

# Employee Empowerment Across Functional Areas: A Profile-Based Analysis of Hotel Employees

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## ABSTRACT

Empowerment in organizations emphasizes the importance of a shared vision, clear communication, and mutual trust so that employees understand the goals and expectations of the organization. Without this common understanding, empowerment efforts risk creating confusion rather than improving performance. When employees feel trusted and are encouraged to take initiative without fear of punishment, they become more willing to take risks and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals.

Employee empowerment has gained significant attention in both research and practice because of its strong relationship with improved job satisfaction, commitment, and overall performance. Empowered employees are able to make timely decisions, respond to environmental changes, and contribute to the organization's flexibility and innovativeness. As globalization increases workplace demands, organizations that promote empowerment are better positioned to motivate, retain, and fully utilize their workforce. Empowerment involves breaking boundaries between management and employees, fostering trust, enhancing motivation, and enabling participation in decision-making.

Scholars and practitioners highlight that empowerment is not simply a transfer of authority but also a leadership and motivational strategy. Effective empowerment involves leadership behaviors such as coaching, mentoring, valuing contributions, encouraging initiative, and supporting employees' autonomy. Research shows that psychological empowerment—characterized by autonomy, competence, meaningfulness, and impact—positively influences employee performance, motivation, and willingness to exert extra effort, especially during organizational challenges.

Although empowerment has been studied extensively worldwide, there remains a need to examine how it operates in specific local contexts. In the hotel and restaurant industry, where employees differ widely in background, education, culture, and personality, the dynamics of empowerment may vary significantly. This study thus seeks to explore the empowerment level of hotel employees in Tarlac City and determine whether demographic factors such as age, gender, educational attainment, length of employment, and number of trainings influence their sense of empowerment. Given the limited local research, this study is positioned as a relevant and timely contribution to understanding empowerment within the hospitality sector.

**Keywords:** Autonomy, Empowerment, Hotel, Participation, Middle Management, Responsibility

## INTRODUCTION

Employee empowerment has increasingly become a central theme in contemporary organizational management, grounded in the premise that employees must share a common understanding of organizational goals, strategies, and expectations. Establishing this shared vision is essential, as attempts to empower employees without clear communication can lead to confusion and weakened organizational cohesion. Effective empowerment requires management to articulate the direction of the organization and build an environment of mutual trust where employees feel confident to take initiative without fear of punishment. When trust is present, empowerment not only enhances decision-making but also encourages risk-taking, innovation, and a higher level of ownership among employees.

Across various sectors, empowerment is widely recognized as a key contributor to organizational success, with studies reporting strong linkages between empowerment and improved job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. As global competition intensifies, organizations increasingly rely on empowered employees who can act quickly, adapt to changing external conditions, and contribute to organizational flexibility. Empowerment further promotes motivation and engagement by breaking traditional hierarchical barriers and allowing employees to participate more actively in decisions that affect their work. Scholars argue that when implemented effectively, empowerment strengthens organizational innovativeness and enhances competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Leadership plays a critical role in creating conditions for empowerment. Empowering leaders provide coaching, mentoring, and developmental opportunities; encourage initiative; recognize employee contributions; and offer autonomy in determining work methods. Research on psychological empowerment suggests that dimensions such as autonomy, competence, meaningfulness, and impact significantly enhance employee performance and intrinsic motivation. Employees who perceive higher levels of empowerment tend to demonstrate greater effort, creativity, and resilience, especially during periods of organizational turbulence. These findings underscore the importance of empowerment as both a management technique and a motivational strategy.

While empowerment has been examined in numerous organizational contexts, gaps remain in understanding how empowerment emerges within specific cultural and industry settings. The hospitality industry, particularly hotel operations, presents unique dynamics due to its diverse workforce and the demanding nature of service delivery. Employees vary widely in terms of educational background, cultural orientation, personality, and work experiences, all of which may influence their perception of empowerment. In Tarlac City, limited empirical research has explored empowerment among hotel employees despite the sector's growing significance. This study therefore seeks to assess the empowerment levels of hotel employees in the locality and examine whether demographic factors—such as age, gender, educational attainment, length of employment, and number of trainings attended—significantly influence their sense of empowerment. Addressing this gap will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of empowerment within the Philippine hospitality industry and inform strategies for enhancing employee involvement, performance, and organizational effectiveness.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study aimed to determine the profile of the hotel employees in Tarlac City and their level of empowerment.

