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## Article

# Determining job satisfaction through the personal growth experience: the detrimental effects of supervisors who undignify the workplace

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# Determining job satisfaction through the personal growth experience: the detrimental effects of supervisors who un-dignify the workplace

Ricardo Martínez Cañas<sup>a</sup> , Alexis Jacobo Bañón Gomís<sup>b</sup> , Graça Silva<sup>c</sup>  and John Opute<sup>d</sup> 

<sup>a</sup>Business Management Department, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Cuenca, Spain; <sup>b</sup>Business Management Department, Technical University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain; <sup>c</sup>Management Department, Lisbon School of Economics & Management, Lisbon, Portugal; <sup>d</sup>Management Department, London South Bank University, London, United Kingdom

## ABSTRACT

In today's competitive labor market, offering employees the highest general satisfaction experience with their jobs appears to be an important ingredient in retaining human capital. Numerous antecedents of this outcome have been disguised over the years, with ethical elements being nominated as influential. However, the role of human dignity in this process has been vaguely explored, and its examination could offer a new and clearer understanding of this relationship. Human dignity, which is more feasible to feel with work and in workplaces, has to do with a sense of self-worth, self-respect, and a fully realized life, which should increase employees' feelings of good personal growth, and thereby, their general job satisfaction. Given that personal growth satisfaction might play an important role in fostering employees' general job satisfaction, this study investigated how the presence of supervisors who undignify the workplace is detrimental to personal growth satisfaction before negatively affecting employees' general job satisfaction. The results of a sample of 151 employees from a diverse set of Spanish industries revealed that personal growth satisfaction partially mediates the negative impact of undignifying supervisors on their employees' general job satisfaction. Thus, novel information concerning the critical elements of human dignity and personal growth satisfaction is needed to spread general job satisfaction in the workplace.

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Supervisor undignifying behavior; human dignity; personal growth satisfaction; general job satisfaction; work behavior

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## 1. Introduction

In the last few decades, research on ethical leadership has grown, emphasizing its positive impact on human relationships in organizations (Qing et al., 2020). Consequently, the role of positive interactions with supervisors has been supported since Hawthorne's studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). One important job outcome that has been thoroughly studied under this perspective is job satisfaction which has been revealed as a direct consequence of interacting with supervisors who behave ethically in the immediate workplace (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2011; Neubert et al., 2013; Bahadori et al., 2021). However, the influential elements that contribute to overall job satisfaction perceptions are less explored (Banks et al., 2021).

For example, human dignity is an important element. In 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations (Davila-Gomez & Crowther, 2012; United Nations, 1948). Human dignity, which is intrinsically tied to human existence from the perspective of involving an end in itself, and not a means (Bolton, 2006)-, is defined as human rights that relate to humans' feelings of self-worth, self-respect (Barak, 2015), self-esteem, honor, dignified status, and autonomy (Bolton, 2006, 2007). This concept explains how perceptions of job satisfaction in the workplace have been developed. In fact, it is the workplace and the work, integral parts of what people are, and thus principal sources of human dignity (Hodson, 1996, 2001; Bolton, 2006, 2007; Khandelwal, 2003), as reflected in the United Nations' (UN) interests in

**CONTACT** Ricardo Martínez Cañas  [Ricardo.Martinez@uclm.es](mailto:Ricardo.Martinez@uclm.es)  Av. Alfares 44, Social Sciences Faculty, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 16071, Cuenca, Spain.

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preserving this issue in the workplace (i.e. International Labour Organization, hereafter ILO), or in promoting decent work (e.g. fair treatment, decent hours workplace relations) (United Nations, 2015).

Unethical supervisors who exhibit undignifying behaviors in the workplace can significantly harm employees' personal dignity. Recent research suggests that this negative impact extends to job satisfaction levels (Zheng et al., 2021). When supervisors undermine dignity, employees may experience decreased self-worth and self-esteem, leading to negative job assessments (Xiong et al., 2021). Personal growth satisfaction, which involves feelings of continued development and self-realization, may play a crucial role in mediating this relationship (Tu et al., 2017).

