Overqualification Effects on Organizational Attitude in Hospitality and Tourism SMEs: The Moderating Role of Interpersonal Influence

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Abstract

The study explores the moderating role of interpersonal influence in the relationship between overqualification and social distance, in the context of hotels and travel agents in Egypt. Drawing on the social influence theory, the study develops an integrative model examining the links between overqualification, social distance and four distinct organizational attitudes (i.e., intention to quit, job satisfaction, well-being and counterproductive). Using data collected from 409 hotels and travel agents, we show that interpersonal influence plays an important role in reducing the negative influence of overqualification on social acceptance. We also reveal that overqualification has an influence on employees' intention to quit, job satisfaction, well-being, and counterproductive behaviour through the mediating role of social acceptance. Finally, social acceptance is determined to be a predictor of organizational attitude. A call to investigate proximal behavioral results, such as feedback-seeking and knowledge sharing so that the approaches incorporated with organizational attitude can be more explicitly understood. Moreover, it would be advantageous to distinguish between different types of overqualification. The current research suggests ways to diminish the likely unfavorable consequences of overqualification, through the impact of interpersonal influence and social acceptance, in order to maximize and best utilize the potential of overqualified employees.

Keywords: overqualification; organizational attitude; social acceptance; interpersonal influence; social influence theory

Introduction

In all organizations, employees are almost the most valuable asset upon which an organization's success and full objectives attainment are based, and through which its future perspective and vision are laid. Therefore, all organizations exert increasing efforts to hire highly skilled, experienced and qualified employees (Bellou & Chatzinikou, 2015), particularly when their work involves direct customer-employee contact, where disqualified employees' mistakes are more costly, in terms of both revenue, guest satisfaction, and loyalty. On the other hand, an overqualified employee is a type of underemployment, wherein the employee perceives he enjoys qualifications (skills, formal education, and expertise) that exceed his job requirements (Maynard, 2006) since some of those qualifications are not utilized. Hence, an overqualified employee is some sort of poor person-job fit (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013), a currently prevalent phenomenon (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009), where the employee may accept a non-suitable job due to unemployment and scarcity of qualification-fitting jobs (Feldman & Leana, 2000). Despite his high qualifications, an overqualified employee sometimes represents a burden regarding the organizational outcomes, since he is always less satisfied than his peers and more likely to leave the organization (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009).

Several researchers, such as Feldman et al. (2002), Maynard et al. (2006), and Maynard and Parfyonova (2013) paid considerable attention to overqualification and its consequences on the organization. Khan and Morrow (1991) discussed overqualification identification, while Liu et al. (2015) discussed overqualification's negative organizational attitudes. However, only a few researchers, such as Baumeister et al. (2003) and Swann et al. (2007) concerned about overqualification impact on internal relations within peers and due implications for employees' performance. Nonetheless, such claims were not experimentally supported (Deng et al., 2018). Overqualification and due negative consequences are more tangible and substantial with the surge of Covid-19, where many of the qualified tourism labor force worldwide and in Egypt became jobless due to tourism recession, and therefore had to accept the first lower calibre jobs they would find in order to earn their living. Hence, three leading questions arise: (1) To what extent overqualification affects employees' counterproductive behavior, wellbeing, job satisfaction and intention to quit? (2) How can social acceptance intervene in such a relationship? and, (3) Does, and in which direction, the interpersonal influence affect the relationship between overqualification and social acceptance?

This study addresses and resolves these questions, adopting the social influence theory of Levy et al. (1998), in hotels and travel agencies in Egypt, and essentially contributes to hospitality and tourism literature through underlining the exchangeable association between employees' overqualification, social acceptance, and various organizational attitudes, and depicts the nature of the moderating role of interpersonal influence in the correlation between overqualification and social acceptance, thus, holding significant implications for both hotels and travel agencies' managers in Egypt and similar cultural and operational contexts, such as the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). This would also help tourism and hospitality organizations compromise and minimize the impact of overqualification amid and post-Covid-19 and similar crises that periodically hit the tourism industry. The theoretical, relevant background is hence outlined, along with pertinent development of the hypotheses, followed by the study methods and outcomes. Finally, findings are duly discussed, a conclusion is presented, are applicable implications are drawn.

Literature review and development of hypotheses
The theory of social influence
The social influence theory sets the ground for comprehending and linking employees' social behavior to their identities (Becker et al., 1995). Social commitment forms have been determined by Kelman's (1958). They are compliance, which is stimulated by the desire for