Specifically, the researcher sought answers to the following questions:

1. How are the respondents in Tarlac City described in terms of
  - 1.1 highest educational attainment,
  - 1.2 length of employment,
  - 1.3 department/unit,
  - 1.4 number of trainings, and
  - 1.5 seminars attended?
2. How are the respondents described in terms of employee empowerment along areas of
  - 2.1 autonomy,
  - 2.2 participation, and
  - 2.3 responsibility?
3. Is there a relationship between the respondents' profile and their empowerment?

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4. What are the problems encountered by the respondents in terms of empowerment?
5. What can be proposed or recommended based on the findings of the study?

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

The hypothesis hereunder was tested at .05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between the hotel employees' profile and their level of empowerment.

## **RELATED LITERATURE**

Employee empowerment has been widely examined in organizational and management literature as a strategic mechanism for enhancing employee motivation, performance, and organizational effectiveness. Rather than being viewed merely as the delegation of authority, empowerment is increasingly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that encompasses psychological, structural, and relational components. Scholars argue that empowerment strengthens employees' sense of meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation and improved work outcomes (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995).

### **Theoretical Foundations of Employee Empowerment**

Early empowerment theories emphasized structural arrangements, such as decentralization of authority and participative management practices. However, later scholarship shifted attention toward psychological empowerment, focusing on employees' perceptions rather than formal structures. Spreitzer (1995) identified four core dimensions of psychological empowerment—meaningfulness, competence, self-determination, and impact—which collectively shape how empowered employees feel in their roles. These dimensions underscore that empowerment exists when employees believe their work is valuable, feel capable of performing it, have autonomy in execution, and perceive their actions as influential to organizational outcomes.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) further argued that empowerment enhances intrinsic motivation by increasing self-efficacy, particularly when employees experience autonomy and responsibility. This theoretical shift suggests that empowerment outcomes depend not only on managerial intent but also on how employees interpret their work environment. In service-oriented industries such as hospitality, these perceptions are especially critical, as employees frequently make real-time decisions that directly affect customer satisfaction.

### **Autonomy as a Dimension of Empowerment**

Autonomy refers to employees' perceived freedom to determine how they perform their work and make decisions within their roles. Literature consistently links autonomy with improved performance, creativity, and job satisfaction. Singh (2003) emphasized that empowered organizations provide employees with discretion over task execution, allowing them to adapt to situational demands. Similarly, Venkat Ratnam (2006) viewed autonomy as central to empowerment, arguing that enriched jobs promote accountability and initiative.

Empirical studies in hospitality settings support this perspective. Fulford and Enz (1995) found that granting autonomy to hotel employees enhances service speed and quality, while Kilon (2003) reported that autonomy enables frontline staff to respond effectively to customer needs. However, some scholars caution that excessive autonomy without adequate guidance may lead to role ambiguity or inconsistent service delivery (Ravichandran & Shirley, 2006). This highlights the importance of balancing autonomy with clear standards and accountability mechanisms.

### **Participation and Shared Decision-Making**

Participation represents employees' involvement in organizational decision-making, planning, and goal-setting. It is closely associated with the impact dimension of psychological empowerment, as employees feel empowered when they perceive their contributions influence organizational direction (Spreitzer, 1995). Numerous studies suggest that participatory practices enhance organizational commitment, trust, and innovation (Baird & Wang,

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2010; Ongori, 2009).

Despite these benefits, participation remains unevenly implemented, particularly in hierarchical or owner-managed organizations. Heathfield (2012) noted that while many organizations espouse empowerment rhetorically, decision-making authority often remains centralized. In hospitality contexts, studies reveal that participation is frequently limited to operational matters, with strategic decisions retained by top management (Baumgartner, 2014). This restricted participation can undermine empowerment by diminishing employees' perceived value and influence, even when autonomy in task execution is present.

