34.3
1 to 5 years	187	47.8	82.1
5 years and above	70	17.9	100

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Results

In this chapter, the research results from the data analyses are presented objectively. Section 4.1 specifies the data screening. Section 4.2 details the descriptive statistics. Section 4.3 presents the data analysis through the measurement model and structural model. Section 4.4 shows the summary of the results.

4.1 Data Screening

Data screening is essential to assess the accuracy, completeness, and distribution of data; along with the reliability and validity of measures. Data screening involves examining the data for missing values, outliers, and normality issues.

4.1.1 Data Cleaning

Researchers suggest that to ensure the accuracy of results, data cleaning should be carried out which involves identifying any missing values and normality distribution (see [Hair, Halle, Terry-Humen, Lavelle, & Calkins, 2006](#)). It is a process of data modification to get rid of any irrelevant or incorrect information. Data cleaning helps to remove from dataset removes invalid data points.

4.1.2 Missing Values and Outliers

The absence of data value for the variable being observed represents missing values. This occurs when, intentionally or unintentionally, a respondent leaves a blank response. The presence of missing values can significantly affect conclusions. No missing values or outliers existed in the current study's data. In addition to looking for missing values, 7 point Likert scale of ebullient supervision was converted into 5 point Likert scale (see Section 3.5.2).

4.1.3 Normal Distribution

Although the assumption of normality is strictly adhered to in co-variance-based partial least structural equation modeling; such is not the case for variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS Smart). According to [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#), for variance-based structural equation modeling, transforming data to be normal kills the data edges. Additionally, these researchers suggested testing the data employing skewness and kurtosis analysis for seeing only the extreme values. While skewness measures distribution symmetry, kurtosis measures the distribution tails' heaviness concerning a normal distribution. Using descriptive statistics, both skewness and kurtosis can be examined. Accordingly to [Brown and Moore \(2012\)](#), while utilizing SEM, the acceptable skewness and kurtosis values range is ± 3 .

Even though PLS-SEM is less prone to normality, it was tested to look for extreme non-normality. Accordingly, skewness and kurtosis were tested. Skewness and kurtosis values ranged within the satisfactory range as shown in Appendix D. Hence, the data was subjected to further assessment.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics generates a data summary to describe the features or contents of data ([Cooksey, 2020](#)). It is a vital first step to calculate descriptive statistics before statistical comparisons can be made ([Kaur, Stoltzfus, Yellapu, et al., 2018](#)).

The current data's descriptive statistics are shown in **Table 4.1**. The current study's sample size was 391. The mean value is the average for each variable. High mean values depict agreement while lower mean values indicate disagreement by the respondent. The standard deviation shows how dispersed the data values are from the mean values. The mean value of nature connectedness was (Mean = 3.632, S.D = 0.877). This means the employees agreed to be experiencing nature connectedness. The mean value of ebullient supervision was (Mean = 4.476, S.D = 1.254). This means the employees agreed to be having an ebullient supervisor. The mean value of positive affect was (Mean = 3.607, S.D = 0.797). The mean value of perspective-taking was (Mean = 2.848, S.D = 0.968). This means the employees agreed to be practicing perspective-taking. The mean value of thriving at work was (Mean = 3.456, S.D = 0.914). This means the employees agreed to be learning and feeling energetic/alive at work, thus, experiencing thriving at work. The mean value of relational social capital was (Mean = 3.547, S.D = 0.954). This means the employees agreed to be having high-quality relationships. The mean value of structural social capital was (Mean = 3.734, S.D = 0.937). This means the employees agreed to be having social connections. The mean value of employee creativity was (Mean = 3.455, S.D = 0.903). This means that the supervisor agreed that employees were creative. The mean value of proactive personality was (Mean = 3.528, S.D = 0.893). This means that the employees agreed to have proactive behaviors.

TABLE 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

Measures	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std.Dev
Nature connectedness	391	1	5	3.632	0.877
Ebullient supervision	391	1	5	4.476	1.254
Positive affect	391	1	5	3.607	0.797
Perspective taking	391	1	5	2.848	0.968
Thriving at work	391	1	5	3.456	0.914
Relational social capital	391	1	5	3.547	0.954
Structural social capital	391	1	5	3.734	0.937
Employee creativity	391	1	5	3.455	0.903
Proactive personality	391	1	5	3.528	0.893

4.3 Results

SmartPLS version 4 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2022) was employed for partial least structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) during data analysis. PLS-SEM analyses are a two-stage process in which, first, the measurement model is assessed to examine the reliability and validity of the scale; followed by the structural model assessment for hypotheses testing.

4.3.1 Measurement Model

4.3.1.1 Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

To evaluate internal consistency, both Cronbach alpha (CA), and composite reliability (CR) were assessed. The required threshold for composite reliabilities should be a minimum of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). In this study, all constructs reported above 0.80 CR, as shown **Table: 4.2**. The average variance extracted (AVE) and outer loadings were examined to evaluate the convergent validity (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2021). **Table: 4.2** shows that all constructs' AVE was greater than 0.50.

TABLE 4.2: Reliability and Validity

Measures	CA	CR	AVE
Nature connectedness	0.919	0.935	0.674
Ebullient supervision	0.960	0.965	0.696
Positive affect	0.904	0.923	0.599
Perspective taking	0.927	0.941	0.696
Thriving at work	0.937	0.947	0.641
Structural social capital	0.764	0.894	0.808
Relational social capital	0.822	0.894	0.737
Employee creativity	0.955	0.962	0.717
Proactive personality	0.943	0.952	0.686

CA= Cronbach's Alpha, CR= Composite Reliability, AVE= Average Variance Extracted; NC = Nature Connectedness, ES = Ebullient Supervision, PA = Positive Affect, PT = Perspective Taking, TW = Thriving at Work, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, EC = Employee Creativity, PP = Proactive Personality

Continued Table 4.3: Outer Loadings

	EC	ES	NC	PA	PP	PT	RSC	SSC	TW
V7									0.832
V8									0.725
V9									0.822
V10									0.746
R1							0.864		
R2							0.878		
R3							0.834		
N4								0.882	
N5								0.916	
NC1			0.826						
NC2			0.830						
NC3			0.750						
NC4			0.840						
NC5			0.842						
NC6			0.829						
NC7			0.828						
PA1				0.816					
PA2				0.756					
PA3				0.783					
PA4				0.765					
PA7				0.725					
PA8				0.802					
PA9				0.770					
PA10				0.770					
PP1					0.868				
PP2					0.837				
PP3					0.835				
PP4					0.791				
PP5					0.831				
PP6					0.812				
PP7					0.848				
PP8					0.834				
PP9					0.796				
PT1						0.890			
PT2						0.847			
PT3						0.785			
PT4						0.799			
PT5						0.861			
PT6						0.828			
PT7						0.824			

Note: NC = Nature Connectedness, ES = Ebullient Supervision, PA = Positive Affect, PT = Perspective Taking, TW = Thriving at Work, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, EC = Employee Creativity, PP = Proactive Personality

4.3.1.3 Discriminant Validity

The recent approach of heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) was employed to establish discriminant validity. **Table: 4.4** shows that all constructs exhibited discriminant validity by scoring values below 0.90 in the criterion of heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016). Hence, the discriminant validity was found satisfactory.

TABLE 4.4: Discriminant Validity - Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Constructs	EC	ES	NC	PA	PP	PT	RSC	SSC	TW
EC									
ES	0.639								
NC	0.658	0.38							
PA	0.798	0.56	0.636						
PP	0.763	0.628	0.525	0.697					
PT	0.784	0.501	0.639	0.781	0.686				
RSC	0.827	0.552	0.657	0.794	0.721	0.78			
SSC	0.556	0.307	0.509	0.552	0.456	0.524	0.787		
TW	0.844	0.657	0.632	0.738	0.764	0.804	0.804	0.529	

EC=Employee Creativity, ES=Ebullient Supervision, NC=Nature Connectedness, PA=Positive Affect, PP=Proactive Personality, PT=Perspective Taking, RSC=Relational Social Capital, SSC=Structural Social Capital, TW=Thriving at Work

Thus, since the values of reliability, construct validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement model appeared satisfactory; the structural model was examined next.

4.3.2 Structural Model

Structural model analysis was carried out following the general guidelines by (Ringle et al., 2020). R^2 (coefficient of determination), Q^2 (predicted relevance), t-value, and out-sample prediction was assessed (Hair et al., 2019). To assess the

t-values, a 5000 bootstrapping procedure was employed (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020).

Table: 4.5 shows the outcomes. Nature connectedness's positive influence on employee creativity (H1) and ebullient supervision's positive influence on employee creativity (H2) was supported. Nature connectedness's positive influence on positive affect (H3) and ebullient supervision's positive influence on positive affect (H4) was also supported. Nature connectedness's positive influence on perspective-taking (H5) and ebullient supervision's positive influence on perspective-taking (H6) was supported. Nature connectedness's positive influence on thriving at work (H7), and ebullient supervision's positive influence on thriving at work (H8) was supported. Nature connectedness's positive influence on structural social capital (H9) was supported. However, ebullient supervision's positive influence on structural social capital (H10) was not supported ($\beta = -0.028$, $p = 0.655$). Nature connectedness's positive influence on relational social capital (H11) was supported. However, ebullient supervision's positive influence on relational social capital (H12) was not supported ($\beta = 0.066$, $p = 0.181$).

Positive affect's positive influence on perspective-taking (H13) was supported. However, positive affect's positive influence on thriving at work (H14) was not supported ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.205$). Positive affect positive influence on structural social capital (H15), and positive affect positive influence on relational social capital (H16) were supported. Positive affect's positive influence on employee creativity (H17) was supported.

Perspective-taking positive influence on thriving at work (H18) was supported. Perspective-taking positive influence on structural social capital (H19), and perspective taking positive influence on relational social capital (H20) were supported. Perspective taking positive influence on employee creativity (H21) was supported. Thriving at work's positive influence on employee creativity (H22) was supported. Lastly, while structural social capital's positive influence on employee creativity (H23) was not supported ($\beta = 0.012$, $p = 0.695$), relational social capital's positive influence on employee creativity (H24) was supported.

TABLE 4.5: Results of Structural Model Analysis (Hypotheses Testing)

Hypothesis	Relationships	β	SE	t-values	p-value	R ²	Q ²	Decision
H1	NC → EC	0.104	0.04	2.595	0.009	0.76	0.597	Supported
H2	ES → EC	0.142	0.042	3.373	0.001			Supported
H3	NC → PA	0.452	0.047	9.528	0.000	0.452	0.443	Supported
H4	ES → PA	0.361	0.050	7.255	0.000			Supported
H5	NC → PT	0.255	0.058	4.423	0.000	0.568	0.418	Supported
H6	ES → PT	0.117	0.051	2.281	0.023			Supported
H7	NC → TW	0.136	0.052	2.635	0.008	0.713	0.614	Supported
H8	ES → TW	0.218	0.044	4.987	0.000			Supported
H9	NC → SSC	0.194	0.069	2.818	0.005	0.272	0.197	Supported
H10	ES → SSC	-0.028	0.063	0.447	0.655			Not Supported
H11	NC → RSC	0.154	0.049	3.12	0.002	0.591	0.47	Supported
H12	ES → RSC	0.066	0.049	1.337	0.181			Not Supported
H13	PA → PT	0.506	0.054	9.354	0.000			Supported
H14	PA → TW	0.072	0.057	1.268	0.205			Not Supported
H15	PA → SSC	0.22	0.082	2.69	0.007			Supported
H16	PA → RSC	0.252	0.057	4.459	0.000			Supported
H17	PA → EC	0.196	0.049	4.016	0.000			Supported
H18	PT → TW	0.329	0.078	4.227	0.000			Supported
H19	PT → SSC	0.175	0.079	2.214	0.027			Supported
H20	PT → RSC	0.241	0.059	4.109	0.000			Supported
H21	PT → EC	0.129	0.061	2.138	0.033			Supported
H22	TW → EC	0.305	0.073	4.153	0.000			Supported
H23	SSC → EC	0.012	0.031	0.392	0.695			Not Supported
H24	RSC → EC	0.158	0.054	2.925	0.003			Supported

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$. EC = Employee Creativity; NC = Nature Connectedness, ES = Ebullient Supervision, PA = Positive Affect; PT = Perspective Taking, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, TW = Thriving at work

The change in dependent variable due to one or more independent variables is shown by R square. R^2 values are categorized as 0.02, 0.13, and 0.26 being weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively (Cohen, 1988). Hence, R^2 values for employee creativity (0.760), positive affect (0.452), perspective-taking (0.568), thriving at work (0.713), structural social capital (0.272), and relational social capital (0.591) were all substantial. In a structural model, Q square is the predictive relevance of the model, where Q^2 values (if >0) suggest well-reconstructed values and a good predictive relevance of the model (Hair et al., 2019). The current study's Q^2 values ranged from 0.197-0.614, thus, the model (Figure 4.1) depicted sufficient predictive relevance.

4.3.2.1 Mediation Analysis

Table: 4.6 shows mediation analyses based on the Preacher and Hayes (2008) method which involves a bootstrapping procedure including 5000 replications to obtain the t statistics and confidence interval. According to Rungtusanatham, Miller, and Boyer (2014), this method is the most suitable technique for evaluating mediation. The results show that H31 was not supported as the confidence intervals include zero, thus, structural social capital did not mediate the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity. Meanwhile, H25, H26, H27, H28, H29, H30, and H32 were supported as there was no zero in between the confidence intervals' upper and lower limits (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

4.3.2.2 Sequential Mediation Analysis

The current study's model proposed three mediating paths relating to nature connectedness and employee creativity, and three mediating paths relating to ebullient supervision and employee creativity.