reward or the dislike of punishment; internalization, where the employee accepts others' beliefs; and, identification, which is encouraged by respecting and/or liking others. Such theory shows how diverse commitment mechanisms and social influence dimensions can change individuals' attitudes towards their target behavior and their belief structure, which can modify their response to possible social status gain (Tsai & Bagozzi, 2014). Briefly, this paper represents a comprehensive attempt to empirically examine how interpersonal influence moderates the impact of overqualification on organizational attitude through the intervening role of social acceptance within the Egyptian hospitality and tourism industry. The study conceptual model and hypotheses are introduced in Figure 1.
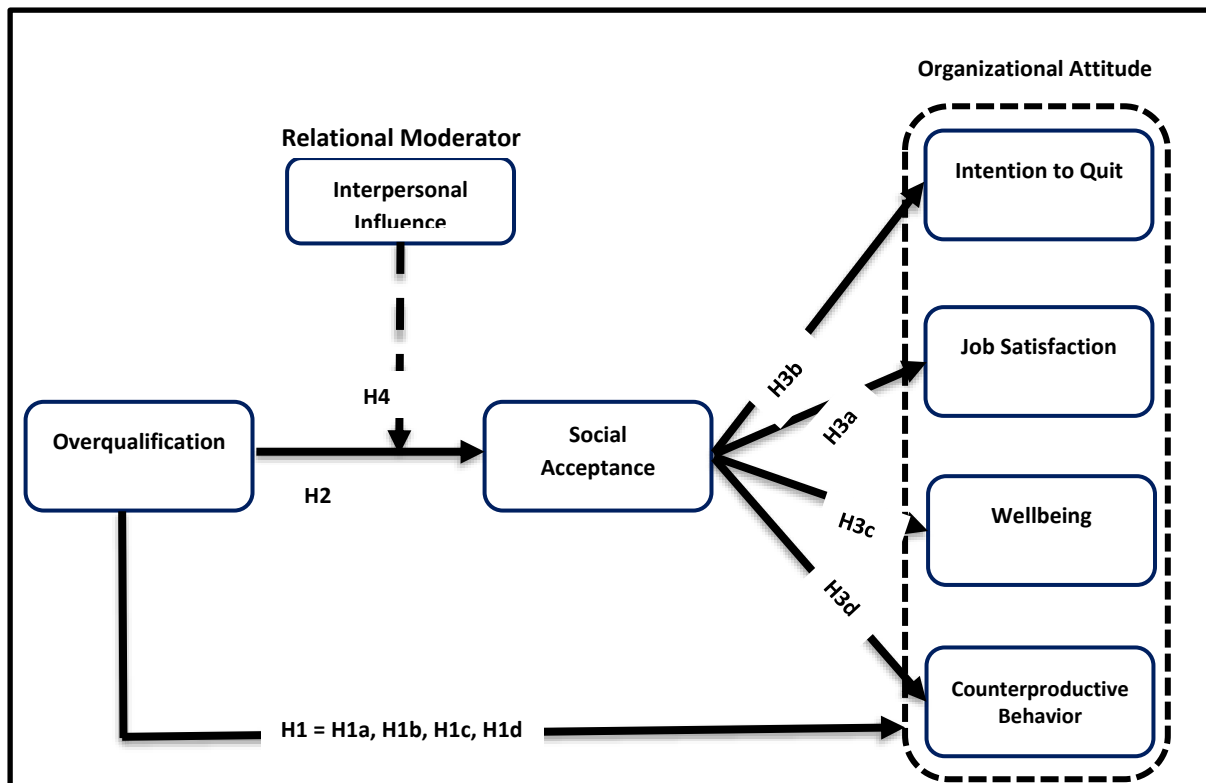

Figure. 1. The Research Conceptual Framework

Overqualification impact on intention to quit

One of the major negative factors affecting organizational effectiveness and causing high staff "voluntary turnover" rates is overqualified employees (Erdogan et al., 2011). The term "voluntary turnover" refers to the extent to which an individual plans to leave an organization or a position of employment (Maynard, 2006). This may relate to several reasons, such as decreased satisfaction, lowered self-esteem as he always thinks that he deserves better, qualification-matching position, and another socio-economic rationale (Kengatharan, 2011). Feldman (1996) suggests that overqualified employees are more associated with the serious consequence of higher turnover rates. Thus, based on the previous discussion, we hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1a: Overqualification positively influences employees' intention to quit

Overqualification impact on job satisfaction

Overqualified employees wish they would have held a position in which they will be able to best utilize their talents and abilities, believing they would deserve a better job opportunity

(Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). Due to this deprivation, they get disappointed, which would consequently bring about adverse job attitudes, particularly job dissatisfaction (Crosby, 1976; Feldman et al., 2002). Moreover, the negative impact of overqualification on job satisfaction is the main core of the theory of relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976). An employee feels dissatisfied on the job when there is a discrepancy between the outcomes he/she wants and the outcomes he/she receives; that is, in our particular scope, when an employee's qualifications led him to expect more than what he/she is currently gaining from his job, and when the employee feels that he/she is entitled to more that would professionally and socially suit his qualifications (Erdogan et al., 2011). Therefore, we suppose:

Hypothesis 1b: Overqualification negatively influences employees' job satisfaction.

Overqualification impact on employee wellbeing

Job wellbeing is manifested as an indirect reward given to employees as a part of organizational membership (Mathis et al., 2015). Therefore, employee wellbeing is a crucial function of human resources management, since employees cannot operate as machines (Opatha, 2009). The overqualification misfit occurs as the employee judges such a reward as inadequate for his qualifications and expects higher rewards than he/she acquires (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). There are several causes regarding why overqualification is negatively related to subjective job-related wellbeing (Anderson & Winefield, 2011). From the perspective of person-job fit, overqualification yields negative work experiences due to the lack of similarity between the employee and his/her work environment. This misfit in turn weakens the overqualified employee's organizational commitment (Feldman et al., 2002). Therefore, the overqualified employee tends to be more distressed with his/her job psychologically and/or physically (Johnson & Johnson, 1997). Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1c: Overqualification negatively influences employees' wellbeing

Overqualification impact on counterproductive work behaviors

According to person-job fit studies, qualification mismatch to the job would trigger several negative outcomes, including counterproductive work behaviors (Edwards, 2008), which are conceptualized as harmful actions directed to the organization as a whole, such as biased criticism of its policies, and towards peers, such as expressing downgrading perspectives of one's colleagues (Holtz & Harold, 2013). Overqualified employees' counterproductive work behaviors can also be materialized as narcissism and neuroticism (O'Boyle et al., 2012), contributing to likely further negative behaviors, involving the organization or its individuals (Eisenberger et al., 2010). Overqualified employees' tendency towards adopting undesirable expressive reactions is higher than other employees, as a response to lack of job-related self-fulfillment (Gibson & Callister, 2010). Relevantly, Bolino and Feldman (2000) spotted a negative impact of overqualification on self-rated job performance. Thus, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 1d: Overqualification positively influences employees' counterproductive behavior