Despite the importance given by Hackman and Oldham (1976,1980) longer than 40years ago to personal growth satisfaction as an affective outcome of employees, this variable has not been addressed much in literature. However, according to the parameters and rationales, this variable, which is likely to arise when performing a job, could be seriously and negatively affected when employees interact with supervisors who undignify the workplace. Employees are more likely to fail in meeting some important growth needs (i.e. self-esteem and self-actualization), with a direct negative influence on their personal growth satisfaction, which would make employees see their jobs as important barriers to their personal development (Hodson, 2001). Thus, personal growth satisfaction may act as a mediating variable for undignifying supervisors' negative influence on employees' general job satisfaction.

To help clarify these issues, we use a human dignity framework to help distinguish whether personal growth satisfaction serves as a mediator through which other work context variables (i.e. undignifying supervisor behavior) affect employees' general job satisfaction. To this end, we first explored the negative direct influence of supervisors' undignifying behavior on employees' general job satisfaction. Then, we examine the mediating role of personal growth satisfaction in this relationship, shedding light on the path that undignifying supervisors take before harming employees' general job satisfaction. Finally, such examinations allow us to elucidate the important role of personal growth satisfaction in determining employees' general job satisfaction.

## 2. Theoretical framework

Similar objective working conditions in organizations do not necessarily imply analogous job satisfaction of employees. Otherwise, under the umbrella of the MacDonaldization thesis (e.g. Ritzer, 1996, 2004) employees of McDonalds, where similar objective working conditions exist in every shop around the world, would be equally satisfied with their jobs. Rather, it appears that subjective elements might come into the scene, such that our objective understanding of job satisfaction in the workplace should be complemented with one perspective, including what individuals perceive as important to make their lives worthy. In this vein, human dignity, which is an essential core human feature that should be respected at work (Bolton, 2007)- and how it is perceived to be respected at work –a sense of human dignity (Bolton, 2007), might become a crucial determinant in understanding the satisfaction of employees in different aspects of the work.

A historical evolution of the concept of dignity shows that initially, dignity was associated with high rank, office, or social status. However, the Stoics introduced a more universal notion of dignity that sets humans apart from the rest of nature. Over time, dignity became a property inherent in all humans, emphasizing our unique qualities. Later, Kant's universalization significantly influenced the Western tradition's conceptualization of dignity making it universal (all humans possess it) and restricted only to humans. The above provides a polysemic concept of dignity with various strands of meaning coexisting. Some view dignity as elevated behavior displayed by individuals, while others emphasize its universal aspect. In summary, dignity encompasses both individual behavior and universal human qualities, reflecting our distinct place in the natural order (Rosen, 2012).

Dignity can be understood as an element that separates us from animal life, making us human, as something that we possess by virtue of our shared humanity (Sacks, 2002). It serves as an indicator of public health, as a scientific framework for measuring dignity and its social determinants. Similar to happiness or love, dignity is valued by individuals but challenging to define. Based on a sociological perspective, differences in dignity stem from inequalities in social and economic resources, experiences

of disrespect, threat, and life stress, as well as factors like mastery, mattering, and meaning. Social groups with less power generally report lower levels of dignity, and education plays a crucial role in resource divides (Hitlin & Andersson, 2023). Dignity is influenced by social divisions, material conditions, and institutional safeguards that significantly impact individual well-being and overall quality of life, underscoring the importance of fair treatment and respect in maintaining dignity (Roscigno et al., 2021).

Applied to work, dignity is the ability to establish self-worth and self-respect, appreciating the respect of others (Hodson, 2004). This concept is closely associated with issues of respect, worth, esteem, equality, autonomy, and freedom (e.g. Hodson, 2001); connected to the level of autonomy, respect, and recognition workers experience (Dube et al., 2022). Such approaches are human needs described in Maslow's (1943) motivation theory, whose satisfaction is crucial to attain general well-being, human thriving, and personal development (e.g. Bañón-Gomis & Ruiz-Palomino, 2015; Valcour, 2014). One way to determine the borders of dignity at work is to conceptualize it as a human right (United Nations, 1948) based on the indicators defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2005). While the former appeals to the condition of a human right, the latter characterizes the 'decent work' concept (Anker et al., 2003; Bolton, 2006, 2007). In 1999, Juan Somavia, ILO's Director, described decent work as 'opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity' (ILO, 1999). He offered a comprehensive concept of work and of the workplace that explicitly includes three general dimensions that further subdivide into six sub-dimensions in total: availability of work (opportunities for work), acceptable scope of work (work in conditions of freedom), and quality of employment (productive work, equity in work, security at work, and dignity at work) (Anker et al., 2002).