### Responsibility and Accountability

Responsibility refers to employees' sense of ownership over their work and accountability for outcomes. Scholars emphasize that empowerment is incomplete without responsibility, as autonomy without accountability may weaken performance standards (Roller, 1998). Responsibility aligns with the meaningfulness and competence dimensions of psychological empowerment, where employees view their work as important and believe their actions matter.

Research consistently shows that empowered employees demonstrate higher responsibility, professionalism, and commitment to quality outcomes. Dessler (2011) argued that responsibility is reinforced through clear expectations, performance feedback, and professional development. In hospitality settings, responsibility is particularly salient due to the direct link between employee behavior and customer satisfaction (Briggs, 2008). However, responsibility may also be reinforced by external pressures—such as customer expectations—rather than organizational empowerment structures alone, suggesting a complex interaction between personal ethics and organizational practices.

### Empowerment and Employee Performance in Hospitality

A substantial body of research establishes a positive relationship between employee empowerment and performance outcomes, including productivity, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Zeglat et al. (2014) found that psychological empowerment significantly predicts customer-oriented behavior among hotel employees, surpassing the influence of structural empowerment. Similarly, Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoen (2013) emphasized the role of training and skill development in strengthening empowerment and service performance.

However, scholars also note that empowerment outcomes vary across contexts. Cultural norms, leadership styles, and organizational structures influence how empowerment is enacted and experienced. In collectivist cultures, employees may value harmony and job security over participation, potentially limiting empowerment's impact (Hechanova & Franco). These findings suggest that empowerment cannot be universally applied without considering contextual and cultural factors.

### Local Studies on Employee Empowerment

Local Philippine studies generally support international findings, highlighting empowerment's positive effects on job satisfaction and performance. Palo (2009) reported that empowerment enhances motivation among service employees, while Frialde (2011) identified gaps in participatory decision-making within local hotels. Tolenada (2009) further noted that manpower and structural challenges in Philippine hotels often limit employee involvement in organizational planning.

Despite these contributions, local studies tend to focus on empowerment outcomes rather than examining empowerment dimensions in relation to employee profile characteristics. Moreover, many studies do not explicitly integrate psychological empowerment theory, resulting in descriptive rather than theory-driven analyses.

## Research Gap

While extensive international and local literature confirms the importance of employee empowerment, several gaps remain evident. First, limited empirical research has examined empowerment among hotel employees in provincial Philippine contexts, particularly in emerging hospitality destinations such as Tarlac City. Second, existing studies often treat empowerment as a general construct, without systematically analyzing its core dimensions—autonomy, participation, and responsibility—and how these dimensions vary across employee profile characteristics. Finally, few studies explicitly integrate psychological empowerment theory to explain why certain empowerment dimensions are stronger or weaker within specific organizational settings. Addressing these gaps, the present study examines the level of empowerment among hotel employees in Tarlac City across autonomy, participation, and responsibility, and investigates how employee profile variables relate to these empowerment dimensions.

## Research Method

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the profile of hotel employees in Tarlac City and determine their level of empowerment. The descriptive component enabled the researcher to characterize participants in terms of highest educational attainment, length of employment, department assignment, and the number of trainings and seminars attended, while the correlational component was used to identify whether these profile variables were associated with empowerment levels. A total of 43 middle-management employees from four Department of Tourism-accredited hotels—Central Park Hotel, L Square Hotel, La Majarica Hotel, and Microtel—participated in the study. These employees represented key functional departments such as housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and accounting, making them suitable respondents due to their involvement in operational and supervisory tasks where empowerment is enacted.