Overqualification impact on social acceptance

Human beings have a powerful need for social approval (Aronson et al., 2007). Therefore, they are always in a struggle to be popular and avoid any social failures, especially in the workplace, where the work is performed by teams requires continuous interactions among workgroup

members (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). Popularity is a significant social concept that refers to how individuals are regarded and treated by each other (Rubin et al., 2006), revealing the collective perception of the group towards one of its members (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989). Social acceptance involves popularity as an essential constituent, and organizations must identify popular employees, why they are so, and how much popularity impacts organizational outcomes. Hence, social acceptance has been associated with critical organizational variables and outcomes, e.g., Hollander (1965) linked it to individual job performance, Lodahl and Porter (1961) correlated it to group performance, whilst Mitchell and Liden (1982) associated it with organizational punishment.

Overqualified employees differ from their colleagues concerning social acceptance and work performance (Avery et al., 2007). This relationship was investigated by Erdogan et al. (2011), who argued that overqualified employees can be quite socially accepted, as they may be perceived as mentors by their colleagues, due to their expertise and varied qualifications, thus probably generating positive inter-group relationships. However, the current study, based on relevant experience with the Egyptian labor market, perceives that overqualification would adversely affect employees' social acceptance. Instead of mentoring others, some overqualified employees might try to compensate for lack of job-based self-fulfillment by being showy and arrogant, acting superior with their peers, and often implying they are being overqualified, either to get promoted, get a pay raise, or at least to differentiate themselves from their peers. To further add to their lacking belonging to the group and the organization is that overqualified employees may be older than their peers. Thus, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 2: Overqualification negatively influences employees' social acceptance

Social acceptance impact on intention to quit

Employees' social acceptance efficaciously yields strengthened employees' intention to stay, loyalty, commitment and cohesion among employees towards organizational goals (Hewitt, 2004). Thus, employees enjoying higher levels of social acceptance intend to tie their destiny to the organization's and have more intention to stay in the organization rather than to quit (Kumar, 2012). Therefore, employees' social acceptance is considered as a valid predictor of a positive organizational climate that discourages their intention to quit (Dutton & Ragins, 2007). Based on the previous rationale, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3a: Employees' social acceptance negatively influences employees' intention to quit

Social acceptance impact on job satisfaction

Another advantage of employees' social acceptance is its key contribution to their job satisfaction. Social acceptance, represented in Maslow's third category of his hierarchy of needs of love and belonging (Maslow, 1954), involves friendship, intimacy, others' acceptance, exchanging affection, and being part of a group (Sheldon et al., 2001). Therefore, social acceptance motivates employees to be engaged in more positive work behaviors, and to be eventually more satisfied (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3b: Social acceptance positively influences employees' job satisfaction

Social acceptance impact on employee wellbeing

Employee wellbeing can be conceptualized through the three-dimension model of subjective wellbeing (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2014), as comprising increased positive affect, decreased negative affect, and a rational evaluation of one's overall life satisfaction. More specifically and relevantly, Keyes and Lopez (2002) stated that wellbeing consists of five social facets: namely, social acceptance, social actualization, social contribution, social coherence, and social integration. Additionally, to further sustain social concerns' significance to employee wellbeing, Christchurch City Council (2005) described objective wellbeing as comprising social environment, employment, and the quality of working life, education and learning, health, physical environment, and personal safety, time availability and leisure, and command over goods and services. Both perspectives thus substantiate the importance of social interest. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3c: Social acceptance positively influences employees' wellbeing

Social acceptance impact on counterproductive work behaviors

Counterproductive work behaviors are considered highly antisocial behaviors that intentionally cause harm and violate organizational norms and values (Vardi & Weitz, 2003). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also emphasized that the effort exerted by an ostracized employee, or by any employee who intends to restore or acquire social acceptance, involves compromising perpetrators' deliberate ostracizing practices, and controlling and holding down his/her own aggressive reactions, to restore social relationships and be reaccepted by previously contradicting colleagues. Moreover, Jawahar et al. (2007) stated that the theory of conservation of resources dictates that, to be in control and maximize personal resources, employees have to develop and maintain the proper political and social skills. Perrewe´ et al. (2005) complemented that such skills would help them make up for lost personal resources and control their counterproductive work behavior. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3d: Social acceptance negatively influences employees' counterproductive behavior

The moderating role of interpersonal influence

An employee's interpersonal influence refers to the competence of properly adapting and regulating his/her behavior according to varying situations to stimulate desirable responses from other employees (Ferris, Davidson & Perrewe, 2005). Such a capacity can highly affect the employee's social influences (Higgins et al., 2003). Munyon et al. (2015) complemented that interpersonally influential employees are usually more self-motivated, can better control their work environment, are perceived as being pleasant by others, and enjoy more flexible interactions with their colleagues. Furthermore, positive interpersonal influence empowers employees to adopt and demonstrate desirable social interactions with their colleagues, which would generate higher levels of social acceptance, and motivate them to engage in more positive work behaviors. On the other hand, employees with weak interpersonal influence are more isolated, ostracized, demotivated, engage in less positive work behaviors, and are thus expected to be less socially accepted (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Therefore, interpersonal influence represents an organizational, political and relational necessity, as it contributes both to controlling the employee's behavioral style and stimulating positive influence on and social relationships with other employees (Ferris et al., 2005). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Interpersonal influence moderates the negative impact of overqualification on social acceptance