TABLE 4.6: Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Relationships	β	SE	t-values	P-value	CI.95		Decision
						2.50%	97.50%	
H25	NC → PA → PT	0.229	0.032	7.054	0.000	0.167	0.295	Supported
H26	ES → PA → PT	0.183	0.034	5.4	0.000	0.118	0.25	Supported
H27	PA → PT → TW	0.167	0.044	3.788	0.000	0.088	0.257	Supported
H28	PA → PT → SSC	0.088	0.039	2.25	0.024	0.007	0.161	Supported
H29	PA → PT → RSC	0.122	0.03	4.109	0.000	0.063	0.179	Supported
H30	PT → TW → EC	0.1	0.03	3.306	0.001	0.048	0.165	Supported
H31	PT → SSC → EC	0.002	0.006	0.348	0.728	-0.009	0.017	Not Supported
H32	PT → RSC → EC	0.038	0.016	2.309	0.021	0.01	0.073	Supported

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$, EC = Employee Creativity; NC = Nature Connectedness, ES = Ebullient Supervision, PA = Positive Affect; PT = Perspective Taking, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, TW = Thriving at work.

TABLE 4.7: Sequential Mediation Analysis

H	Relationships	β	SE	t-values	P-value	Decision
H33a	NC → PA → PT → TW → EC	0.023	0.007	3.113	0.002	Supported
H33b	NC → PA → PT → SSC → EC	0.000	0.001	0.354	0.723	Not Supported
H33c	NC → PA → PT → RSC → EC	0.009	0.004	2.221	0.026	Supported
H34a	ES → PA → PT → TW → EC	0.018	0.006	3.111	0.002	Supported
H34b	ES → PA → PT → SSC → EC	0.000	0.001	0.352	0.725	Not Supported
H34c	ES → PA → PT → RSC → EC	0.007	0.003	2.106	0.035	Supported

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$, EC = Employee Creativity; NC = Nature Connectedness, ES = Ebullient Supervision, PA = Positive Affect; PT = Perspective Taking, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, TW = Thriving at work.

Table: 4.7 shows the outcomes. The path relating nature connectedness to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work was significant. The path relating nature connectedness to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and structural social capital was insignificant. The path relating nature connectedness to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and relational social capital was significant.

The path relating ebullient supervision to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work was significant. The path relating ebullient supervision to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and structural social capital was insignificant. The path relating ebullient supervision to employee creativity through positive affect, perspective-taking, and relational social capital was significant.

4.3.3 Out Sample Prediction

PLS-Predict was assessed to examine out-sample prediction ([Shmueli et al., 2019](#)), where if the LM-RMSE values exceed PLS-SEM values, then, there is high predictive relevance of the framework. **Table: 4.8** indicates a medium predictive relevance (70%) of the model as out of 40 items, for 12 items the value of LM-MAE was less than PLS-MAE.

4.3.4 Moderation

Further, proactive personality as a moderator was examined between perspective-taking and thriving at work, perspective-taking and structural social capital and perspective-taking and relational social capital. Interestingly, contrary to the literature, no moderation was proven. **Table: 4.9** displays the moderation results.

TABLE 4.8: Out-Sample Prediction

	LM_RMSE	PLS-SEM_RMSE
C1	0.835	0.822
C2	0.789	0.801
C4	0.973	0.953
C5	0.814	0.795
C6	0.946	0.955
C8	0.821	0.815
C10	0.886	0.884
C11	0.867	0.868
C12	0.818	0.839
C13	0.846	0.852
PA1	0.866	0.833
PA2	0.965	0.930
PA3	0.963	0.940
PA4	0.980	0.968
PA7	0.990	1.004
PA8	0.927	0.930
PA9	0.973	0.946
PA10	0.957	0.943
PT1	0.955	0.957
PT2	1.032	1.070
PT3	0.936	0.929
PT4	0.931	0.934
PT5	0.943	0.978
PT6	0.914	0.92
PT7	1.072	1.067
R1	0.877	0.840
R2	0.946	0.927
R3	0.951	0.934
N4	0.982	0.950
N5	0.989	0.963
L1	0.893	0.870
L2	0.928	0.895
L3	0.989	0.958
L4	0.948	0.908
L5	0.909	0.865
V6	0.912	0.865
V7	0.868	0.861
V8	0.941	0.905
V9	0.808	0.799
V10	1.013	0.966

Notes: C = Employee creativity; PT = Perspective taking, R = Relational social capital, N= Structural social capital, L and V = Thriving at work; PLS-MAE = PLS mean absolute error; and LM-MAE = Linear-regression mean absolute error

TABLE 4.9: Moderation Analysis

Hypotheses Relationships		β	SE	t-values	P value	CI.95	Decision
						2.50% 97.50%	
H35a	PT \rightarrow TW	0.329	0.078	4.227	0.000	0.182 0.485	
	PP \rightarrow TW	0.24	0.06	3.976	0.000	0.121 0.358	
	Interaction term \rightarrow TW	-0.037	0.044	0.832	0.405	-0.122 0.052	Reject
H35b	PT \rightarrow SSC	0.175	0.079	2.214	0.027	0.013 0.322	
	PP \rightarrow SSC	0.108	0.07	1.548	0.122	-0.028 0.245	
	Interaction term \rightarrow SSC	0.07	0.052	1.336	0.182	-0.029 0.176	Reject
H35c	PT \rightarrow RSC	0.241	0.059	4.109	0.000	0.121 0.35	
	PP \rightarrow RSC	0.194	0.06	3.252	0.001	0.075 0.309	
	Interaction term \rightarrow RSC	-0.014	0.04	0.357	0.721	-0.092 0.061	Reject

Note: PT = Perspective Taking, RSC = Relational Social Capital, SSC = Structural Social Capital, TW = Thriving at work.

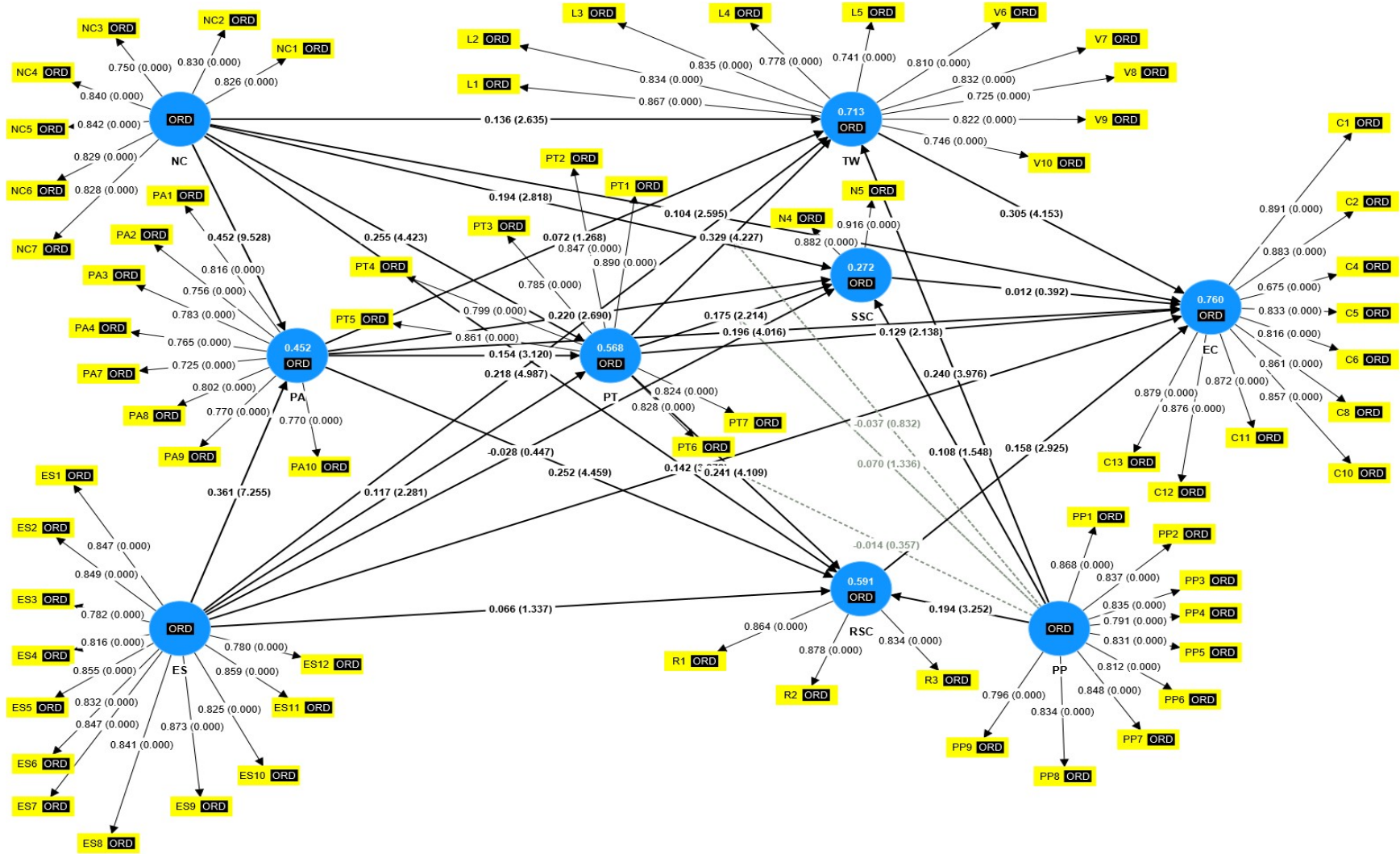


FIGURE 4.1: The Structural Model

4.4 Summary of Hypotheses Results

TABLE 4.10: Hypotheses Statement

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H2	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H3	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on positive affect.	Supported
H4	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on positive affect.	Supported
H5	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on perspective-taking.	Supported
H6	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on perspective-taking.	Supported
H7	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on thriving at work.	Supported
H8	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on thriving at work.	Supported
H9	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on structural social capital.	Supported
H10	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on structural social capital.	Not Supported
H11	Nature connectedness has a positive influence on relational social capital.	Supported
H12	Ebullient supervision has a positive influence on relational social capital.	Not Supported
H13	Positive affect has a positive influence on perspective-taking.	Supported
H14	Positive affect has a positive influence on thriving at work.	Not Supported
H15	Positive affect has a positive influence on structural social capital.	Supported
H16	Positive affect has a positive influence on relational social capital.	Supported

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H17	Positive affect has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H18	Perspective-taking has a positive influence on thriving at work.	Supported
H19	Perspective-taking has a positive influence on structural social capital.	Supported
H20	Perspective-taking has a positive influence on relational social capital.	Supported
H21	Perspective-taking has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H22	Thriving at work has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H23	Structural social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Not Supported
H24	Relational social capital has a positive influence on employee creativity.	Supported
H25	Positive affect mediates the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective-taking.	Supported
H26	Positive affect mediates the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking.	Supported
H27	Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work.	Supported
H28	Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital.	Supported
H29	Perspective-taking mediates the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital.	Supported
H30	Thriving at work mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity.	Supported
H31	Structural social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.	Supported
H32	Relational social capital mediates the relationship perspective taking and employee creativity.	Supported
H33a	Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work.	Supported

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H33b	Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.	Supported
H33c	Nature connectedness is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.	Supported
H34a	Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work.	Not Supported
H34b	Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital.	Not Supported
H34c	Ebullient supervision is indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital.	Supported
H35a	Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.	Not Supported
H35b	Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and structural social capital such that a highly proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.	Not Supported
H35c	Proactive personality moderates the relationship between perspective-taking and relational social capital such that high proactive personality strengthens this relationship and vice versa.	Not Supported

Chapter 5

Discussion, Implications, and Future Directions

The present study aimed to explore the role of nature connectedness and a recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision in stimulating employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Drawing upon the affective events theory, conservation of resources theory, attention restoration theory, and the broaden-and-build theory, this study explores the affect-cognition-resource-outcome pathway through which nature connectedness and ebullient supervision transfer its impact on employee creativity. In doing so, this study empirically examined some new linkages, making it an original, and adding novel contributions to the management literature. This opens up opportunities for scholars to develop research in the underexplored area of ebullient supervision. Further, this study provides a new pathway to stimulate positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, structural social capital, relational social capital, and, ultimately, employee creativity in the hospitality industry by encouraging being connected to the natural environment and a leadership style that promotes having fun at work.

In this chapter, results are explored in-depth to extract the meaning and relevance of the findings. Accordingly, in Section 5.1 the hypothesized relationships are discussed with justifications to answer the research questions. Section 5.2 argues both theoretical and practical implications, and in Section 5.3 the limitations and future directions are suggested. Lastly, Section 5.4 includes the conclusion.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H1)

This study found a positive relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity, thus H1 was supported. This finding reveals that employees experiencing nature connectedness are propelled toward employee creativity. This finding is supported by the recent meta-analysis ([Pritchard et al., 2020](#)) suggesting that nature connectedness leads to higher levels of employee personal growth. However, the current finding adds more to this meta-analysis's suggestions, as in the current study employee creativity was supervisor reported; whereas, in the meta-analysis, it was self-reported. This finding also contributes to the literature on nature connectedness and employee creativity linkage since this area is very less explored in literature.

5.1.2 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H2)

The results show that ebullient supervision positively influenced employee creativity (H2). This is an important finding as the research gave ample evidence of fun working environments generating positive employee outcomes, it became important to investigate the impact of such a leadership style that intentionally creates fun at work. In line with AET ([Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996](#)), this finding makes a novel contribution to the management literature by empirically supporting this new linkage. Employing the recently introduced scale of ebullient supervision ([Ford et al., 2019](#)), this research provides empirical evidence that ebullient supervision stimulates employee creativity. Although fun at work is known to lead to employee creativity (e.g. [Boekhorst et al., 2021](#); [Yang & Chen, 2023](#)), no previous study had empirically examined a leadership style that intentionally creates fun at work in the context of employee creativity. This finding lends support to the literature advocating the importance of positive leadership in facilitating employee

creativity (see [Lee et al., 2020](#)). This finding indicates the ability of an ebullient supervisor to stimulate employee creativity. Accordingly, as a practical strategy, the hotel industry practitioners may encourage an ebullient supervision style of leadership amongst existing supervisors (e.g., being cheerful, greeting, supportive, use of appropriate humor, celebrating and appreciating achievements), or consider such characteristics while hiring for supervisory positions, in order encourage creative behaviors amongst employees. Having management supporting fun at work may also attract and retain competent young millennials as they seek fun at work ([Alatalo et al., 2018](#)). Future research may consider examining the impact of ebullient supervision on employee attraction and retention.