Data were gathered using two instruments. The first was a structured profile survey that collected demographic and employment information. The second was the Perception of Empowerment Instrument (PEI) developed by Roller (1998), a 15-item tool measuring autonomy, participation, and responsibility as dimensions of empowerment. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “never” to “always,” enabling classification of empowerment levels from not empowered to highly empowered. The instrument underwent pilot testing among hotel employees in Clark, Pampanga, and reliability assessment using Cronbach’s alpha, which confirmed satisfactory internal consistency across all constructs. Its content validity was further strengthened through the review of four experts in management, research, and hotel operations.

Prior to the administration of the instruments, formal permission to conduct the study was secured from hotel managers and administrators. The researcher coordinated with designated contact persons in each hotel to distribute and retrieve questionnaires, ensuring that employees were able to answer them within their available schedules. Follow-ups were conducted to achieve full retrieval, and all responses were handled with confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies and percentages were computed to summarize the respondents’ profiles, while weighted means were used to assess empowerment levels according to the interpretation scale provided by Roller (1998). To determine whether empowerment was significantly related to any of the profile variables, Pearson’s Chi-Square Test of Association was employed at a 0.05 level of significance. This statistical technique was appropriate for identifying relationships among categorical variables without manipulating conditions, thereby aligning with the natural setting of the study.

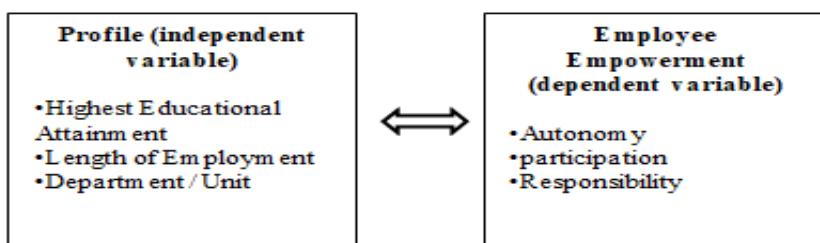


Figure 1. Paradigm of the study

This study is anchored on psychological empowerment theory, which posits that empowerment is reflected in employees' perceptions of autonomy, participation, and responsibility within their work environment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995).

The independent variables consist of selected employee profile characteristics, namely age, gender, highest educational attainment, length of employment, department or unit assignment, number of trainings attended, and number of seminars attended. The dependent variables are the three dimensions of employee empowerment: autonomy, participation, and responsibility. Autonomy refers to employees' perceived freedom in carrying out work tasks and making decisions within their job scope.

The framework assumes that employee profile characteristics may influence each empowerment dimension to varying degrees. While autonomy and responsibility may be embedded in job design and professional norms, participation is expected to be more sensitive to organizational structures and managerial practices.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The respondents consisted primarily of young to early middle-aged hotel employees, with most falling within the 20–34 age range. The workforce was predominantly female, college-educated, and employed for six to eight years, with a large proportion assigned to housekeeping and front-office departments. Most respondents had attended multiple trainings and seminars, indicating exposure to continuous professional development. This profile suggests a relatively experienced and trainable workforce, consistent with the operational demands of the hospitality industry, where service quality, accountability, and adaptability are critical.

From a human capital perspective, this demographic composition aligns with hospitality labor patterns reported in regional and international studies, where hotels rely heavily on younger, formally educated employees for service-oriented roles (Zeglat et al., 2014; Baumgartner, 2014). However, while experience and training are expected to enhance empowerment, empowerment outcomes depend not only on individual characteristics but also on organizational structures and leadership practices.

### Level of Employee Empowerment:

Table I Autonomy

Indicators	wm	Description
I am my own boss most of the time.	4.35	Agree
I have freedom to decide how to do my job.	4.19	Agree
I can be creative in finding solutions to problems.	4.05	Agree
I have a lot of autonomy in my job.	3.88	Agree
I make my own decisions about how to do my work.	3.86	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>Empowered</b>

The results show that hotel employees generally perceive themselves as empowered in terms of autonomy, with a mean score of 4.07 indicating agreement across all indicators. Respondents reported feeling like "their own boss," noting that they understand their job expectations and can work responsibly without constant supervision. They also expressed having sufficient freedom to decide how to perform their tasks, although this freedom operates within the boundaries of their job descriptions and operational requirements. Employees further agreed that they can be creative in solving problems and make decisions related to their work, demonstrating practical problem-solving skills appropriate to their departments. Despite this autonomy, respondents acknowledged that decision-making still operates within a "span of control," and they seek supervisory guidance when issues exceed

their job scope. Overall, findings suggest that employees experience a strong sense of independence and accountability, reflecting an empowered work environment in terms of autonomy.