The mediating role of social acceptance

Building upon the aforementioned discussions, and according to the logically hypothesized impact of overqualification on organizational attitude, and the induced impact of social acceptance on organizational attitude, the present research proposes that employees' social acceptance represents a typical mediator of the relationship between employees' overqualification and components of their organizational attitude. This hypothesis is based on the idea that overqualification holds a major influence on employees' social acceptance, and, in turn, employees' social acceptance is associated with organizational attitude, playing an indispensable role in the ultimate overqualification-organizational-attitude correlation. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 5: Social acceptance significantly mediates the link between overqualification and organizational attitude

Methods

Sample characteristics

Based on a purposive sample, paper-based surveys have been circulated in January 2020 to a sample of 409 frontline employees in five-star hotels and category (A) travel agencies in Greater Cairo. 33 five-star hotels operate in Greater Cairo (Egyptian Tourism Chamber, 2017), where a sample of 350 frontline hotel employees was targeted, among which, 248 survey copies were collected, among which 225 were statistically valid and usable. Whilst 1229 travel agencies operate in Egypt, among which, it was determined to target those operating in Greater Cairo, where a sample of 300 frontline travel agency employees was targeted, among which, 209 survey copies were collected, among which 184 were statistically valid and usable. Overall, 457 copies were collected (70.3% as a response rate), of which 409 were usable copies, whereas 48 were deemed non-usable due to missing data. 55% of the participants are frontline hotels employees, while 45% were frontline travel agencies employees.

The sample profile depicts those frontline employees in surveyed hotels and travel agencies were almost youths, ranging from 26 to 35 years old (61.9%), followed by the 18-25 age group (27.4%). Regarding gender, a noticeably higher percentage of males was recognized (approximately 73.1%) as is common in the Middle East region's broader economy, where more male employees are involved than women. This trend was also noted by Abdelhamied and Elbaz (2018); Elbaz et al. (2019); Mekawy and Elbaz (2020); Elbaz et al. (2020); Elkhwesky et al. (2018); Elkhwesky et al. (2021); Salem et al. (2021); Abou-Shouk et al. (2021); Al-Azab et al (2021), where the Egyptian female labor force contribution rate is much lower than the global average. Education-wise, two-thirds of frontline employees hold at least a bachelor's degree (67.5%). Besides, 48.9 % of the participants' experience ranged between 5 to 11 years, followed by 40.1% of respondents whose experience ranged between 5 to 10 years.

Measures

In the current study, seven constructs are used; overqualification, job satisfaction, intention to quit, wellbeing, counterproductive work behavior, social acceptance, and interpersonal influence. The research variables were measured using multiple items, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To ensure content validity, items were derived from preceding studies. Further details for these measures are provided in the appendix. The overqualification status of employees was measured by a 9-item scale developed

by Maynard et al. (2006). Job satisfaction was measured with the 10-item scale developed by Macdonald and Maclntyre (1997). The 3-items scale developed by Camman et al. (1979) was used to assess employees' intention to quit. Employees' well-being was assessed with the 12-item scale proposed by Warr (1990). For measuring counterproductive work behavior, Bennett and Robinson's (2000) 12-item scale of organizational deviance was adopted. For measuring social acceptance, the 7-item scale of (Scott & Judge, 2009) was utilized. Finally, to assess interpersonal influence, the Political Skill Inventory (PSI) 4-item scale developed by Ferris et al. (2005) was adopted.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	Percent
Working place	
Hotels	55.0
Travel agency	45.0
Gender	
Male	73.1
Female	26.9
Age group	
18-25 Years	27.0
26-35 Years	61.1
36-45 Years	10.0
More than 45 Years	1.9
Educational level	
Bachelor degree	67.5
Diploma	13.2
Postgraduates	19.3
Work Experience	
Less than 5 Years	9.3
From 5-10 Years	40.1
From 11-15 Years	48.9
More than 15 Years	1.7

Analysis and results

It is essential to substantiate the validity and reliability of the adopted measures. Therefore, we followed Cheng, Chang, and Li (2013) technique to evaluate the reliability and validity of all constructs through structural equation modeling, aided by WarpPLS 7.0 software (Kock, 2020), which have been broadly used in tourism research (Salem & Mobarak, 2018; Dardeer et al., 2017).

Reliability and validity

The instruments' internal reliability and convergent validity have been estimated utilizing composite reliability (CR), Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and the average variance extracted (AVE). The results based on the empirical data collected are shown in Table 2. According to Henseler, Hubona and Ray (2016), who determined relevant acceptable thresholds, the three indicators (CR, Cronbach's alpha, and AVE) show acceptable indices exceeding the cut-off thresholds of 0.7 and 0.5 for reliability and validity, respectively. In addition, *factor loadings*, *t ratios* and *confidence intervals* are provided (see Table 3).

Table 2: Reliability and Validity (convergent) of Measures

Constructs	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	VIF
Over qualification	0.931	0.890	0.819	2.350
Social Acceptance	0.926	0.903	0.788	1.735
Intention to Quit	0.974	0.948	0.950	3.693
Job Satisfaction	0.951	0.935	0.796	3.488
Wellbeing	0.939	0.902	0.837	3.389
Counterproductive	0.911	0.887	0.566	1.134
Interpersonal Influence	0.874	0.782	0.698	1.344

The discriminant validity has been verified via AVE square roots. According to Henseler et al. (2016), and Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root of each construct's AVE should be greater than the correlations with remaining constructs, so that for discriminant validity to be well-established. Hence, Table 3 approves this requirement.