5.1.3 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Positive Affect (H3)

This study proposed that nature connectedness will positively influence positive affect (H3). The results of this study confirmed this hypothesis. This finding is in line with previous studies providing evidence that connecting with nature leads to experiencing positive affect ([McMahan et al., 2018](#); [Vanwallegem & Mirowska, 2020](#)).

5.1.4 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Positive Affect (H4)

This study proposed a novel linkage of ebullient supervision positively influencing positive affect. The results show that the relationship between ebullient supervision and positive affect (H4) was supported. This is an original contribution to the literature of leadership and positive affect as this relationship was previously unexplored in the literature. In line with AET ([Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996](#)) and literature advocating that having a supportive and fun working environment induces a positive affect on employees ([Boekhorst et al., 2021](#); [Men & Yue, 2019](#); [Michel et al., 2019](#); [Tetteh, Dei Mensah, Opata, & Mensah, 2021](#)), this finding

confirms the ability of ebullient supervision to stimulate positive affect in employees. Happy employees are sought by organizations because not only positive affect can undo negative emotions (Behnke et al., 2023; Junça-Silva, Silva, & Caetano, 2022), but also due to numerous positive individual and organizational outcomes they (see Diener et al., 2020). Accordingly, as a practical strategy, ebullient supervision may be employed by hotel industry practitioners to stimulate positive affect amongst employees.

5.1.5 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Perspective-Taking (H5)

The relationship between nature connectedness and perspective-taking (H5) was supported. This finding aligns with previous studies that drew upon attention restoration theory, suggesting that connecting with nature helps to replenish the depleting attentional resources which, then, improves directed attention, enhances attentional capacity, improves cognitive performance, leading to perspective taking (e.g. Leong et al., 2014; Passmore & Holder, 2017). Hence, this might be the reason that the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective-taking was supported in this study.

5.1.6 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Perspective-Taking (H6)

This study proposed a novel linkage of ebullient supervision positively influencing perspective-taking. This novel relationship was found to be held in the finding of this study, thus, H6 was supported. These findings empirically confirm that ebullient supervision stimulates perspective-taking in employees, helping them to generate multiple alternative viewpoints. This is an original contribution to the literature on leadership and perspective-taking as no prior study exists proposing or empirically examining this relationship. However, it does align with literature advocating that a supportive leader creates a mentally non-threatening working environment, promoting perspective-taking in employees (Sonenshein et al., 2013).

Moreover, this finding is also in agreement with the literature suggesting that humor influences cognitive processes, and increases mental flexibility, leading to unconventional thinking which involves a perspective shift (Dixon, 1980; Strick, Holland, Van Baaren, & Van Knippenberg, 2009). An ebullient supervisor is a supportive leader who uses humor at work to provide fun working environment (Ford et al., 2019). This might be the reason that the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking was supported.

5.1.7 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Thriving at Work (H7)

In the current study, a positive relationship between nature connectedness and thriving at work (H7) was hypothesized. The results show that nature connectedness positively influences thriving at work. Thus, H6 was supported. These findings make a unique contribution to the scant literature on the relationship between nature connectedness and thriving at work. (Jordan & Chawla, 2022; Kuo, Barnes, & Jordan, 2022; Kuo et al., 2021; Nisbet, Shaw, & Lachance, 2020; Norwood et al., 2021). Results in support of this finding suggest that nature connectedness makes employees learn frequently at work and they see themselves as continuously learning. Results further suggest that employees experiencing nature connectedness find themselves developing at work due to increased learning. Similarly, the results suggest that employees experiencing nature connectedness felt lively, energetic, and full of spirit. They were alert and awake, looking forward to work everyday. Hence, the findings of this study suggest that nature connectedness, simultaneously, leads to vitality and learning; thus, resulting in thriving at work.

5.1.8 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Thriving at Work (H8)

The results show that the relationship between ebullient supervision and thriving at work (H8) was supported. This is a novel contribution to the management

literature on leadership, fun at work, and thriving at work as this relationship was not previously proposed nor empirically investigated, making the current study an original.

Consistent with COR theory, this finding indicates the ability of ebullient supervision to build a personal resource of thriving at work. The findings suggest that if a leader intentionally creates a fun working environment, employees will learn and feel energized, simultaneously. This finding specifies the benefits of having an ebullient supervisor towards making employees energetic (vitality) and increasing their knowledge and skills (learning); thus, making them thrive at work. This means that an ebullient supervisor provides pleasurable opportunities for employees to learn often, to continually improve themselves, to develop as a person; and thus increasing their competencies and knowledge. This finding also means that an ebullient supervisor provides enjoyable opportunities for employees that make them feel alive, energetic, vital, full of spirit, alert, awake, and looking forward to each new day; thus leading to their increased vitality. Overall, this finding suggests that an ebullient supervisor makes employees thrive at work by enabling them to learn and feel vitality, simultaneously.

The above finding is consistent with the fun at work literature advocating that playful working environments make employees curious to learn to handle challenges and generate energy in them, thus, stimulating thriving at work (Lee et al., 2022; Scharp et al., 2023). Moreover, this finding is also consistent with scholars who have previously highlighted that when a leader is supportive of employees, giving them compliments and appreciating their achievements; employees learn and develop (Lundqvist et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022). This gives employees a feeling of being competent and doing something meaningful which promotes their vitality (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021). Since an ebullient supervisor deliberately ensures providing fun at work for employees and is supportive of them (Ford et al., 2019), it facilitated the development of both vitality and learning, thus thriving at work. Hence, this might be the reason that the relationship between ebullient supervision and thriving at work was supported in this study. Organizations seek thriving employees as they represent a crucial resource

in achieving competitive advantage (Liu & Ge, 2020; Zhai et al., 2020). Accordingly, hotel industry practitioners may employ ebullient supervision as a practical human resource strategy to generate employee psychological and intellectual resources, such as thriving at work; leading them to both learn and feel energetic at work.

5.1.9 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Structural Social Capital (H9)

This study investigated the relationship between nature connectedness and structural social capital. Results show that nature connectedness positively influenced structural social capital. Hence, H9 was supported.

Results in support of this finding suggest that employees experiencing nature connectedness socially interacted, building new contacts through existing contacts. Their current pool of network links enabled them to build further social contacts. This finding means that nature connectedness enables people to make more social bonds. This is a unique contribution since not much is found in the literature regarding nature connectedness and social capital. However, the literature argues that nature exposure (an antecedent of nature connectedness) leads to increased social capital, in terms of, facilitating social interactions and building stronger ties (Hadavi, 2017; Sliter, Jones, & Devine, 2017).

Further, attention restoration theory also advocates the role of natural environment exposure enhancing the individual's concentration level by breaking away from habitual activities, facilitating social interactions. Thus, nature connectedness may serve as an importance influence to improve the social fabric and enhance structural social capital.

5.1.10 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Structural Social Capital (H10)

Surprisingly, the linkage between ebullient supervision and structural social capital (H10) was not supported. One reason might be that fun at work activities mostly

promote productive contests, building competition amongst employees which could lead to splitting the unity between them to be amongst the winners and not losers. This could result in intrapersonal conflicts and severed relationships (Sliter et al., 2017; Hommelhoff, 2019), thus, not creating social ties. Similarly, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) study suggests that when goal conflicts occur at work, jealousy and role conflicts may occur among individuals which can reduce communication among them. Although fun at work can reap desired work outcomes in hospitality firms, managers need to frame fun at work activities carefully and according to the employee characteristics and desired outcomes (Michel et al., 2019). These studies suggested that young and old employees differently perceive managerial support for fun; thus, fun at work may not be appreciated by all. Similarly, Everett (2011) and Lamm and Meeks (2009) studies argued that for millennials, fun at work may be a need but for elder generations, it might seem counterproductive; viewing the "fun culture" cynically, These studies give a notion that, perhaps, fun is not equally valued among all employees.

Another reason could be that use of humor is involved in fun at work, and different types of humor can have positive or negative outcomes respectively (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). However, humor type was not the scope of this study, future researchers can investigate this arena for a better understanding of how the type of humor used by an ebullient supervisor can influence a social capital generation. Thus, the key implication of this particular finding of the current study could be that having too much fun might have adverse consequences concerning social capital. Future research should deliberate on this unanticipated result and investigate factors that may help to build the relationship between ebullient supervision and structural social capital.

5.1.11 Nature Connectedness has a Positive Influence on Relational Social Capital (H11)

The relationship between nature connectedness and relational social capital (H11) was supported. This finding means that when people feel connected with nature, they develop high-quality, trust worthy relationships. This is a unique contribution

since not much is found in the literature regarding nature connectedness and social capital.

This finding suggests that employee experiencing nature connectedness avoided making such demands that would damage their colleague's interest and felt that their colleagues did the same. Moreover, the employees felt that even if an opportunity was provided, they didn't took advantage of eachother. Further, the results of this hypothesis also suggest that employees experiencing nature connectedness felt that their fellow colleagues fulfilled their promises.

Attention restoration theory also advocates that nature exposure, (an antecedent of nature connectedness) allows individuals to connect with nature which builds their social cohesion ([Jennings & Bamkole, 2019](#)). Social cohesion shares a positive relationship between social interactions and feelings of trust ([Bazrafshan, Tabrizi, Bauer, & Kienast, 2021](#)). Thus, nature connectedness may serve as an importance influence to improve the social fabric and enhance relational social capital.

5.1.12 Ebullient Supervision has a Positive Influence on Relational Social Capital (H12)

Surprisingly, the relationship between ebullient supervision and relational social capital (H12) was not supported. One reason could be that fun at work involves the use of humor and there are different types of humor, having positive or negative outcomes respectively. Positive humor evokes positive emotions, acts as a social lubricant in building social bonds, high-quality relationships with workers, harmony, and cohesion and decreases interpersonal conflicts ([Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012](#)), and negative humor type can put others down, make them feel targeted, induce hostility among coworkers, and reduce satisfaction and cooperation among coworkers ([Martin et al., 2003](#)). All these can result in less mingling and more isolation among employees. In the present thesis, the hospitality employees might have perceived aggressive humor (irony or sarcasm) due to which ebullient supervision did not lead to relational social capital. However, since the type of humor was not the scope of this study, future researchers can investigate this arena for a better understanding of how the type of humor can

influence a relational social capital generation. Future research should deliberate on this unanticipated result and investigate factors which may help to build the relationship between ebullient supervision and relational social capital.

5.1.13 Positive Affect has a Positive Influence on Perspective-Taking (H13)

The impact of positive affect on perspective-taking (H13) was supported. This can be justified by the broaden-and-build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)) which suggests that once individuals experience positive emotions, along with a good feel, it expands their traditional ways of thinking; encouraging exploration and integration of information in new ways. According to this theory, when people feel good, they feel secure and safe, and experience broadened attention scope along with expanded thoughts and actions repertoires. As employees experienced positive affect, their thinking became flexible, encouraging new ways of integrating information, resulting in better perceiving of others' opinions, feelings, and needs. This current study's findings are also supported by the study of [Hobfoll et al. \(2018\)](#) suggesting that positive affect may evoke such exploratory cognitive behavior that enables integrating information in new ways. The results suggest that employees experiencing positive affect were able to imagine others feelings before criticising them. Even if the employees thought that they were right, they still would listen to other people points of view. Moreover, employees experiencing positive affect try to understand things from others perspectives, knowing that two sides exist to every situation. Hence, these might be the reasons that positive affect in hotel employees positively influenced their perspective-taking.

5.1.14 Positive Affect has a Positive Influence on Thriving at Work (H14)

Contrary to the literature, the results show that positive affect did not influence thriving at work. Thus, H14 was not supported. One reason could be that since positive emotions signal well-being and satisfaction, overwhelming positive

emotions may make individuals less motivated to exert efforts (Davis & Mark, 2009). Happiness brings a feeling of being deeply satisfied, signaling fulfillment of goals; and that may slow down a person, making them more laid back than thriving (Tamir & Bigman, 2018). Similarly, an experimental study in the academic domain showed that when instructors displayed happiness to students, they performed poorly in learning; whereas, when they showed anger, students learned more; and when instructors conveyed happy expressions, it signaled satisfactory current performance to students, and hence they didn't put any efforts for further improvements (van Doorn, van Kleef, & van der Pligt, 2014). This means emotional regulation is important and while organizations make efforts to induce positive emotions amongst employees, it must also ensure emotional regulation trainings to keep a balance.

5.1.15 Positive Affect has a Positive Influence on Structural Social Capital (H15)

The impact of positive affect on structural social capital (H15) was supported. This finding is of significance as it contributes to the underexplored literature on positive affect and social capital. This finding suggests that employees experiencing positive affect socially mingled and made new contacts through their existing contacts. They were able to generate more network links or social contacts via their current colleagues.

Organizations seek the presence of social contacts and positive interactions play a key role in human resource management because these processes, through enabling employees to communicate and collaborate more effectively, may improve employee performance (Moqbel & Nah, 2017). Consistent to the broaden-and-build theory, this finding suggests positive affect encourages individuals towards mingling or socializing with their environments. Positive emotions broaden cognitive style, making it more flexible; it may help them to be more open to socializing and build stronger connections socially (Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019). This might be the reason for the positive impact of positive affect on structural social capital.