Results indicate that hotel employees are generally empowered in terms of autonomy, with respondents agreeing that they have freedom in deciding how to perform their tasks, make work-related decisions, and creatively solve problems within their job scope. This finding suggests that employees perceive a substantial level of self-direction and independence in daily operations.

From the lens of psychological empowerment theory (Spreitzer, 1995), autonomy reflects the self-determination dimension, wherein employees experience control over how they carry out their work. The high autonomy scores imply that employees possess clarity in role expectations and confidence in task execution, allowing them to function effectively without constant supervision. This aligns with Conger and Kanungo's (1988) assertion that empowerment enhances intrinsic motivation when employees perceive meaning and competence in their roles.

Comparatively, similar findings have been reported in hospitality settings in other countries, where operational autonomy is granted to frontline and middle-management staff to ensure quick service recovery and customer satisfaction (Fulford & Enz, 1995; Kilon, 2003). Local studies likewise suggest that Filipino hotel employees often enjoy task-level autonomy due to trust developed through experience and tenure (Palo, 2009). However, this autonomy remains bounded by organizational policies and standards, indicating that empowerment is operational rather than strategic in nature.

Table II Participation

Indicators	wm	Description
I am involved when changes are planned.	2.61	Neutral
I am involved in creating our vision of the future.	2.54	Neutral
I am involved in determining organizational goals.	2.47	Disagree
I am involved in decisions that affect me.	2.42	Disagree
My input is solicited in planning changes.	2.26	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.46</b>	<b>Somewhat Empowered</b>

The findings indicate that hotel employees feel only somewhat empowered in terms of participation, as reflected by a grand mean of 2.46. Respondents expressed a neutral stance regarding their involvement in planning changes or creating the organization's vision, and they generally disagreed that they participate in setting goals, influencing decisions, or providing input on organizational changes. Interviews confirmed that major decisions—including planning, goal-setting, and policy development—are made exclusively by top management or hotel owners, leaving middle-management employees with limited influence beyond their assigned tasks. Matters such as salary adjustments, incentives, and working conditions are likewise determined at higher managerial levels. As a result, employees feel they have minimal opportunity to contribute to organizational direction or workplace improvement, although they comply with existing rules to maintain job security and stability.

In contrast, respondents were found to be only somewhat empowered in terms of participation, particularly in areas involving organizational planning, goal-setting, and decision-making that affect them directly. Employees reported limited involvement in planning changes, shaping organizational vision, and contributing inputs to management decisions.

Theoretically, participation reflects the impact dimension of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995), where employees perceive that their actions can influence organizational outcomes. The low participation scores

suggest a disconnect between task autonomy and strategic inclusion, indicating a predominantly centralized management structure. While employees are trusted to execute tasks independently, they are excluded from higher-level decision-making processes.

This pattern is consistent with findings in developing-country hospitality contexts, where decision-making authority is often retained by owners and top management (Ongori, 2009; Ravichandran & Shirley, 2006). International studies emphasize that limited participation can weaken empowerment despite high autonomy, as employees may feel undervalued or disengaged from organizational direction (Baird & Wang, 2010). Local research similarly notes that Filipino employees tend to accept hierarchical decision-making structures, even when participation is restricted, due to cultural norms and job security concerns (Hechanova & Franco).