Table 3. PLS approach confirmatory factor analysis

Construct	Loadings	T ratios	Significance	Confidence Intervals 2.5%	97.5%
Overqualification1	(0.921)	21.082	0.000	0.835	1.007
Overqualification2	(0.916)	20.961	0.000	0.831	1.002
Overqualification3	(0.916)	20.952	0.000	0.830	1.002
Overqualification4	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Overqualification5	(0.857)	19.439	0.000	0.770	0.943
Overqualification6	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Overqualification7	N.A.)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Overqualification8	(0.912)	20.848	0.000	0.826	0.998
Overqualification9	(0.855)	19.393	0.000	0.768	0.941
Social Accpetance1	(0.721)	16.072	0.000	0.633	0.809
Social Accpetance2	(0.848)	19.231	0.000	0.762	0.935
Social Accpetance3	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Social Accpetance4	(0.852)	19.329	0.000	0.766	0.939
Social Accpetance5	(0.857)	19.446	0.000	0.771	0.943
Social Accpetance6	(0.823)	18.594	0.000	0.736	0.910
Social Accpetance7	(0.822)	18.556	0.000	0.735	0.908
Interpersonal Influence1	(0.803)	18.080	0.000	0.713	0.882
Interpersonal Influence2	(0.815)	18.399	0.000	0.751	0.920
Interpersonal Influence3	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Interpersonal Influence4	(0.886)	20.176	0.000	0.764	0.932
Intention To Quit1	(0.974)	22.454	0.000	0.889	1.059
Intention To Quit2	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Intention To Quit4	(0.974)	22.454	0.000	0.889	1.059
Job Satisfaction 1	(0.816)	18.406	0.000	0.729	0.902
Job Satisfaction 2	(0.925)	21.189	0.000	0.840	1.011
Job Satisfaction 3	(0.899)	20.523	0.000	0.813	0.985
Job Satisfaction 4	(0.902)	20.585	0.000	0.816	0.988
Job Satisfaction 5	(0.916)	20.941	0.000	0.830	1.001
Job Satisfaction 6	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Wellbeing1	(0.888)	20.244	0.000	0.802	0.974
Wellbeing2	(0.907)	20.726	0.000	0.821	0.993
Wellbeing3	(0.922)	21.099	0.000	0.836	1.007
Wellbeing4	(0.928)	21.249	0.000	0.842	1.013
Wellbeing5	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Wellbeing6	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Counterproductive Behaviour 1	(0.746)	16.679	0.000	0.658	0.834
Counterproductive Behaviour 2	(0.769)	17.235	0.000	0.681	0.856
Counterproductive Behaviour 3	(0.770)	17.271	0.000	0.683	0.857
Counterproductive Behaviour 4	(0.888)	20.225	0.000	0.802	0.974
Counterproductive Behaviour 5	(0.845)	19.143	0.000	0.758	0.931
Counterproductive Behaviour 6	(0.722)	16.089	0.000	0.634	0.810
Counterproductive Behaviour 7	(0.639)	14.074	0.000	0.550	0.728
Counterproductive Behaviour 8	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Counterproductive Behaviour 9	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Counterproductive Behaviour10	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

*Dropped item due to low loading N.A. Not Applicable

Besides, Henseler (2018) suggested the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) rate of associations to assess the instruments' discriminant validity. This new test was employed to confirm discriminant validity. In this regard, Kock (2020) proposed that, if the HTMT value is less than 0.90, then discriminant validity is appropriate, which is also attained for the current study (see Table 4).

In conclusion, Podsakoff et al. (2003) confirm that to check multicollinearity concerns and common method bias, both the variance inflation factor (VIF) and Harman's single factor should be tested. The VIF for each instrument is lower than the threshold of 5, indicating no

major collinearity problems. Moreover, Harman's test demonstrates that the single factor accounted for 39.9% of the total variance, which proposes no major issue of common method bias.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

AVEs							
Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Over qualification	(0.905)						
2. Social Acceptance	-0.187	(0.822)					
3. Intention to Quit	0.700	-0.418	(0.975)				
4. Job Satisfaction	-0.634	0.484	-0.783	(0.892)			
5. Wellbeing	-0.667	0.450	-0.776	0.749	(0.915)		
6. Counterproductive	0.085	-0.174	0.077	-0.107	-0.198	(0.752)	
7. Interpersonal Influence	-0.131	0.389	-0.138	0.078	0.254	-0.191	(0.835)
HTMT							
Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Over qualification							
2. Social Acceptance	0.215						
3. Intention to Quit	0.763	0.450					
4. Job Satisfaction	0.694	0.526	0.831				
5. Wellbeing	0.745	0.498	0.839	0.814			
6. Counterproductive	0.162	0.217	0.099	0.135	0.221		
7. Interpersonal Influence	0.161	0.461	0.180	0.137	0.303	0.301	

Results of hypotheses testing

The next section introduces the conceptual model path coefficients (β), p values, and R^2 values (see Figure 2). Findings confirm employee overqualification has a positive, significant influence on employees' intention to leave (β = 0.67 and $p < 0.01$). This means that overqualification leads employees to seriously consider quitting their jobs. Hence, H1a is supported. Moreover, overqualification has a negative, significant influence on employees' job satisfaction (β = -0.62 and $p < 0.01$) and wellbeing, (β = -0.63 and $p < 0.01$).