5.1.16 Positive Affect has a Positive Influence on Relational Social Capital (H16)

The impact of positive affect on relational social capital (H16) was supported. This finding is of significance as it contributes to the underexplored literature on positive affect and social capital. This finding suggests that employees experiencing positive affect avoided making demands that could damage their colleagues interests and felt their colleagues did the same for them. These employees also felt that neither them, nor their colleagues took advantage of anyone, even if the opportunity arose. Moreover, this finding suggests that employees experiencing positive affect felt that their colleagues kept their promises. This finding is supported by the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) suggesting that positive emotions broaden one's traditional ways of thinking, making them more flexible and empathic. When people are happy, (Satici et al., 2016). This might be the reason for the positive impact of positive affect on relational social capital.

5.1.17 Positive Affect has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H17)

The relationship between positive affect and employee creativity (H17) was supported. This finding is consistent with B&B theory (Fredrickson, 2004) advocating positive emotions expand cognition capacity and provide multiple alternatives of actions and personal resources which may result in creative outcomes. This finding suggests that employee experiencing positive affect were considered by their supervisors as suggesting new ways to achieve goals, and coming up with novel practical ideas to enhance performance. Further, such employees were considered by their supervisor to look out for new technologies and processes to enhance quality. They are seen as risk takers, promoting champion ideas to others and exhibiting creativity whenever they find an opportunity to do so. The finding also suggests that employees experiencing positive affect were viewed by their supervisors as developing sufficient plans for new ideas implementation, coming up with innovative solutions to the problems.

Further, the current finding also aligns with scholars, who have previously advocated positive affect as a prevalent antecedent of employee creativity, suggesting that people tend to be more creative when experiencing positive emotions, producing new and useful ideas which may lead to employee creativity (Diener et al., 2020; Hwang & Choi, 2020; Ivcevic et al., 2021). As positive affect is experienced, creative behaviors will be exhibited. Hence, this might be the reason that the link between positive affect and employee creativity was supported in this study. Accordingly, this study adds to the literature advocating that positive emotions matter in real-life working environments, especially in the hospitality industry, where frequent and prolonged interactions between employees-employees and employees-customers are a daily feature.

5.1.18 Perspective-Taking has a Positive Influence on Thriving at Work (H18)

The results show that perspective-taking positively influenced thriving at work. Thus, H18 was supported. This was an underexplored relationship in the literature. This is a novel finding as although previous studies have examined perspective-taking with learning, the link between perspective-taking and vitality is under-explored. Thus, this study fulfills this gap by empirically finding that perspective-taking leads to thriving at work (both learning and vitality). This finding suggests that employees experiencing perspective-taking were able to learn continuously and, thus, perceived themselves to be developing at work. Moreover, they also felt alive, alert, in spirit, and energetic; making them feeling excited for every new day. Thus, employees experiencing perspective-taking were able to learn and feel vitality, together, leading to thriving at work.

Hence, they experienced the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) advocating the building up of personal resources when momentary thoughts are broadened, justifies this finding. This theory states that individuals propel toward learning when cognitive flexibility is experienced (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). In addition, as perspective-taking reduces perceptions of dissimilarity, individuals experience vitality and a sense of being alive (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009).

Since, thriving at work is characterized jointly by learning and vitality (Kleine et al., 2019); thus, the results suggest that perspective-taking stimulates both vitality and learning, creating an overall accelerative drive, leading to thriving at work. Accordingly, as thriving represents a joint presence of learning and vitality, hotel employees experienced it as their cognitive abilities broadened.

5.1.19 Perspective-Taking has a Positive Influence on Structural Social Capital (H19)

The effect of perspective-taking on structural social capital (H19) was supported. This finding aligns with the literature arguing that perspective-taking is a prerequisite for successful social bonds (Davis, 2018). This finding suggests that employees experiencing perspective-taking were socially interacting, making new contacts through their present contacts. Through their current colleagues, they were able to develop more social contacts.

Additionally, broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) also argues that cognitive flexibility develops social resources because the expansion of thoughts and inventory actions develop social resources as positive emotions encourage individuals to mingle or socialize with their environments. This widening of the perceptual access of individuals in the shape of perspective-taking enables understanding and approaching others, acquiring social resources, and establishing social bonds (Yu et al., 2021). This might be the reason that the relationship between perspective-taking and structural social capital was supported.

5.1.20 Perspective-Taking has a Positive Influence on Relational Social Capital (H20)

The effect of perspective-taking on relational social capital (H20) was also supported. This finding suggests that employees experiencing perspective taking felt that neither them nor their colleagues made such demands that would harm respective interests. Moreover, perspective-taking employees were also of the view

that neither party took advantage of anyone, even if an opportunity was presented. They also perceived that promises were kept by their colleagues.

This finding aligns with the literature arguing that perspective-taking is a prerequisite for successful cooperative behaviors because perspective-taking allows the integration of multiple points of view that reduce dissimilarity conflicts among members (Davis, 2018; Zhou et al., 2017).

Moreover, broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) also advocates development of social resources as a result of cognitive flexibility. This might be the reason that the relationship between perspective-taking and structural social capital was supported.

5.1.21 Perspective-Taking has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H21)

The results show that the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity (H21) was supported. This finding is supported by the literature advocating that creativity requires flexibility in thinking. For example, a recent study argues that creativity requires being attentive to others and perspective-taking provides the cognitive flexibility of seeing from alternative viewpoints; enabling divergent thinking which allows connecting unrelated ideas, creating different novel solutions to a problem, and may result in employee creativity (Hui et al., 2021). Moreover, in addition to generating more ideas, perspective-taking also ensures a more constructive evaluation and comparison among them; helping employees to choose new and more useful ideas, thus, leading to creativity (Wang et al., 2021). This finding is also consistent with the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) which suggests that positive emotions expand the traditional ways of thinking, bringing flexibility in understanding others' points of view; thus, encouraging exploration and integration of information in new ways and may lead towards creative outcomes. Cognitive flexibility fortifies employee creativity by broadening the thinking patterns of employees. Thus, employees with cognitive flexibility perform better on creative problem-solving tasks. Cognitive flexibility enables individuals to undertake multiple and diverse available information and to process

them effectively to find solutions and generate new ideas. By considering others' perspectives, a standard is provided against which an employee can determine the selection or discarding of ideas based on their uselessness. Thus, when other perspectives are considered, more new and useful ideas get generated.

5.1.22 Thriving at Work has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H22)

The results show that the relationship between thriving at work and employee creativity (H22) was supported. This finding is important because employee creativity was supervisor rated and not self-reported. This finding suggests that thriving employees were considered by their supervisors as risk takers, coming up with new practical ideas and ways to achieve goals, improve performance, and quality. Further, supervisors considered thriving employees eager to seek new technologies and processes, being creative and coming up with adequate plans to implement innovative solutions. This finding is consistent with the previous literature advocating thriving at work to be a well-recognized predictor of employee creativity (Shahid et al., 2020). Organizations seek engaged and energetic employees due to their higher creative performance (Ahmed, Umrani, Zaman, Rajput, & Aziz, 2020).

The employees in this study found themselves to be learning often and developing continuously and also felt energetic and alive. Their supervisors reported the employees to be suggesting new ideas and techniques, having risk-taking attitudes, devising creative resolutions to problems. Hence, this might be the reason that the relationship between thriving at work and employee creativity was supported.

5.1.23 Structural Social Capital has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H23)

Contrary to the literature, the linkage between structural social capital and employee creativity (H23) was not supported. This means that employees building social contacts were not perceived by their supervisor to come up with novel and

useful ideas. The supervisors didn't not find such employees as being risk takers or coming up with sufficient new plans and ideas to improve quality or performance. One reason might be high job insecurity in Asian countries where employees who fear their job loss are avoidant to actively participating in sharing their new ideas and are more inclined towards knowledge hiding (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020). A recent systematic review (Abdillah et al., 2022) has also suggested that currently high unemployment rates have afflicted the Asian region. Particularly, the hospitality sector in Pakistan, like other South Asian countries, suffers from job insecurity as the majority of the employees are on contract-based employment (Mirza & Akram, 2022). In recent times, due to the pandemic, the hospitality industry in Pakistan has suffered immensely, negatively affecting revenues and increasing employability fears among employees (Javed, 2020). Hence, while employees become comfortable and socialize with others, yet to outperform others due to high competition and the threat of unemployment, they might not intentionally share novel ideas. Such findings have theoretical and practical implications.

5.1.24 Relational Social Capital has a Positive Influence on Employee Creativity (H24)

Consistent with the literature, the relationship between relational social capital and employee creativity (H24) was supported. This finding suggests that employees having high-quality relationships, characterized by trust, were considered by their supervisors as being able to generate novel and useful ideas. Supervisors reported such employees to be contributing new plans and ideas to improve current processes, performance and quality. Supervisors reported employees having high-quality relationships to be risk takers and pursuing new technologies and methods.

Creativity, inherently, is an impulsive and risky endeavor and high-quality relationships at work reduce the perceived risks and create a mentally safe environment that increases the willingness of employees to be engaged in creative actions (Zhang et al., 2014). Hence, relational social capital can crucially facilitates employee creativity. Moreover, this finding aligns with literature suggesting that in the Asian

context, social ties are of great importance, and maintaining good relationships with colleagues matters the most, especially, for creativity (Huang & Luthans, 2015). Accordingly, hotel industry practitioners may enable hotel employees to develop strong interpersonal relations, thus, relational social capital; which later may translate into employee creativity.

5.1.25 Positive Affect Mediates the Relationship between Nature Connectedness and Perspective-Taking (H25)

Positive affect mediated the relationship between nature connectedness and perspective taking. Hence, H25 was supported. Attention restoration theory suggests that nature's restorative effect generates a positive affect (Ulrich, 1983). Broaden and build theory advocates that positive affect broadens cognitive thinking, bringing more flexibility in thinking styles, and generating multiple alternative routes of doing things. Hence, hotel and restaurant employees experiencing nature connectedness generated positive affect which led to their cognitive flexibility in the shape of perspective-taking. Thus, drawing on attention restoration theory and broaden and build theory, positive affect has been justified as a mediator between nature connectedness and perspective-taking.

5.1.26 Positive Affect Mediates the Relationship between Ebullient Supervision and Perspective-Taking (H26)

Positive affect mediated the relationship between ebullient supervision and perspective taking. Hence, H26 was supported. This is a novel contribution to the literature since no empirical evidence existed before this study indicating positive affect as a mediator between ebullient supervision and perspective taking. Affective events theory suggests that since fun at work is a positive work event, ebullient supervision will lead to positive affect (Boekhorst et al., 2021; Michel et al., 2019). Also, supportive leaders generate a positive affect on their employees (Patzelt et al., 2021). According to the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson,

2004), positive affect broadens cognition, enabling the merging of multiple points of view; represented by perspective-taking in this study. An ebullient supervisor deliberately provides fun at work and is supportive (Ford et al., 2019). Hence, the hotel and restaurant employees reported of having ebullient supervisors experienced positive affect which led to their perspective-taking. Thus, drawing on affective events theory and the broaden and build theory, positive affect has been justified as a mediator between ebullient supervision and perspective-taking.

5.1.27 Perspective-Taking Mediates the Relationship between Positive Affect and Thriving at Work (H27)

Although positive affect did not lead to thriving at work (H14), interestingly, perspective-taking completely mediated the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work; thus, H27 was supported. This means that perspective-taking fully explains the association between positive affect and thriving at work. This is an interesting finding as the results show that the entire mechanism of how positive affect builds skills and resources in the shape of thriving at work, which then leads to employee creativity (H22) is through perspective taking. Hence, only when positive affect will lead to perspective taking, then, thriving at work will happen. Thus, organizations need to develop such strategies where inducing positive emotion amongst employees generates cognitive flexibility in the form of perspective-thinking, to thrive at work.

This finding is also in line with broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), positive affect improves cognitive functioning, broadening the thinking and action inventories of an individual which allows them to consider multiple alternatives of actions, behaviors, and thinking styles; resulting in the development of resources of psychological, social, physical or intellectual resources. Positive mood broadens individuals' thought-action repertoires, helping them to build personal resources which contribute toward behavioral tendencies. Thriving at work represents both psychological and intellectual resources as it is a joint representation of vitality and learning. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, perspective-taking has been justified as a mediator between positive affect and thriving at work.

5.1.28 Perspective-Taking Mediates the Relationship between Positive Affect and Structural Social Capital (H28)

Perspective-taking mediated the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital. Hence, H28 was supported. This finding is a novel contribution because, before this study, the mediating effect of perspective-taking between positive affect and structural social capital was yet to be examined. According to this finding, positive affect transmits the effect on structural social capital through the mechanism of perspective-taking. This can be justified by the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). This theory suggests that in addition to making one's thinking more flexible, positive emotions also increase an individual's social resources. Positive emotions develop cognitive broadening which may lead to the development of social capacities of an individual. This might be the reason for the positive impact of positive affect on structural social capital and relational social capital via perspective-taking. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, perspective-taking has been justified as a mediator between positive affect and relational social capital.

5.1.29 Perspective-Taking Mediates the Relationship between Positive Affect and Relational Social Capital (H29)

Perspective-taking mediated the relationship between positive affect and relational social capital. Hence, H29 was supported. This finding is a novel contribution because, before this study, the mediating effect of perspective-taking between positive affect and relational social capital was yet to be examined. According to this finding, positive affect transmits the influence on relational social capital through the mechanism of perspective-taking. This can be justified by the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004). This theory argues that positive affect can broaden the inventory of thoughts and actions which can develop social resources. Drawing upon this theory, as positive affect enlarged the attention and cognition scope

leading to cognitive flexibility which promotes unusual perspectives, hotel and restaurant employees experienced perspective taking which improved interpersonal relations by facilitating social coordination and understanding, and building trust. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, perspective-taking has been justified as a mediator between positive affect and relational social capital.