Table III Responsibility

Indicators	wm	Description
I take responsibility for what I do.	4.59	Strongly Agree
I am responsible for the outcomes of my actions.	4.54	Strongly Agree
I am personally responsible for the work I do.	4.54	Agree
I am responsible for the outcomes of my decision.	4.47	Agree
My ideas and inputs are valued.	4.40	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>Highly Empowered</b>

The results show that employees feel highly empowered in terms of responsibility, with a grand mean of 4.50. Respondents strongly agreed that they take responsibility for their actions and the outcomes of their work, recognizing that meeting standards and performing tasks effectively are essential to maintaining service quality and avoiding customer dissatisfaction or supervisory reprimands. Interviews further illustrated this sense of accountability, with employees describing situations in which they assumed additional duties to support colleagues and ensure operational continuity. Respondents also agreed that they are accountable for their decisions and that their ideas are valued, suggesting a strong sense of personal commitment and dedication to their roles. Overall, these findings portray a workforce that demonstrates high levels of ownership, professionalism, and reliability in carrying out their responsibilities.

Results further reveal that respondents are highly empowered in terms of responsibility, with strong agreement that they take accountability for their work and the outcomes of their decisions. This suggests a deeply ingrained sense of ownership and professional commitment among hotel employees.

Responsibility corresponds to the meaningfulness and competence dimensions of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995), where employees perceive their work as important and believe they are capable of performing it well. High responsibility scores indicate that employees internalize service standards and recognize the direct link between their performance and customer satisfaction. This is particularly critical in hospitality, where service failures are immediately visible to guests.

Comparable findings have been reported in both international and local studies, where hotel employees demonstrate high responsibility even in environments with limited participation (Dessler, 2011; Briggs, 2008). This phenomenon suggests that responsibility may be reinforced more by professional norms and customer expectations than by formal empowerment structures.

#### Relationship Between Employee Profile and Empowerment:

Analysis of the relationship between profile variables and empowerment dimensions reveals nuanced patterns.

No significant relationships were found between employee profile variables and autonomy, indicating that perceptions of task-level independence are consistent across age, gender, education, tenure, and department. This suggests that autonomy is embedded in job design rather than influenced by individual characteristics.

In terms of participation, significant relationships were observed with age, length of employment, number of trainings, and number of seminars attended. Employees with longer tenure and greater exposure to training appeared more aware of organizational processes and, consequently, more sensitive to their exclusion from decision-making. This finding supports the argument that as employees gain experience and knowledge, their expectations for involvement increase (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

For responsibility, significant relationships emerged only with the number of trainings and seminars attended. This underscores the role of continuous learning in reinforcing accountability and professional maturity. Training and seminars may strengthen employees' understanding of standards, ethics, and service quality, thereby enhancing their sense of responsibility regardless of demographic characteristics.

Table IV Profile and Autonomy

Profile Variables	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p-value	Interpretation
Age	10	16.478	0.087	Not Significant
Gender	2	1.978	0.372	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	8	7.426	0.491	Not Significant
Length of Employment	8	5.043	0.753	Not Significant
Department/Unit	4	5.259	.0511	Not Significant
Number of Trainings Attended	6	3.299	0.770	Not Significant
Number of Seminars Attended	6	5.128	0.527	Not Significant

Table IV shows the statistical relationship between profile and empowerment. Data computed show that no significant relationship was registered between age ( $X^2 = 16.478$ ,  $p=0.087$ ); gender ( $X^2 = 1.978$ ,  $p=0.372$ ); highest educational attainment ( $X^2 = 7.426$ ,  $p=0.491$ ); length of employment ( $X^2 = 5.043$ ,  $p=0.753$ ); department/unit ( $X^2 = 5.259$ ,  $p=.0511$ ); number of trainings attended ( $X^2 = 3.299$ ,  $p=0.770$ ); and number of seminars attended ( $X^2 = 5.128$ ,  $p=0.527$ ) and the level of employee empowerment of the respondents in terms of autonomy.

Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the employees' profile in all areas and the level of empowerment is accepted. It could therefore be deduced that the profile of the respondents does not in any way contribute to the generally "empowered" level of respondents in terms of autonomy, particularly in terms of being their own boss most of the time, having freedom to decide how to do their job, and being creative in finding solutions to problems.