These quite rational results signify that employee overqualification undermines his job satisfaction and wellbeing. Therefore, H1b and H1c are supported. However, no significant influence of employee overqualification was spotted to impact counterproductive behaviors (β = 0.05 and p = 0.13). Thus, H1d is rejected. Besides, the results show that employee overqualification has a negative, significant influence on employees' social acceptance (β = -0.31 and $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, H2 is supported.

In addition, results show that social acceptance has a negative, significant influence on employees' intention to quit (β = -0.30 and p = < 0.01) and employees' counterproductive (β = -0.17 and $p < 0.01$). This means that employee social acceptance reduces their intention to leave and their counterproductive behavior. Hence, Hypotheses H3a and H3d are supported. In line with that, the results assert that employee social acceptance has a positive significant effect on employees' job satisfaction (β = 0.35 and $p < 0.01$) and wellbeing (β = 0.31 and $p < 0.01$). This signifies that social acceptance improves employees' job satisfaction and wellbeing in Egyptian hotels and travel agencies. Thus, H3b and H3c are supported. Overall, employee overqualification and social acceptance explained the variance of organizational attitude in terms of intention to quit (R^2 =0.62), job satisfaction (R2 =0.61), wellbeing (R^2 =0.59), and counterproductive (R^2 =0.04).
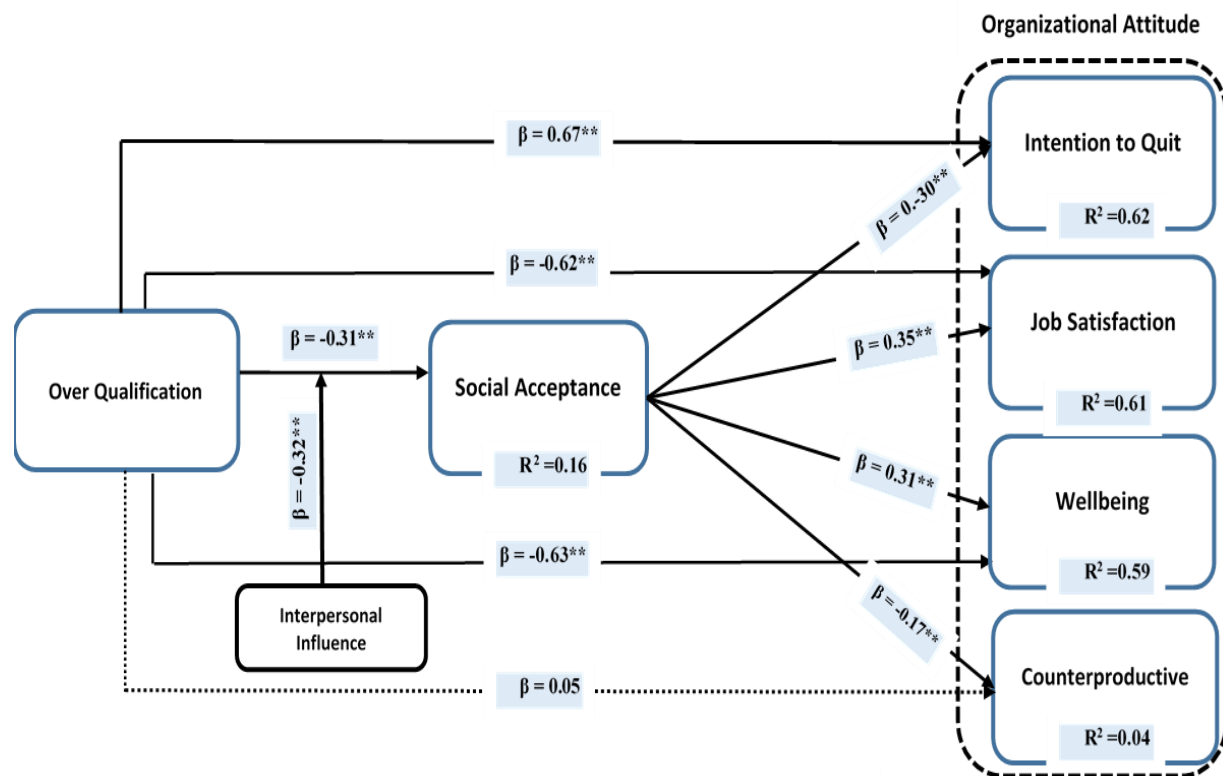
Figure 1. The research Path coefficients

As for the moderating role of interpersonal influence (see Table 5 and Figure 3), it plays a crucial role in reducing the negative effect of employees' overqualification on their social acceptance. Interpersonal influence significantly moderates the relationship between overqualification on employee social acceptance (β = -0.32 and P < 0.01). Hence, H4 is accepted. Overall, overqualification with the moderating role of interpersonal influence explained 16% of the variance of social acceptance (R2 = 0.16).
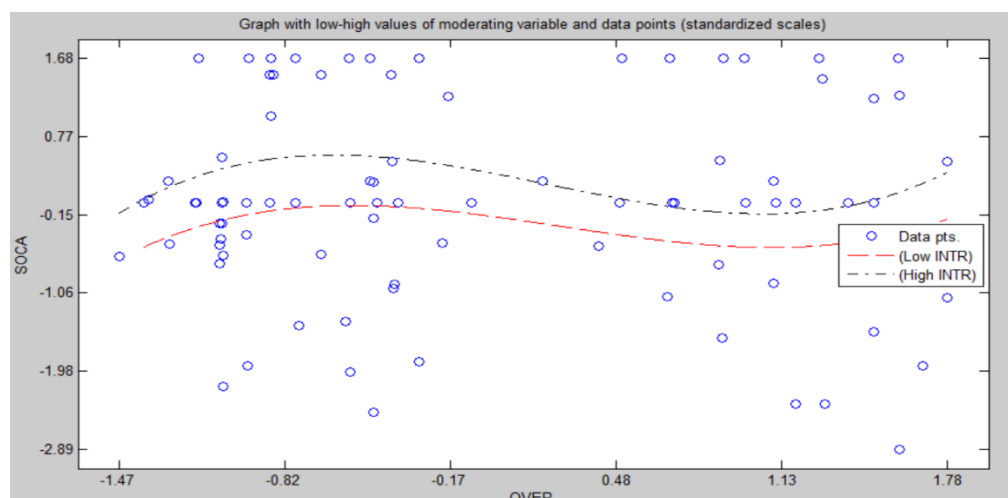