5.1.30 Thriving at Work Mediates Relationship

Perspective-Taking and Employee Creativity (H30)

Thriving at work was found to mediate between nature perspective-taking and employee creativity. Hence, H30 was supported. This is a unique contribution of this study because the mediating effect of thriving at work between perspective-taking and employee creativity was yet to be examined. Hence, this study, drawing on broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), has justified thriving at work as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity. This theory states that positive emotions expand one's mindset which leads to the building of personal resources, such as, intellectual and psychological. This in turn helps to promote creative and exploratory actions. Thriving at work is a positive psychological and intellectual resource that makes individuals both learn and feel energetic, yielding positive behavioral results. Hence, in this study, thriving at work acted as an important mechanism for transmitting the impact of perspective-taking on employee creativity.

5.1.31 Structural Social Capital Mediates the Relationship

Perspective Taking and Employee Creativity (H31)

Structural social capital mediated the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity. Hence, H31 was supported. This is a novel finding as, before the current study, the mediating effect of structural social capital between perspective-taking and employee creativity was yet to be examined. Hence, this study, drawing on broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), has justified structural social capital as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee

creativity. According to this theory, broadening thought actions inventory result in the development of social resources which then cause personal growth in the final transformation stage. As hotel and restaurant employees experiment with the broadening of thought actions inventory in the shape of perspective taking, it facilitated them in building social connections. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, structural social capital has been justified as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity.

5.1.32 Relational Social Capital Mediates the Relationship Perspective Taking and Employee Creativity (H32)

Relational social capital mediated the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity. Hence, H32 was supported. This is a novel finding as, before the current study, the mediating effect of relational social capital between perspective-taking and employee creativity was yet to be examined. Hence, this study, drawing on broaden and build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)), has justified relational social capital as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity. According to this theory, broadened cognitive style leads to social resource building, and thus, creative outcomes. Trustworthy relationships result in employee creativity ([Chen et al., 2021](#)). The findings suggest that as hotel and restaurant employees understood others' points of view and practiced perspective-taking, the impact was transmitted on employee creativity via maintaining high-quality social relationships in the shape of relational social capital. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, relational social capital has been justified as a mediator between perspective-taking and employee creativity.

5.1.33 Sequential Mediation between Nature Connectedness and Employee Creativity

Drawing upon broaden and build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)), the current study proposed that nature connectedness would induce a positive affect in hotel and

restaurant employees which would initiate the broadening process of perspective-taking, leading to the building of personal psychological and intellectual resources of thriving at work, and social resources of structural social capital and relational social capital. These personal resources will then stimulate employee creativity.

In this study, three unique paths were proposed suggesting the sequential mediation between nature connectedness and employee creativity. The findings revealed that nature connectedness was indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work. Hence, H33a was supported, in line with the theory. Similarly, consistent with the theory, the findings also revealed that nature connectedness was indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and relational social capital. Thus, H33c was also supported. These findings make novel contributions to the literature as, before this study, no empirical evidence existed regarding the sequential mediating role of positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and relational social capital between nature connectedness and employee creativity. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, the sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work between the relationship of nature connectedness and employee creativity; and the sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital between the relationship of nature connectedness and employee creativity have been justified.

However, the findings revealed that nature connectedness was not indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and structural social capital. Hence, contrary to broaden and build theory, H33b was not supported. Although nature connectedness did generate a positive affect leading to perspective-taking and structural social capital, structural social capital didn't stimulate employee creativity (H23); hence this sequential mediation was not supported.

Therefore, the results suggest that nature connectedness induced a positive affect amongst hotel and restaurant employees which enabled their perspective-taking ability, making them thrive at work and build trustworthy relationships; ultimately

leading to employee creativity. These findings are of importance as employee creativity was not self-reported, but supervisor-rated.

5.1.34 Sequential Mediation between Nature Ebullient Supervision and Employee Creativity

Drawing upon broaden and build theory ([Fredrickson, 2004](#)), the current study proposed that ebullient supervision would induce a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which would initiate the broadening process of perspective-taking, leading to the building of personal psychological and intellectual resources of thriving at work, and social resources of structural social capital and relational social capital. These personal resources will then stimulate employee creativity.

In this study, three unique paths were proposed suggesting the sequential mediations between ebullient supervision and employee creativity. The findings revealed that ebullient supervision was indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and thriving at work. Hence, H34a was supported, in line with the broaden and build theory. Similarly, consistent with the theory, the findings also revealed that ebullient supervision was indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective-taking, and relational social capital. Thus, H34c was also supported. These findings make novel contributions to the literature as, before this study, no empirical evidence existed regarding the sequential mediating role of positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and relational social capital between nature connectedness and employee creativity. Thus, drawing on broaden and build theory, the sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work between the relationship of ebullient supervision and employee creativity; and the sequential mediating effects of positive affect, perspective taking, and relational social capital between the relationship of ebullient supervision and employee creativity have been justified.

However, the findings revealed that ebullient supervision was not indirectly and positively related to employee creativity through sequential mediating effects of

positive affect, perspective-taking, and structural social capital. Hence, contrary to broaden and build theory, H3b was not supported. Although ebullient supervision did generate a positive affect leading to perspective-taking and structural social capital, structural social capital didn't stimulate employee creativity (H23); hence this sequential mediation was not supported.

Therefore, the results suggest that ebullient supervision induced a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which enabled their perspective-taking ability, making them thrive at work and build trustworthy relationships; ultimately leading to their employee creativity. These findings are of importance as employee creativity was not self-reported, but supervisor-rated.

5.1.35 Moderator Hypotheses

Proactive personality did not moderate the relationship between perspective-taking and thriving at work. Similarly, it did not moderate the relationship between perspective-taking and any examined social capital dimension. Hence, H35a, H35b, and H35c; were not supported. This could be due to some proactive behavior characteristics.

Proactive people are initiative-takers, who try to improve their environments themselves to bring meaningful change. Still, there are ambiguities regarding what makes people proactive and although literature suggests the role of affect in it, it is majorly correlational/cross-sectional evidence (Wolsink, Den Hartog, Belschak, & Oosterwijk, 2019). Thus, the possible underlying mechanisms (affective, motivational, or cognitive) connecting positive affect and proactivity are still grey. Filling this gap, recently an experimental study by Wolsink et al. (2019) concluded that the proactive behavior of proactive individuals lessens in the presence of positive affect; whereas, negative affect makes them more proactive. They suggested that for proactivity to strongly have an influence, negative affect is more important rather than positive affect. This is because negative affect is related to narrow and frustrated thinking because of constraints that activate proactive people to change the status quo; the total opposite of broadened and flexible thinking due to positive affect (Sonnentag & Starzyk, 2015). Being anticipatory, proactive individuals

are affectively sensitive, and they use proactive behavior as a coping mechanism against setbacks due to negative affect. When such proactive individuals are already feeling good, there remains no need for further increasing positive feelings (Wolsink et al., 2019).

Further, an organizational diary study (Fay & Hüttges, 2017) showed that proactive behavior can drain resources and increase stress levels. Perhaps, the positive affect being experienced by the respondents of this study was already a lot which led to the broadening of cognitive thinking and building of such strong personal resources; that proactive employees didn't feel the need to either increase or drain the resources. This could be another reason for no moderation occurring in the present study.

Another reason for the current results regarding no moderation role of proactive personality could also be that the scope of proactive behavior is beyond mere idea generation; and rather involves more implementation of the idea to bring the actual change (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012). Employee creativity is related to generate of novel and useful ideas, whereas, innovation is about the implementation of creative ideas. Thus, perhaps, when new ideas are to be generated, broadened flexible thinking generated by positive affect is better; while the impact of proactive behavior is stronger when persistent thinking is required for the implementation phase. This is supported by the experimental study of (Wolsink et al., 2019) which focused on the implementation of ideas.

Lastly, the role of the collectivist culture, in which the present study was conducted, could be one of the reasons for proactive behavior not moderating the proposed associations. In contrast to individualistic cultures where much of the proactive studies have been conducted and its positive outcomes have been lauded; scholars suggest the opposite for collectivist cultures. Scholarly work suggests that in collectivist cultures where high power distance prevails, high uncertainty avoidance exists, short-term orientation and maintaining good harmonious relationships are of much more importance; in such people-oriented cultures (as opposed to self-oriented cultures) proactive behaviors would be hindered (Urbach, Den Hartog, Fay, Parker, & Strauss, 2021). This could be the reason why although respondents

of this study reported being proactive, their proactive behaviors didn't have any strong influence on the relationships proposed and, thus, no moderation occurred.

5.2 Implications

The findings of this study ensure the theoretical and practical implications. This study contributes not only to the knowledge of understanding how employee creativity can be stimulated in hospitality literature; but, in addition, also offers valuable managerial implications to the hospitality industry managers.

5.2.1 Theoretical Implications

In an attempt to fill the identified gaps, this thesis makes several original contributions to the literature. First, many of the present study's researched paths are novel and understudied. By investigating a recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision as an antecedent of employee creativity, all of the empirically supported relationships of ebullient supervision with the rest of the studied constructs are new linkages. To the best of the authors' knowledge, the present study is a pioneer affective research attempt in exploring and empirically investigating the role of ebullient supervision in inducing employees' positive affect, generating cognitive skills of perspective-taking, generating psychological resources of thriving at work and social capital and shaping employee creativity in the hospitality industry. This makes the current study an original, offering empirical evidence of the influence of this recent leadership style on employee work-related outcomes in the creative context. Drawing upon COR theory and broaden and build theory, this study presents original findings on ebullient supervision outcomes, contributing to the underexplored ebullient supervision literature; and adding to the literature on positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, social capital, and employee creativity. The findings of this study make novel theoretical contributions and enrich the existing management literature.

The literature highlighted the demand and need for new leadership styles through which organizations can foster employee creativity in current business practices as

the current workforce expectations differ from the preceding generations (Berdecia-Cruz et al., 2022; Ford et al., 2023). Particularly, in the hospitality industry, employee creativity is a mainstream demand; yet scholars and practitioners are looking for ways to frame employee creativity in this industry (Lu et al., 2020; Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). Hence, literature demanded greater attention to processes, in the hospitality industry, that may enhance employee creativity. The present research is the first empirical study to make a significant contribution to the hospitality literature by confirming that ebullient supervision positively influences employee creativity. This also contributes to the infancy research on ebullient supervision.

Additionally, a persistent gap existed regarding investigating how leaders can develop the cognitive process of employees while engaging in creative processes (Hughes et al., 2018; Reiter-Palmon & Illies, 2004). Supported hypotheses show that ebullient supervision has strong associations with inducing positive affect in employees and helps to broaden the thinking styles by promoting perspective-taking. Moreover, ebullient supervision helps to generate the psychological and intellectual resources for thriving at work which makes employees learn and feel alive, simultaneously at work. All these proven linkages are novel. Supported hypotheses show that ebullient supervision has strong associations with multiple outcomes which are deemed as important and often investigated in management studies. Thus, this study expands the scant literature on such positive leadership styles that create a fun working environment for their employees.

Furthermore, the findings of this study, in addition to making contributions in the infancy ebullient supervision literature; also contribute to the literature on positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, social capital, and employee creativity. In doing so, the current study also highlights the positive side of a new supervisory style that influences important affective, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral outcomes for employees at work. This study provides a new prominence to investigating the benefits of such leadership styles that initiate, encourage, and support a fun working environment. According to the results of this thesis, hospitality practitioners, and hotel and restaurant managers need to cultivate and support ebullient supervision, as a practical strategy, to induce positive affect among the

employees which, then, via facilitating the broaden-and-build mechanism, translates to employee creativity. Additionally, an ebullient supervisor intentionally creates fun at work which, in itself, is a resource as employees value such a work climate. This study also highlights that when direct supervisors deliberately ensure their subordinates have fun at work, valuable resources can be acquired and positive outcomes can be generated. Thus, future research focusing on the benefits yielded by fun at work needs further attention.

Second, by confirming the positive relationship between nature connectedness and employee creativity, this study has also contributed to the scant nature connectedness-creativity literature in a work context. This is because much of the previous literature relating nature with positive outcomes stems from research conducted on students. Additionally, the nature-creativity literature has had much research focus on the physical aspects of nature exposure; whereas, in the present study the subjective nature connectedness link with employee creativity was proven. This study provides a new emphasis on investigating the benefits of enhancing subjective feelings towards nature as it can increase employee creativity. According to the results of this thesis, organizations need to provide such opportunities at work which can enable nature connectedness. Doing so will lead to a positive affect on employees which, via facilitating the broaden-and-build mechanism, leads to employee creativity. More so, an ebullient supervisor can initiate and encourage pleasurable and enjoyable activities that create fun at work by involving the natural environment itself, or even through virtual reality where going to physical places is not possible. This possibility is further discussed under managerial implications.

Third, literature highlights a persisting ambiguity regarding the process and the interaction between different individual and contextual factors through which employee creativity gets influenced (Cai et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2018; Jain & Jain, 2017; Lee et al., 2020; van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2020). Only a few studies (e.g. Gong, Huang, & Farh, 2009) have previously examined both individual and contextual factors together concerning employee creativity. This study contributes to this scant literature by examining the interaction between multiple individual and

contextual factors influencing employee creativity, in one integrated model to provide a holistic approach. Supported hypotheses showed that both contextual and individual factors had independent along with mediated influences on employee creativity.