Table V Profile and Participation

Profile Variables	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p-value	Interpretation
Age	10	19.086	0.039	Significant
Gender	2	2.237	0.327	Not Significant

Highest Educational Attainment	8	9.933	0.270	Not Significant
Length of Employment	8	18.224	0.042	Significant
Department/Unit	4	5.898	0.435	Not Significant
Number of Trainings Attended	6	18.046	0.043	Significant
Number of Seminars Attended	6	24.497	0.010	Significant

The analysis shows that gender, highest educational attainment, and department or unit assignment do not have a significant relationship with employees' level of empowerment in terms of participation. This means that these profile variables do not meaningfully influence how involved employees feel in organizational planning, goal-setting, or shaping the hotel's future direction. Regardless of differences in gender, educational background, or departmental placement, respondents consistently reported limited participation in decision-making processes. These results reinforce earlier findings that middle-management employees are seldom included in planning changes or determining goals, and that key decisions remain under the control of top management or hotel owners. Overall, employees' demographic and work characteristics did not account for their generally "somewhat empowered" status in the area of participation.

Table VI Profile and Responsibility

Profile Variables	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p-value	Interpretation
Age	5	4.686	0.455	Not Significant
Gender	1	1.311	0.252	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	4	3.920	0.417	Not Significant
Length of Employment	4	4.961	0.291	Not Significant
Department/Unit	4	1.007	0.800	Not Significant
Number of Trainings Attended	3	11.403	0.005	Significant
Number of Seminars Attended	3	8.419	0.038	Significant

The results show that age, gender, educational attainment, length of employment, and department assignment have no significant relationship with employees' sense of responsibility, indicating that these characteristics do not influence the generally high levels of responsibility reported by the respondents. Employees across different demographic and job categories similarly demonstrated strong perceptions of being accountable for their actions and the outcomes of their work. In contrast, the number of trainings and seminars attended showed a significant relationship with responsibility, suggesting that professional development experiences contribute to employees' heightened sense of accountability and commitment to their tasks. Overall, while most profile variables do not affect responsibility, exposure to more trainings and seminars appears to strengthen employees' empowerment in this area.

#### Problems Encountered by the Respondents on Employee Empowerment:

Table VII Problems Encountered by the Hotel Employees

Problems	n	%
I am seldom involved on planning changes and determining goals.	31	72.09%

Ineffective communication.	26	60.47%
My ideas and inputs are never solicited.	24	55.81%
There is no clear plan on achievement or advancement.	23	53.49%
My superiors abdicate all responsibility and accountability for decision making.	22	51.16%
I feel under-compensated and under-titled for the responsibilities.	20	46.51%
I feel under-noticed, under-praised and under-appreciated.	19	44.19%
Insufficient training/coaching/mentoring.	17	39.53%
My superiors don't really understand what employee empowerment means.	16	37.21%

The findings show several recurring problems encountered by hotel employees, the most prominent of which is their minimal involvement in planning changes and determining organizational goals, reported by 72.09% of respondents. Employees shared that major operational decisions are predetermined by top management, leaving them with little influence over the hotel's direction and resulting in a generally low sense of empowerment in participation.

This lack of involvement is compounded by ineffective communication (60.47%) and the perception that their ideas and inputs are rarely solicited (55.81%). Respondents also noted unclear pathways for advancement (53.49%) and instances where supervisors avoid responsibility in decision-making (51.16%), creating further disconnect between management and staff.

Interviews affirmed that limited communication often leads to misunderstandings and poor working conditions. Employees explained that while their suggestions may be heard, these are seldom integrated into formal plans, and key decisions—such as shift assignments, salary adjustments, and organizational policies—remain strictly under top management's discretion.

Additional concerns included feeling under-compensated or under-recognized for their responsibilities, insufficient coaching or mentoring, and a belief that some supervisors do not fully understand the concept of empowerment. Collectively, these issues reinforce employees' perception of being only "somewhat empowered," particularly in areas requiring participation and shared decision-making.