Figure 3. The moderating role of interpersonal influence

is constituents of organizational attitudes (counterproductive behavior, wellbeing, job satisfaction, and intention to leave), through the moderating role of interpersonal influence and the mediating

role of social acceptance in the domain of hospitality and tourism establishments. Currently, all institutions are performing huge efforts to hire experienced, well-qualified, and well-trained employees (Bellou & Chatzinikou, 2015). However, overqualified employees could represent a burden concerning the organizational outcomes, as they suffer downgraded job-based self-fulfillment, and are thus more likely to quit their jobs (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). Notwithstanding its growing influence and significance, overqualification has not been adequately scrutinized within the hospitality and tourism industry.

To understand the role of interpersonal influence in manoeuvring the impact of overqualification on social acceptance, and the role of social acceptance in mediating the association of overqualification to organizational attitude, a theoretical model was developed and tested that investigated the relationships among four constructs: overqualification, interpersonal influence, social acceptance, and organizational attitudes (counterproductive behavior, wellbeing, job satisfaction, and employee's intention to leave).

Theoretical implications

This research contributes to the theoretical and empirical literature in the tourism and hospitality industry, as overqualification in the hospitality and tourism industry is almost a novel construct that lacks due attention (Akbiyik, 2015). Our research is accordingly an endeavor to draw tourism and hospitality researchers' attention towards overqualification, associating it to social acceptance and organizational attitudes. Second, by drawing on the social influence theory, this study extended and offered an integrative theoretical model that not only illustrates how overqualification is associated with social acceptance and organizational attitude but also investigates interpersonal influence as an underlying mechanism in this relationship. Besides, social acceptance's magnitude was further examined through its mediating role between overqualification and organizational attitude.

Third, the literature review exhibits that even though prior research has studied employees' overqualification, little consideration has been given to the implicit causes behind the association between overqualification and its outcomes (Deng et al., 2018). To complement previous attempts, the current research answers the question of "To what extent overqualification predicts employees' counterproductive behavior, wellbeing, job satisfaction, and intention to quit work". Overqualified employees may perceive that they are not completely employing their skills, creativity, and ambition in the workplace, thus they would consider quitting and seeking another job that best suits their advanced profile. This result is harmonious with previous research (i.e., Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Erdogan et al., 2011; Kengatharan, 2011; Maynard, 2006).

Fourth, unlike the social influence theory, our findings affirmed the hypothesized negative impact of overqualification on social acceptance. This might be due to those negative emotions correlated to being overqualified could negatively affect social acceptance in the workplace. Moreover, overqualified employees are likely to irritatingly interact with peers, which would drive to the stereotypically adverse social image that they are self-important and act superiorly to others. Overqualified employees might roughly interact with peers, leading to the distinctively unacceptable social image that they are egotistical and act higher-level to others. These insights thus go to the contrary of earlier research conducted by Erdogan and Bauer (2009) and Liu et al. (2015).

Fifth, as far as we can figure, our research sets a preamble in its association of hospitality and travel agencies' employees' social acceptance with organizational attitude. We find social acceptance negatively associated with intention to leave work and counterproductive behaviors, while being positively correlated to job satisfaction and wellbeing. The due rationale is that when employees exchange positive relations among

themselves and with management and are motivated to carry out their tasks as a team, this will energize their organizational commitment. This finding is uniform with previous studies of Griffin et al. (2007) and Stephens et al. (2012). Our study answered the question of "how social acceptance intervenes with the relation between overqualification and organizational attitude". The partial mediating role of social acceptance implies that overqualification is linked directly and indirectly to organizational attitude. The foundation for this mediation might be that, when overqualified employees are trusted, appreciated, or respected by their peers, they would show commitment, utilizing their skills, talents, and abilities to contribute to the best interests of their colleagues and their organizations (Deng et al., 2008 & Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

Finally, by pinpointing interpersonal influence as a powerful moderator, our research answers the question of "whether interpersonal influence has a role in decreasing the negative impact of overqualification on social acceptance among frontline employees in the tourism and hospitality industry". To best utilize overqualified employees' potential and try to minimize the negative aspects and consequences of overqualification, our study figured out interpersonal influence as a proactive agent that can support their social acceptance, and thus steer their organizational attitudes for the organization's best interest. The current study enterprisingly shed light on an innovative, off-the-beaten-track approach to transform the plethora of talents of overqualified employees into productive capacity that can contribute to the organization's effectiveness. This finding builds on and is consistent with prior empirical research explaining how interpersonal influence fits into the association between overqualification and social acceptance (Deng et al., 2018; Ferris et al., 2005; Liu et al., 2015). It is thus inferred that if overqualified employees lacked effective interpersonal influence, this would generate social hardships, to add to the already existing overqualification-driven social acceptance problems. The eventual casualty is employees' organizational attitude. Consequently, our study, not only contributes to overqualification literature in tourism and hospitality but also additionally suggests interpersonal influence as a major catalyst among frontline employees.