Further, the present study affirms that although being connected to nature and a leader's behavior are powerful in governing employee creativity, these are only two of the parts that constitute the entire working environment. By examining the mediating roles of positive affect, perspective taking, thriving at work, and social capital between nature connectedness and employee creativity and ebullient supervision and employee creativity; this research showed that there are other mechanisms beyond nature connectedness and ebullient supervision which could influence employee creativity. This study found positive affect partially mediated the effect between nature connectedness and perspective taking, and between ebullient supervision and perspective taking. Perspective-taking completely mediated the relationship between positive affect and thriving at work. Perspective-taking partially mediated the relationship between positive affect and structural social capital and positive affect and relational social capital. Additionally, the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity was partially mediated by thriving at work. Similarly, relational social capital partially mediated the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity. However, structural social capital didn't mediate the relationship between perspective-taking and employee creativity. Thus, this study provides a more broadened view of employee creativity by examining both affective and cognitive factors along with the underlying mechanism of how these factors transfer impact on employee creativity. The present study provides a holistic approach to stimulating employee creativity as both contextual and individual factors had independent along with mediated influences on employee creativity. This study further helps to understand the broaden-and-build mechanism of Fredrickson's theory. Additionally, this study extends this theory outside the social bonds and links it with nature too. Fourth, by considering positive affect as the main mediating mechanism to transfer the impact of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision on employee creativity, this study expands the literature lacking studies involving affective factors' impact

on employee creativity, as highlighted by multiple reviews and meta-analyses (e.g. [Gong et al., 2018](#); [Hughes et al., 2018](#); [Richardson et al., 2016](#)). By employing broaden and build theory, the current study makes a novel contribution by exploring the causal mechanism of transferring the impact of nature connectedness and ebullient supervision on employee creativity through positive affect which was yet to be considered in the hospitality industry.

Fifth, by considering structural social capital and relational social capital, separately, this study adds to the literature highlighting the need to study social capital dimensions' impact on employee creativity ([Bhatti et al., 2021](#); [Oussi & Chtourou, 2020](#)) particularly in the hospitality industry. Additionally, by examining the influence of positive affect on social capital dimensions this study adds to the scant literature available in this domain; particularly in the foodservice industry.

Sixth, this study contributes to the limited empirical literature existing on thriving at work in the hospitality industry ([Wu, Chen, & Wang, 2023](#)), the role of having fun at work, and its underlying process in stimulating social capital. Seventh, this study addresses the much-ignored hospitality industry in the creativity literature. A recent study on the hospitality industry also highlighted the lack of investigations on employee creativity determinants ([Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020](#)). Last but not least, although proactive personality did not moderate any of the proposed relationships, this itself is a unique theoretical contribution in terms of being contrary to the widely accepted literature. This finding suggests that under certain circumstances proactive behaviour, which is generally desired at work, might not be necessary. Further on this is discussed under future directions.

In summary, these theoretical contributions highlight the need for the hospitality industry to cultivate nature connectedness in employees, inducing positive affect in them. Similarly, these theoretical contributions highlight the need for the hospitality industry to recognize and support ebullient supervision, which as a positive work event, induces a positive affect on employees. Both nature connectedness and ebullient supervision, via facilitating the broaden-and-build mechanism, lead to the generation of much sought-after thriving at work (intellectual and psychological resource), relational social capital, and structural social capital (social

resources). The resources of thriving at work and relational social capital would then translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry.

5.2.2 Managerial Implications

Owing to the unpredictable nature of the service sector, especially the hospitality industry, firms need employees who can bring out-of-the-box solutions for businesses to remain innovative (Krskova & Breyer, 2023). This makes employee creativity a mainstream demand. The current study offers several recommendations for practitioners to frame employee creativity in the hospitality industry.

Primarily, this study encourages senior management to recognize the importance of fun at work as a basic need, fulfillment of which can generate many sought-after psychological benefits like experiencing positive emotions and intellectual outcomes like employee creativity. The senior management needs to recognize, appreciate and encourage fun at work (e.g., breaks, celebrations, breakfast/lunches, performance appreciating ceremonies, picnics, use of appropriate humor, and playful tasks). Encouraging fun at work is rather simple (e.g., being playful during tasks, appreciating and celebrating successes, organizing social gatherings, being supportive, and using appropriate humor). Hence, hospitality industry practitioners and managers can encourage leadership practices, such as ebullient supervision, which intentionally creates fun at work. To generate personal and social resources which facilitate employee creativity, hotel managers need to intentionally adopt those factors that can boost resource generation. The present study found that ebullient supervision resulted in the thriving at work of employees and the building of employees' relational social capital, both of which ultimately stimulated employee creativity. Thus, inducing a positive leadership style that makes employees, simultaneously, learn and feel energetic; along with improving the quality of their interpersonal relationships, may serve as a promising human resource development strategy for framing employee creativity in the hospitality sector. This is of significant importance since the hospitality industry is of people-oriented nature, having frequent employee-customer interactions and also employee-employee interactions. Thus, having social characteristics, hospitality

managers should encourage an ebullient supervision style that involves creating a fun working environment for subordinates.

Moreover, tactics employed by an ebullient supervisor tend not to be expensive but, as the current study shows, can produce valuable employee personal resources which later translates into employee creativity. E.g., smiling, greeting, encouraging play at work, using an appropriate sense of humor, being supportive, and having social events, such as celebrating achievements or birthdays. Further, from time to time, top management needs to assess if employees are feeling energetic, learning, and developing good social bonds. This information will aid the senior management to be proactive in preventing any negative psychological or social outcomes.

Today's workforce mainly comprises millennials who have different work expectations and needs in comparison to previous generations at work. They expect to have work-life integration rather than work-life balance; where they can have fun at work and not after it (Hidalgo, Marín-García, Wu, & Hidalgo, 2022). Research has proven that a fun working environment has a significant influence on employees' behaviors and outcomes at work, thus, highlighting the importance of investigating such factors that could stimulate and through it employee creativity. Enjoyable and pleasurable activities at work make employees happy and happy employees bring a competitive advantage which, in turn, brings higher profits (Hogreve et al., 2017). This suggests that top management will need to consider tailoring the standard/conventional policies and processes to achieve a competitive advantage. These could range from supervisor-oriented informal/formal gatherings, lunches, celebrations of achievements and occasions, activities involving play at work, using a sense of humor, greetings, and social events. In the present study, 95.4% of the respondents were 40 and below years of age; thus confirming that if Millennials have fun at work and connect with nature, they will produce creative outcomes. Thus, this study presents a unique and an easy to implement mechanism for managers, in the hospitality sector, to stimulate employee creativity through introducing pleasurable and enjoyable times at work via nature connectedness and ebullient supervision. Second, the literature argues that nature exposure (natural or artificial) enhances the feeling of nature connectedness. The present study

findings suggest that nature connectedness will lead to a positive affect, which through broadening and building process, stimulate employee creativity. Thus, the hotel managers can also consider ways to incorporate biomorphic designs at the workspace stations of employees where all creative planning takes place, e.g., office plants, landscape pictures, open windows for natural light and smell of fresh air, small waterfalls amongst natural rockery, vegetation around meeting/workshop or and conference rooms. Hotel managers can even encourage the employees to take outdoor breaks in biomorphic areas, specially designated only for the employees, e.g., rooftop gardens. Such outdoor nature exposure, while not going much away from the office, engages the sense of sight, smell, taste, touch, and sound (Klotz & Bolino, 2021) which could lead to restorative effects amongst employees and enhance their nature connectedness. This, in turn, as per the findings of this study, can stimulate employee creativity.

Given the nature of hospitality nature, enhancing the nature connectedness of employees and giving a fun working environment to them is feasible. Both these options are cost-effective and easily managed, especially in the hospitality sector. Therefore, hospitality leaders and managers need to consider encouraging ebullient supervision and provide such opportunities where employees can enjoy work; and also connect with nature to stimulate employee creativity. They need to incorporate having a fun working environment as a corporate agenda. Managers should look for ways to make the working environment more fun and connected to nature to achieve employee creativity. Since fun at work has proven to have many positive outcomes, both at an individual and organizational level, including employee creativity which is a top most needed skill for attaining sustainable competitive advantage; top management needs to consider fun and nature-related activities that could help attain organization purpose. As suggested by (Chan & Simon, 2010), these could range from supervisor-oriented informal/formal gatherings to lunches, celebrations of achievements, and occasions. Additionally, such activities could be introduced in natural environments to enhance nature connectedness. This can be achieved easily and cheaply as the natural environment is readily and quite cheaply, if not free, available. It is a cost-effective way to develop well-being and nature connection (Capaldi, Passmore, Nisbet, Zelenski, & Dopko, 2015). More

so, a recent study found that virtual reality technology can be used as an effective restorative purpose when easy or no access to natural environments is possible (Mattila et al., 2020). Studies show that even artificially stimulated natural environments generate the same positive outcomes as those of natural environments (e.g. Song, Ikei, & Miyazaki, 2018; Zabini et al., 2020). A recent study found that just 6 minutes of virtual reality exposure to nature greatly improved mood and provided restorative effects (Browning, Mimnaugh, Van Riper, Laurent, & LaValle, 2020). Another recent study found that more creativity was generated during videoconferencing in which the virtual backgrounds displayed natural environments (Palanica & Fossat, 2022).

Third, this study emphasizes the importance of keeping hospitality industry employees happy. This matters because the frequency of employee-to-employee and employee-to-customer interactions is frequent in the hospitality industry (Siyal et al., 2023), and emotions are contagious. In the service industry, happy employees mean more business and better chances of surviving the constantly changing and increasingly competitive industry environment. In the hospitality industry, employee happiness is crucial, especially for those who due to their work role are routinely involved in creative tasks. Thus, due to the hospitality industry being social, hospitality managers should encourage such activities and experiences for employees that make them more interested, excited, enthusiastic, inspired, determined, and active. Hotel industry managers may design such HR practices that enhance positive emotions amongst their employees to stimulate employee creativity. The hotel managers can design such work activities which provoke positive emotions, such as making employees interested, excited, enthusiastic, alert, inspired, more attentive, and active. Moreover, periodic assessments should be performed by organizations to monitor the psychological function of the employees. Such assessments can help managers to design and organize early interventions to restore, maintain and stimulate positive affect that could facilitate employee creativity. Having a positive leadership style that encourages having fun at work, and connecting with nature, as per the results of this study, are two such approaches. These could involve fun at work activities, or a recreational trip to nature – physically or virtually.

Fourth, results show that employees experiencing positive emotions thrived at work, learned new things, felt energetic, and were encouraged to build network ties and good relationships. Hotel employees face intensified competition at the workplace and for such employees, thriving is of crucial importance because both learning and vitality are two key factors for effective performance. Happy people socially connect; therefore, hotel practitioners may focus on introducing positive affect experiences for employees to boost thriving at work and social capital. Additionally, considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the pressure it has put on businesses and employees alike, especially in the service sector; the hotel management may provide counseling, psychological sessions, or training that may facilitate positive moods amongst the employees which can help them to be more creative at work. Fifth, results show that perspective-taking was triggered in employees experiencing positive emotions which resulted in the building up of personal resources which enabled them to learn new things, feel energetic, build social bonds, and maintain high-quality relationships. All these are critically desirable outcomes for hotel employees who face intensified competition at the workplace and for such employees. Thus, the findings suggest that hotel managers provide more such opportunities to employees that help them understand concepts from an alternative point of view to generate creative outcomes. For example, while ensuring the recruitment of a diverse workforce, hotel managers may encourage brainstorming sessions and workforce training to promote perspective-taking which can facilitate vitality, learning, and building social connections; thus, leading to employee creativity.

5.2.3 Contextual Implications

The present study also provides contextual implications to literature by examining the mechanism through which employee creativity can be framed in the hospitality industry of a developing country, in an Eastern/Asian context. This is important because many multinational companies are locating their jobs in this region along with developing nations allocating more budget to flourish the tourism and hospitality industry (Khan et al., 2020; Mughal, 2019). Accordingly, this study guides

practitioners and policymakers towards prioritizing strategies to allocate budget to such plans that would induce nature connectedness, ebullient supervision to have a fun working environment, positive emotions, perspective-taking, thriving at work, improving structural and relational social capital, and ultimately employee creativity.

5.3 Limitations

While providing some noteworthy theoretical and practical implications, and contextual contributions, this study did have some limitations. First, the present study's respondents were hotel and restaurant employees involved in creative decision-making; hence, the results are not generalizable to manufacturing, technology, or other non-service industries.

Second, male respondents dominate the sample which puts generalizability limitations on findings. Third, data was collected from various two to five star hotels and restaurants, without considering organizational culture which limits the understanding of this contextual factor's influence. For example, position levels may influence the proposed associations as a moderator, in collectivist cultures, where power distance is high. Fourth, ebullient supervision was the only contextual factor considered in this study. This limits the significance of interplay between individual and contextual factors that may influence employee creativity.

5.4 Future Directions

First, as ebullient supervision is a recently introduced leadership style, much remains to be explored regarding its antecedents, outcomes, and related mechanisms through which it may impact work outcomes. This study examined ebullient supervision's impact on employees' positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and relational social capital which later stimulated employee creativity. However, surprisingly, the relationship between ebullient supervision and structural social capital was not supported in this study. Future research should deliberate on this

unanticipated result and investigate factors that may help to build the relationship between ebullient supervision and structural social capital.

Moreover, future research may focus on exploring the antecedents, outcomes, and related mechanisms through which ebullient supervision may impact work outcomes. Thus, future research may investigate ebullient supervision with popular constructs like personality, organizational culture, thriving at work, social capital, meaningful work, attraction and retention of employees; and other emerging and long-lasting human resource management factors; e.g., diversity management, ergonomics, team management, HR development, employee participation, work-life balance, flexible employment, knowledge sharing, organizational commitment, HRM for innovation, green and sustainable HRM, talent management, corporate social responsibility (Piwovar-Sulej et al., 2022). All these under-explored arenas offer promising research endeavors and are of critical importance to the hospitality industry.