Table VIII Proposed recommendation

Areas/Problems	Strategies	Activities	Means of Verification
Less involvement of employees on planning changes and determining goals	Establishment of employee union groups  Involvement of employees during corporate meetings and conferences, at least represented by a president of the union group	Conference/meeting of employees to elect Union Officers  Corporate meetings involving top, middle and rank and file employees	Percentage of Attendance of employees  By-laws of the union  Memorandum of Agreement  Vote/involvement of the union president (representing all employees) on organizational changes
Ineffective communication	Framing of a practical communication plan	Conference/training/seminar to frame communication plan	Actual communication plan, monitoring sheet, supervisory plans

	Use of bulletins, memoranda, etc.  Conference on organizational changes	Regular information dissemination through posting in bulletins, memo, etc.  Holding of seminars/trainings on organizational changes	Regularized information dissemination using bulletins, memo, etc.  Percentage of attendance of the employees in the trainings/seminars
Non-solicitation of employees' ideas and inputs	Involvement of employees in corporate planning and decision-making	Corporate meetings involving top, middle and rank and file employees	Percentage of Attendance of employees
Unclear plan on achievement or advancement.	Involvement of employees in Orientation/ seminar/ training of employees on plans and development before implementation	Orientation/seminar/training of employees on plans and development before implementation	Percentage of Attendance of employees  Accomplishment reports
Abdication of superiors of all responsibility and accountability for decision making.	Revisit of existing job descriptions which should incorporate employee empowerment, particularly focusing on participation	Conference/training/seminar on existing job descriptions which should incorporate employee empowerment, particularly focusing on participation	Percentage of Attendance of employees  Revised job descriptions onto which tenets of employee empowerment are incorporated and improved performance rating criteria

The most prominent problem identified was employees' minimal involvement in planning changes and determining organizational goals, followed by ineffective communication and lack of solicitation of employee inputs. These issues further explain the low participation scores observed earlier and highlight structural barriers to empowerment.

From an organizational perspective, ineffective communication and centralized decision-making undermine empowerment by restricting information flow and limiting employees' perceived impact (Bushe et al., 1996). While employees accept management authority, persistent exclusion from decision-making may lead to disengagement over time, particularly among experienced staff.

These findings reinforce the need to view empowerment as a balanced system, where autonomy and responsibility must be complemented by meaningful participation. Without participatory mechanisms, empowerment remains incomplete and may fail to achieve its full potential in improving organizational commitment and innovation.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study provide a clearer understanding of the profile and empowerment levels of hotel employees in Tarlac City. The majority of the respondents were females aged 20–34 years, most of whom were college graduates with six to eight years of work experience in the hotel industry. A significant portion were assigned to housekeeping departments and had participated in multiple professional development activities, typically attending four to six trainings and seven to nine seminars. These profile characteristics reflect a relatively young yet experienced workforce with substantial exposure to both academic and skill-based preparation.

In terms of empowerment, employees reported feeling highly empowered in responsibility, indicating strong personal accountability and commitment to their work and its outcomes. They also expressed being empowered

in autonomy, reflecting their ability to make decisions and perform tasks independently within their assigned roles. However, they felt only somewhat empowered in participation, highlighting a limited sense of involvement in organizational planning, goal setting, and major decision-making processes. This imbalance suggests that while employees feel confident and responsible in their individual tasks, they experience constraints when it comes to influencing broader organizational directions.

The correlational analysis revealed that certain profile variables, specifically gender, highest educational attainment, and department or unit assignment, showed significant relationships with employees' levels of participation. This suggests that these personal and organizational attributes may shape the extent to which employees perceive themselves as included in decision-making processes. Additionally, the number of trainings and seminars attended had a significant association with responsibility, indicating that continuous learning and development contribute to stronger feelings of accountability and empowerment in work-related responsibilities.

The findings emphasize that a large majority of hotel employees feel seldom involved in planning changes and determining organizational goals. This limited participation appears to contribute to their overall lower empowerment in this area and reinforces the perception that strategic decisions remain highly centralized among top management. Overall, the study concludes that while employees demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility and autonomy, their empowerment is constrained by restricted opportunities to participate in organizational planning and decision-making.

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