Practical implications

The findings of the current research have numerous implications for hotels and travel agencies. Given that the competition for and efforts to retain skilled employees and maximize their commitment have become as relevant as recruiting them, overqualification contradicts those efforts and put them at stake. Although findings affirm that overqualified employees would report higher intention to quit and lower job satisfaction and wellbeing, it is not fundamentally advocated to cease hiring overqualified staff. While hiring the right person for the right job remains an undisputed recruiting efficacy, but there still are cases where establishments would inevitably hire overqualified employees, either due to scarcity of fitting applicants, or due to crises that hit the tourism and hospitality sector every now and then, such as Covid-19, where many employees lose their jobs, and may thus be in need to accept whatever available jobs. Hence, the current research suggests ways to diminish the likely unfavorable consequences of overqualification, through the impact of interpersonal influence and social acceptance, in order to maximize and best utilize the potential of overqualified employees.

Whenever managers in tourism and hospitality organizations hire, or spot, an overqualified employee, their first and foremost concern must be to configure innovative approaches to best utilize his/her potential and minimize due to drawbacks, mainly through raising that employee's interpersonal influence capabilities. This is a crucial factor to minimize overqualification negative impacts, through improving the overqualified employee's aptitude to prompt his/her own positive behavior, induce colleagues' supportive reactions, develop better self-motivation, better work environment control, and fruitful political and relational skills, promote more positively flexible social influences and social acceptance, and,

eventually, generate desirable organizational attitudes and attain joint goals. Otherwise, managers will have to deal with negative symptoms, where the overqualified employee would be more isolated, demotivated, and less socially accepted, with the ultimately predicted negative organizational attitudes.

Interpersonal influence should be developed among overqualified, and even all other, employees through multiple measures. First, it should be included as recruitment, screening, and selection criterion if a new applicant is identified as overqualified. This would increase the employee's performance, social acceptance, and organizational attitude. Besides, interpersonal influence and organizational relationships must be an integral part of orientation and training programs to equip the overqualified employee with due personal and social tools to boost his social acceptance on the job. Last, but not least, the organizational climate must be designed to help develop and maintain interpersonal and group cohesion and support mutual interests.

In the parallel stream, social acceptance among the workgroup members must be developed, raised, and maintained. Any likely indicators of an isolated or ostracized employee, particularly if overqualified, must be identified, resolved and settled. An overqualified employee may be disliked by the workgroup, either due to his/her own supercilious attitude and behavior, or due to other employees' dislike of having a better performing, more experienced, and higher qualified colleague. Leaders should thus encourage mutual devotion and commitment to common social and values (Elkhwesky et al. 2022). Overqualified employees should be encouraged, not only to provide higher performance levels commensurate with their qualifications but also to contribute to raising the mutual, collaborative workgroup performance level, through serving as mentors to others. Hence, social acceptance would secure the organization against overqualification-caused drawbacks like dissatisfaction, diminished well-being, intention to quit, and counterproductive behavior.

To support employees' social acceptance, managers should constantly reveal and measure employees' commitment to the progress and shared goals of the company. Furthermore, managers should obviously communicate work prospects, while simultaneously assuring that employees' job-related knowledge and skills are fully utilized. Managers should also involve and build upon employees' interpersonal influence, assuring that employees are organizationally appreciated for their participation by, for example, celebrating different individual and team-based success stories, and supporting each other in case of disappointments. Managers can also foster training programs that concentrate on social acceptance, employee participation, and interpersonal influence to enhance engagement and self-esteem among overqualified employees.

In addition, managers of hotel and travel agencies should invest in maximizing job satisfaction and wellbeing, while minimizing counterproductive and intention to quit job by increasing the workgroup cohesiveness. For that to be attained, overqualified employees' motives should be understood and reflected in the workplace environment. They should also be engaged differently, with their advice valued and due credit given to them. Moreover, managers can ask them to be involved in advanced tasks, with sufficient autonomy provided to them to create group-based resolution. By doing so, overqualified employees will feel that their talents have an added value and are appropriated at work. Assuring that all employees, and particularly those overqualified, are incorporated into the organization's mutual vision and mission through consistent intercommunication will reinforce the impression of being valued.

Limitations and perspectives for future research

The current study findings should be approached with concern to its limitations. First, the current study utilized cross-sectional data collection. Whilst the essence of the relationships is expected to be accurate, an analysis of data collected longitudinally would likely contribute to

more precise analyses of cause and effect. Our findings are expected to be generalized to younger overqualified employees in the hospitality and tourism domain, but generalizability to other staff categories should be examined in future studies. Our sample targeted five-star hotels and category (A) travel agencies only. Therefore, replicating further research with a more diverse sample would be more advisable.

More research on the frontier contexts of overqualification will be essential to support tourism and hospitality companies in the management of overqualified employees. More quantitative and qualitative measures in prospective studies should be adopted to better comprehend the overqualification dimensions. The research sample is exclusively for Egyptian hotels and travel agencies, which might restrict the generalizability of our findings to Egypt and countries with similar cultural, economic and social contexts. While prior studies have not affirmed cross-cultural discrepancies in the effects of overqualification, we stimulate future research to replicate our model by using samples from different cultures. Although the current research investigated organizational attitude as a consequence of overqualification, a call to investigate proximal behavioral results, such as feedback-seeking and knowledge sharing so that the approaches incorporated with organizational attitude can be more explicitly understood. Moreover, it would be advantageous to distinguish between different types of overqualification.

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