Also, although ebullient supervision is a positive leadership style, and future research should focus on investigating more benefits of ebullient supervision; it would be interesting to investigate if a dark side exists generating detrimental individual or organizational outcomes. Negative emotions also are part of affective studies. It would be interesting to investigate if ebullient supervision generates negative emotions or not, and through which mechanism. Could there be any situation where ebullient supervision may lead to negative affect? All these research questions present interesting future research endeavors.

Second, up until recently, the research on fun at work was scant (Michel et al., 2019). There was a need to empirically generate a clear understanding as to why top management should place importance on having a fun working environment and how a leader initiating and supporting engagement in fun activities would benefit employees. The current study examined ebullient supervision's impact on positive affect and employee creativity through two-time lag data. For more generalizability of results, future research should focus on employing experimental designs for further examinations where participants affect and employee creativity could be evaluated before and after introducing ebullient supervision. Such a future study will help to assess and compare if having a leader encouraging fun at

work helps employees to flourish through the broadening and building mechanism. Thus, future research should focus on employing experimental designs for further examinations where participants' affect, cognition style, social capital, and thriving could be evaluated before and after introducing ebullient supervision. Such a future study will help to assess and compare if being connected to nature and having fun at work helps employees to flourish through the broaden and build mechanism. It would also make results more generalizable.

Third, research exists advocating the use of Biophilic design, e.g., indoor/outdoor plantations, waterfalls, and aquariums; as being a few of the key decor design elements in hotels and restaurants which enhances the feeling of being around the natural environment for the guests leading to positive emotional responses and increased satisfaction, through all generations (Lee et al., 2020; Nanu, Ali, Berezina, & Cobanoglu, 2020). While a plethora of research exists advocating that various physical working conditions (e.g., wages, relations at work, communication, lighting/heating) influence employee productivity; not much is known about the influence of subjective feelings related to nature at work despite wide recognition of biophilia hypothesis suggesting that connecting with nature is a basic need of a human for optimal functioning. There is a lack of basic knowledge regarding how employees connect with nature at work or respond to it (Klotz & Bolino, 2021). Also most of the studies focus on nature contact or nature exposure and those conducted on nature connectedness have focused on the student population. Thus, there is a need to do more future research in a working context.

Moreover, while using existing scales, it is possible to assess subjective and attitudinal variables, and objectively measuring biophilic working conditions is also possible. A recent study (Klotz & Bolino, 2021) suggests examining the direct relationship between nature at work and its impact on employees' cognitive, emotional, prosocial, and physical energy. Moreover, future research can include experimental studies investigating how different work designs incorporating elements of the natural environment or mimicking them influence the biophilic desires of employees. Since nature exposure is a proven antecedent of nature connectedness, this will help to understand ways to stimulate the subjective feeling of connecting with nature; which this study's findings suggest to stimulate employee creativity.

Further, cultural beliefs, spirituality, and climate zones/pleasant seasons can influence nature connectedness (Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott, & Sevigny, 2017). E.g., pleasant seasons may positively influence nature connectedness. In unpleasant seasons, organizations can work on strategies, such as showing videos of nature or training on mindful learning to employees for enhancing nature connectedness (Elliott & Rodenburg, 2019). Much of the literature on nature connectedness (above 60%) has emerged from the West (Ives et al., 2018). This leaves the human-nature relationship understanding partial and thus more future cross-cultural studies are needed for generalizability and replicability purposes (Nisbet et al., 2020). Additionally, since nature connectedness and ebullient supervision lead to positive affect and other variables which are highly desired at a workplace; future research should focus on investigating when and how these can be stimulated at work.

Fourth, since the data was collected from hotel employees belonging to different hotels with two to five stars ratings, future studies may consider the data of each hotel category and compare and contrast the results for each category. It is also recommended that future studies expand the sample, involving employees from one-star hotels/restaurants too because most of these, in Pakistan, are family-owned independent businesses. This could have unique consequences because working in a family business could have different psychological and contextual boundaries and may reveal different mechanisms for employee creativity and different outcomes for nature connectedness and ebullient supervision.

Fifth, human resources represent a large portion of the operating costs of an organization and two factors increase these costs, namely, low productivity and high absenteeism. A careful literature review (Soderlund & Newman, 2015) suggests that introducing natural environment elements at workplaces significantly influences both these factors by increasing productivity and lowering absenteeism. However, most of these studies have been cross-sectional and conducted in academic environments. Thus, more longitudinal research is required in an office work setting. Longitudinal studies affirmations may even help to propel the use of biophilic work designs as an organizational strategy, which along with individual and organizational benefits; may also lead to societal benefits like reduced carbon footprint. The findings of this study suggest that it might be a worthwhile investment

for hospitality managers to consider creating workplaces that are fun to work in and provide a nature connectedness for employees. Hence providing such working environments to the employees where they build nature connectedness, have fun, and can be happy; may, in longer terms, not only increase the well-being but also productivity and may even lead to reduced employee turnover and absenteeism. Future longitudinal and experimental research is suggested in this regard.

Sixth, this study used a survey approach, perhaps, future researchers can use qualitative techniques such as in-depth interviews or observations. Unlike this study, future research may take into account personal information like gender, education, and age, perhaps as moderators to assess if these create any differences in the results. Also, organizational culture is an important factor that may influence fun at work. Research in the future could investigate how ebullient supervision influences or gets influenced by organizational culture.

Seventh, regarding proactive personality not being proven as a moderator in this study opens a not much-focused arena for future research to identify when and under what circumstances having a proactive personality does not yield desired outcomes or may even lead to counterproductive behaviors. This is of importance because many of the proactive behavior theories have advocated numerous positive outcomes, and thus, much of the literature suggests positive associations regarding proactive personality. Proactive behavior consequences are still not well understood as much of the previous related literature has only focused on good outcomes of this behavior while largely ignoring the potential downsides (Liu & Ge, 2020). However, as every coin has two sides, thus, more research needs to be done regarding when proactive behaviors should be desired at work because up until recently researchers have begun to suggest its drawbacks; e.g., increased stress levels and resource drain (Cangiano, Parker, & Ouyang, 2021), higher irritability and withdrawal levels (Pingel, Fay, & Urbach, 2019), increased coworker envy and coworker undermining (Sun et al., 2021). Moreover, most of the proactive behavior studies have been conducted in Western individualistic cultures where proactive agentic behavior is lauded (Gelfand, Lim, & Raver, 2004). In contrast, in collectivist cultures, such behaviors result in tension and conflicts amongst coworkers since maintaining harmony is of more importance (Urbach et al., 2021). There-

fore, more studies investigating this behavior are needed in cultures other than individualism.

Eighth, the findings of this study may even help to find an easier ‘creative’ solution to some of the biggest problems or challenges in the 21st century, especially in the hospitality industry— highest turnover rate or lowest employee retention (Ghani et al., 2022; McCartney, Chi In, & Pinto, 2022; Ohunakin, Adeniji, Ogunlusi, Igbadumhe, & Sodeinde, 2020). Additionally, globally, the hospitality industry has recognized its high impact on the social, cultural, economic, and natural environment; and sustainability has become a defining issue for it (Moneva, Bonilla-Priego, & Ortas, 2020). The findings of this study suggest that nature connectedness stimulates employee creativity by inducing positive emotions, broadening cognitive resources, and building personal resources; creates a bridge between natural, psychological, and social capital that can lead to employee creativity. Thus, hospitality managers can design and implement such environmental social activities which will revamp the HR activities into sustainable HR and Green HRM that, while improving sustainability issues, can also help retain employees by helping them to build a positive attitude and long-term commitment (Kramar, 2022; Mirčetić et al., 2022; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). This may also be possible because Millennials who form the majority of today’s workforce are attracted to companies that invest in individual well-being and societal well-being. Millennials while seeking fun at work, also seek meaningful work that creates a positive impact on the world (Weeks & Schaffert, 2019). Being involved in meaningful work is critical to make employees happy (Loi & Ng, 2021). Being involved in such green initiatives may increase the nature connectedness of employees, enhancing the feeling of meaningful work which can reduce turnover intentions (Siahaan & Gatari, 2020). Future research should focus on examining this.

Ninth, although, worldwide, persistent gender inequality prevails in the hospitality industry, it is overly dominated by males (Fairclough, 2018); yet both small and large firms in this sector seem to be reluctant to address the issue (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). Future researchers may consider investigating why this gender disparity exists. Lastly, the present research was tested in Pakistan (Asian context), where employees may differ in their emotional and thinking patterns,

learning interests, and social interactions. This framework may be tested in future research in another context so comparisons can be made. Also, to determine its generalizability; its replication in other developing countries becomes necessary. Thus, future research endeavors may be undertaken in different contexts for comparison purposes. Additionally, the role of gender may also be a potential moderator to discover as family responsibilities may hamper female employees to be involved in fun-related tasks and could lead to different perceptions of fun at work. Also fun at work involves the use of humor and research shows that men and women have different approaches, perceptions, and styles of humor (Bensaber, 2020; Hofmann, Platt, Lau, & Torres-Marín, 2020). This also opens up avenues to consider the role of emotional intelligence or other emotional regulatory strategies as moderators.

This study took into account the factors of nature connectedness, ebullient supervision, positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and social capital dimensions that facilitate employee creativity. Future research may consider other, underexplored yet related factors concerning nature connectedness and ebullient supervision and examine their interplay towards employee creativity stimulation, e.g., meaningful work, green HRM, sustainable HRM, work engagement, employee retention, and turnover intentions. All these areas are of critical importance to the hospitality industry. In sum, this study stimulates the literature on employee creativity. Further research may strengthen the literature in this area by considering the above recommended future directions.

5.5 Conclusion

In the fast-paced working environment of today, where the digital revolution is playing at the forefront and many tasks are being automatized, the present study emphasizes the need for top management to humanize the working environment, to bring nature and fun back to where it naturally belongs – amongst humans. Doing so will enable achieving positive outcomes, both at individual and organizational levels, with ease and in a much simpler manner. Employee creativity has become essential for organizational efficiency, especially in the service sector.

Creativity doesn't happen in isolation, thus, considering both individual and contextual factors is important when determining mechanisms to stimulate employee creativity. The present study found that nature connectedness and ebullient supervision significantly increased positive affect which ultimately stimulated employee creativity. Thus, inducing positive affect via having fun at work and providing opportunities to enhance connection with nature, can serve as a promising strategy for framing employee creativity in the hospitality sector.

Drawing upon attention restoration theory, affective events theory, conservation of resources theory, and broaden and build theory; this study gives the following holistic conclusions:

Nature connectedness induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the personal resource of thriving at work, which then would translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Nature connectedness induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the social resource of relational social capital, which then would translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Nature connectedness induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the social resource of structural social capital. However, structural social capital would not translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Although structural social capital was not found to be associated with employee creativity, still nature connectedness helped to generate it. This in itself is an important finding as it highlights the importance of remaining connected with nature to produce a highly desired outcome of social capital.

Ebullient supervision induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the personal resource of thriving at work, which then would translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Ebullient supervision induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which

broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the social resource of relational social capital, which then would translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Ebullient supervision induces a positive affect on hotel and restaurant employees which broadens their cognition in the shape of perspective-taking. This broadening process would help generate the social resource of structural social capital. However, structural social capital would not translate into employee creativity in the hospitality industry.

Thus, this study provides empirical evidence of ebullient supervision being a new antecedent to positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and employee creativity. In doing so, this study makes novel contributions to the management literature since these linkages have not been empirically examined before; thus, making this study an original. Additionally, this study explains a new mechanism to hospitality practitioners regarding how the much sought-after skill of employee creativity can be stimulated by encouraging a leadership style that intentionally provides a fun and supportive work environment and promotes nature connectedness among employees. Effective leadership not only recognizes innovative management practices but also promotes them (Bilginoglu & Yozgat, 2018). The upper management's attitude towards fun at work and providing a connection with the natural environment can critically influence employees' work experiences. Hence, hospitality managers need to prioritize fun at work and increasing nature connectedness in employees to promote favorable emotions towards work which later may translate into employee creativity. Hence, hospitality managers should encourage an ebullient supervision style and nature connectedness to facilitate positive affect, stimulating employee creativity. Having social characteristics, to increase the social relationships and their quality, hospitality managers should initiate and organize such activities that create a fun working environment (e.g., celebrating achievements or birthdays, competitions involving play at work, using a sense of humor, greeting, social events) and these activities can be carried out in natural environments (physically or artificially) to increase nature connectedness as well. Doing so also will produce a positive affect which will further promote flexible thinking, personal resources of employees, and desirable outcomes, in this case,

employee creativity. Accordingly, it is hoped that this research provides directions for future researchers to further investigate how organizations can utilize the positive outcomes resulting from nature connectedness and the newly introduced positive leadership style of ebullient supervision.

To sum it up, this study sheds light on the importance of positive psychology to discover that through humanizing the workplace of today, by connecting people with nature and having fun at work, positive emotions can be generated which can translate into better strategies for broadening cognitive thinking and building personal and social resources and desired outcomes. Happiness and creativity can be achieved in a much more fun and natural way.

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Appendix-A

List of Hotels and Restaurants

S.No.	Name
1.	Islamabad Serena Hotel
2.	Ramada by Wyndham Islamabad
3.	Hotel Hillview Islamabad
4.	Islamabad Marriott Hotel
5.	Pearl Continental
6.	Wild Rice Restaurant
7.	Dragon City Chinese Restaurant
8.	Pinetree Restaurant
9.	Envoy Continental Hotel
10.	Best Western Premier Islamabad
11.	Grand Islamabad Hotel
12.	Ginyaki
13.	Hotel Crown Plaza
14.	Mei Kong
15.	Islamabad Hotel
16.	KC Grill
17.	El Momento Islamabad
18.	Diplomat Hotel
19.	Nando's
20.	Howdy Islamabad

21.	Hotel Pak Continental
22.	Dreamland Hotel
23.	Grand Regency Hotel
24.	English Tea House
25.	Royal Regency Hotel
26.	Tiger Temple
27.	Shangrila Resort Hotel
28.	Islamabad Regalia Hotel
29.	Tuscany Courtyard
30.	The Carnivore
31.	Roasters
32.	La Maison Hotel Islamabad
33.	Jacranda Family Club
34.	Shelton's Rezidor Islamabad
35.	Texas steak house
36.	Royal Continental
37.	Coffee Planet
38.	Asian Wok
39.	Ox n Grill Restaurant
40.	Garden City Golf and Country Club Restaurant
41.	La Montana
42.	Street 1 Cafe
43.	Viridi Hotels
44.	La Terrazza
45.	The Royal Elephant
46.	Atrio
47.	Monal Islamabad
48.	Khiva restaurant
49.	BBQ Tonight
50.	Chaaye Khana

51.	Haleem Ghar
52.	Wild Thyme

Appendix-B

Form A – Employee Questionnaire



Capital University of Science and Technology

Department of Management Science

Survey Cover Letter

Dear Participant,

I am currently a PhD Scholar at Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad. For my Thesis, I am examining **The Mechanism through which Employee Creativity is Framed by Considering Individual and Contextual Factors**. Since you are part of this chosen industry, I humbly request your participation in this research study by completing the attached survey.

This survey is meant to be filled by an employee on managerial level having a supervisor and requires approximately 10-15 minutes. There is no compensation nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information remains confidential, please do not include your name. The anonymity of the responses will be maintained and not shown to anyone. The obtained information being collected under this study shall remain confidential and will only be used for research purpose. For any clarification and query regarding this form research, kindly feel free to contact undersigned.

If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Mashkooor (PhD Scholar)

Ph.D (HRM) Research Scholar

Email: maria.mashkooor@cust.edu.pk

Section 1: Demographics Characteristics

Organization name: _____

Gender: Male Female

Age:

Less than 25 25-30 31-34 35-40 41-44 45 and above

Qualification:

Intermediate Bachelors Masters Doctorate **Others** _____

No. of years working under current Manager (your direct supervisor/manager):

Less than 6 months 6 months to 1 year 1-5 years more than 5 years

Hierarchical Level:

Middle level Senior level

Experience (Current organization):

Less than 1 year 1-2 years 2-3 years 3-4 years more than 4 years

Section 2: Nature Connectedness

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

Please answer each of these questions in terms of the way you generally feel, using the scale given. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please tick the relevant choices: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Sr. No.	Statement					
NC1	I think of the natural world as a community to which I belong.	1	2	3	4	5
NC2	When I think of my life, I imagine myself to be part of a larger cyclical process of living.	1	2	3	4	5
NC3	I often feel a kinship with animals and plants.	1	2	3	4	5
NC4	I feel as though I belong to the Earth as equally as it belongs to me.	1	2	3	4	5
NC5	I often feel part of the web of life.	1	2	3	4	5
NC6	I feel that all inhabitants of Earth, human, and nonhuman, share a common 'life force'.	1	2	3	4	5
NC7	Like a tree can be part of a forest, I feel embedded within the broader natural world.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3: Perspective Taking

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

Read each of the following statements and rate how well each of them describes you:

0=Does not describe me well, 1=Does not describe me enough, 2=Neutral, 3=Describes me somewhat, 4=Describes me well.

Sr. No.	Statement					

PT1	Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.	0	1	2	3	4
PT2	If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments. (R)	0	1	2	3	4
PT3	I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.	0	1	2	3	4
PT4	I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.	0	1	2	3	4
PT5	I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view. (R)	0	1	2	3	4
PT6	I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	0	1	2	3	4
PT 7	When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.	0	1	2	3	4

Section 4: Relational/Structural Social Capital

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

Keeping in mind your relationships with people at work, please rate the following statements:

Please tick the relevant choices: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Sr. No.	Statement					
R1	In this relationship, both sides avoid making demands that can seriously damage the interest of other colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5

R2	In this relationship, neither side takes advantage of the other colleagues even if the opportunity arises.	1	2	3	4	5
R3	The colleague always keeps his/her promises to me.	1	2	3	4	5
N 4	I have known other colleagues' contacts through colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
N 5	The colleague has 'opened the doors' of other colleagues for me.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 5: Positive Affect

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

Indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week. 1=Very slightly or not at all 2= A little, 3=Moderately, 4=Quite a bit, 5=Extremely

Sr. No.	Statement					
PA1	Interested	1	2	3	4	5
PA2	Excited	1	2	3	4	5
PA3	Strong	1	2	3	4	5
PA4	Enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5
PA5	Proud	1	2	3	4	5
PA6	Alert	1	2	3	4	5
PA7	Inspired	1	2	3	4	5
PA8	Determined	1	2	3	4	5
PA9	Attentive	1	2	3	4	5
PA10	Active	1	2	3	4	5

“At work. . . .”

Please tick the relevant choices: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Sr. No.	Statement					
L1	...I find myself learning often	1	2	3	4	5
L 2	...I continue to learn more and more as time goes by	1	2	3	4	5
L 3	...I see myself continually improving	1	2	3	4	5
L 4	...I am not learning (R)	1	2	3	4	5
L 5	...I have developed a lot as a person	1	2	3	4	5
V6	...I feel alive and vital	1	2	3	4	5
V7	...I have energy and spirit	1	2	3	4	5
V8	...I do not feel very energetic (R)	1	2	3	4	5
V9	... I feel alert and awake	1	2	3	4	5
V10	... I am looking forward to each new day	1	2	3	4	5

Section 6: Proactive Personality

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

How you see yourself

Please tick the relevant choices: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Sr. No.	Statement					
PP1	I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.	1	2	3	4	5
PP2	Wherever I have been, i have been a powerful force for constructive change.	1	2	3	4	5
PP3	Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.	1	2	3	4	5
PP4	If I see something I don't like, I fix it.	1	2	3	4	5

PP5	No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.	1	2	3	4	5
PP6	I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition	1	2	3	4	5
PP7	I excel at identifying opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
PP8	I am always looking for better ways to do things	1	2	3	4	5
PP9	If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.	1	2	3	4	5
PP10	I can spot a good opportunity long before others can	1	2	3	4	5

Section 7: Ebullient Supervision

Using the following scale, please rate the following statements:

Your supervisor:

Please tick the relevant choices: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Occasionally, 5=Often, 6=Frequently, 7=Always,

Sr. No.	Statement							
ES1	Greets employees in passing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 2	Goes out of his/her way to brighten the day at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 3	Uses a cheerful tone when speaking with subordinates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 4	Attempts to make people laugh	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 5	Will gladly take on routine task responsibilities (e.g., schedules, meetings)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 6	Finds uses for appropriate humor at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES 7	Helps people feel enthusiastic about their jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

ES8	Tries to put people at ease	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES9	Smiles when someone enters his/her office for any meeting or discussion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES10	Lets people know that it's OK to be playful at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES11	Praises individual wins	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES12	Compliments employees in front of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ES13	Finds reasons to celebrate (e.g., birthdays, group or personal milestones).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix-C

Form B – Supervisor Questionnaire



Capital University of Science and Technology

Department of Management Science

Survey Cover Letter

Dear Participant,

I am currently a PhD Scholar at Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad. For my Thesis, I am examining the impact of nature and supervision on employee creativity in the Pakistani Hotels. Since you are part of this chosen industry, I humbly request your participation in this research study by completing the attached survey.

This survey is meant to be filled by an employee on supervisory level and requires only 5-10 minutes. There is no compensation nor is there any known risk. The anonymity of the responses will be maintained and not shown to anyone. The obtained information being collected under this study remains confidential and will only be used for research purpose. For any clarification and query regarding this form research, kindly feel free to contact undersigned. If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Mashkoor (PhD Scholar)

Ph.D (HRM) Research Scholar

Email: maria.mashkoor@cust.edu.pk

Please rate the following questions by considering the following employee creativity:

This employee...

Please tick the relevant choices: 1=Not at all characteristic, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Very characteristic

Sr. No.	Statement					
C1	... suggests new ways to achieve goals or objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
C2	... comes up with new and practical ideas to improve performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C3	... searches out new technologies, processes, techniques, and/or product ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
C4	... suggests new ways to increase quality.	1	2	3	4	5
C5	... is a good source of creative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
C6	... is not afraid to take risks.	1	2	3	4	5
C7	... promotes and champions ideas to others.	1	2	3	4	5
C8	... exhibits creativity on the job when given the opportunity to.	1	2	3	4	5
C9	... develops adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
C10	... often has a new and innovative idea.	1	2	3	4	5
C11	... comes up with creative solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
C12	... often has a fresh approach to problems.	1	2	3	4	5

C13	... suggests new ways of performing work tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
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Supervisor's Information

Organization: _____

Gender: Male Female

Age:

21-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 or above

Qualification:

Intermediate Bachelors Masters Doctorate Others _____

Experience (Current organization):

Less than 5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years more than 15 years

Hierarchical Level:

Supervisory level

Number of employees in the company:

0-25 26-100 101-500 501-1000 more than 1000

Sr. No.	Statement					
C9	... develops adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
C10	... often has a new and innovative idea.	1	2	3	4	5
C11	... comes up with creative solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
C12	... often has a fresh approach to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
C13	... suggests new ways of performing work tasks.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix-D

Normal Distribution Analysis (skewness and kurtosis)

Item	N	Observed min	Observed max	Standard deviation	Excess kurtosis	Skewness
NC1	391	1	5	1.039	0.408	-0.986
NC2	391	1	5	1.031	0.393	-0.971
NC3	391	1	5	1.098	-0.358	-0.617
NC4	391	1	5	1.097	-0.021	-0.85
NC5	391	1	5	1.097	-0.184	-0.741
NC6	391	1	5	1.036	0.211	-0.82
NC7	391	1	5	1.074	0.191	-0.905
ES1	391	1	7	1.623	-0.663	-0.467
ES2	391	1	7	1.489	-0.231	-0.434
ES3	391	1	7	1.462	-0.48	-0.396
ES4	391	1	7	1.594	-0.731	-0.34
ES5	391	1	7	1.586	-0.303	-0.436
ES6	391	1	7	1.559	-0.564	-0.379

ES7	391	1	7	1.489	-0.469	-0.353
ES8	391	1	7	1.584	-0.613	-0.356
ES9	391	1	7	1.601	-0.495	-0.457
ES10	391	1	7	1.555	-0.547	-0.383
ES11	391	1	7	1.587	-0.505	-0.385
ES12	391	1	7	1.584	-0.427	-0.385
ES13	391	1	7	1.582	-0.755	0.139
PA1	391	1	5	1.043	-0.381	-0.582
PA2	391	1	5	1.093	-0.468	-0.558
PA3	391	1	5	1.107	-0.393	-0.584
PA4	391	1	5	1.134	-0.607	-0.528
PA5	391	1	5	1.256	-0.991	-0.232
PA6	391	1	5	1.11	-0.228	-0.714
PA7	391	1	5	1.107	-0.32	-0.692
PA8	391	1	5	1.055	-0.119	-0.696
PA9	391	1	5	1.074	-0.32	-0.675
PA10	391	1	5	1.099	-0.04	-0.888
PT1	391	0	4	1.18	0.53	-1.182

PT2	391	0	4	1.248	-0.162	-0.927
PT3	391	0	4	1.061	-0.046	-0.853
PT4	391	0	4	1.108	0.212	-1.006
PT5	391	0	4	1.136	0.195	-1.012
PT6	391	0	4	1.138	-0.194	-0.833
PT7	391	0	4	1.239	-0.027	-1.005
R1	391	1	5	1.058	0.163	-0.919
R2	391	1	5	1.126	-0.577	-0.604
R3	391	1	5	1.146	-0.301	-0.623
N4	391	1	5	1.021	0.247	-0.863
N5	391	1	5	1.059	-0.116	-0.755
L1	391	1	5	1.197	-0.345	-0.85
L2	391	1	5	1.182	-0.449	-0.688
L3	391	1	5	1.244	-0.584	-0.659
L4	391	1	5	1.101	-0.47	-0.442
L5	391	1	5	1.043	-0.209	-0.387
V6	391	1	5	1.132	-0.273	-0.689
V7	391	1	5	1.151	-0.446	-0.688

V8	391	1	5	1.078	-0.286	-0.38
V9	391	1	5	1.075	0.119	-0.92
V10	391	1	5	1.196	-0.786	-0.533
C1	391	1	5	1.141	-0.013	-0.925
C2	391	1	5	1.126	-0.239	-0.776
C3	391	1	5	1.189	-0.956	-0.201
C4	391	1	5	1.063	-0.803	-0.459
C5	391	1	5	1.055	-0.29	-0.623
C6	391	1	5	1.217	-0.606	-0.654
C7	391	1	5	1.149	-1.088	-0.004
C8	391	1	5	1.124	-0.195	-0.818
C9	391	1	5	1.176	-1.227	-0.088
C10	391	1	5	1.156	-0.388	-0.724
C11	391	1	5	1.132	-0.187	-0.819
C12	391	1	5	1.163	-0.342	-0.774
C13	391	1	5	1.163	-0.101	-0.894
PP1	391	1	5	1.072	0.149	-0.89
PP2	391	1	5	1.036	-0.164	-0.682

PP3	391	1	5	1.133	-0.41	-0.62
PP4	391	1	5	1.092	-0.533	-0.467
PP5	391	1	5	1.069	-0.214	-0.673
PP6	391	1	5	1.11	-0.395	-0.566
PP7	391	1	5	1.031	-0.149	-0.821
PP8	391	1	5	1.075	-0.001	-0.828
PP9	391	1	5	1.029	-0.585	-0.294
PP10	391	1	7	1.125	-0.018	-0.649