Based on this concept, Bolton (2006, 2007) distinguished two constitutive elements of dignity in the workplace: dignity at work and dignity in work. His approach can be seen as a proposition of a bi-dimensional understanding of -dignity at work, which conceives it as a human right -dignity at work- and as a quality condition to generate decent work-dignity in work-. The former dimension, dignity at work, relies on factors associated with material rewards (i.e. pay, security, gender equity) and is external to the individual. The latter dimension, dignity in work, contemplates a subjective experience conception of dignity (i.e. a form of reward, such as caring as a vocation), the inherent part of the human condition achieved and protected by individual endeavors. This is also associated with human connectedness and social ties and represents an important part of the conception of human dignity conception (Bolton, 2006). Using MacDonald's as an example, dignity at work would consist of creating objective working conditions in all its shops around the world to reach material conditions affordable to individuals, rather than enacted by them. This includes elements such as well-being, rewards, voice, security, and equal opportunity. However, achieving dignity at work in MacDonald's would include dealing with elements such as autonomy, job satisfaction, meaningful work, respect, and/or learning and development, which can be considered either dignifying or undignifying depending on the person.

Overall, the concept of human dignity is formed by two inseparable components. One component includes an 'objective order of dignity'-dignity at work-focused on material conditions, with which the first five ILO's sub-dimensions of a decent work should be met. One another important component, which would explain the reason why material conditions are not enough for employees to get job satisfaction, includes a 'subjective order of dignity'-dignity in work- focused on employees as persons, their perceptions of how they are treated and their inter-relationships with others -with which the remaining sub-dimension of dignity in the workplace should be met- (see Table 1). Accordingly, to foster satisfaction in the workplace, supervisors should be very attentive to the above-described aspects. Supervisors should thus make sure that the 'objective order of dignity', i.e. processes and procedures, is being applied into their organizations; therefore, work conditions such as availability of work, the acceptable scope of work and the quality of employment would be improved (see Table 1). Supervisors play a crucial role in ensuring subjective order of dignity. Treating employees fairly with respect to humanity fosters their satisfaction across various life aspects, personal growth, and self-realization. However, supervisors who undermine trust, autonomy, recognition, and respect threaten employees' sense of dignity, negatively affecting both general job satisfaction and personal growth.

**Table 1.** Dimensions of dignity based on the six dimensions of decent work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Dimensions of dignity	Work conditions	Dimensions	Explanations
Objective order of dignity	Availability of work	Opportunities for work	It "refers to the need for all persons (men and women) who want work to be able to find work, since decent work is not possible without work itself" (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)
	Acceptable scope of work	Work in conditions of freedom	It "underscores the fact that work should be freely chosen and not forced on individuals and that certain forms of work are not acceptable in the 21st century." (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)
	Quality of employment	Productive work	It "is essential for workers to have acceptable livelihoods for themselves and their families, as well as to ensure sustainable development and competitiveness of enterprises and countries." (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)
		Equity in work	It "represents workers' need to have fair and equitable treatment and opportunity in work. It encompasses absence of discrimination at work and in access to work and ability to balance work with family life." (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)
		Security at work	It "is mindful of the need to help safeguard health, pensions and livelihoods, and to provide adequate financial and other protection in the event of health and other contingencies. It also recognizes workers' need to limit insecurity associated with the possible loss of work and livelihood." (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)
	Subjective order of dignity	Dignity in the workplace	It "requires that workers be treated with respect at work, and be able to voice concerns and participate in decision-making about working conditions. An essential ingredient is workers' freedom to represent their interests collectively." (Anker et al., 2002, p. 2)

Source: Adapted from Anker et al. (2002) and Bolton (2006, 2007).

### ***2.1. The importance of human dignity in the workplace: direct effects of un-dignifying supervisor behavior on employee's general job satisfaction and personal growth satisfaction***

In recent decades, the negative effects of toxic supervisors in the workplace have become a growing body of research (Lipman-Blumen, 2006; Pelletier, 2010, 2012). These supervisors usually characterize themselves to disempower their employees (Singh et al., 2016), break down their employees' self-esteem, threaten their employees' personal security, promote a culture of inequity in the workplace, intimidate their employees both physically and psychologically, carry out dishonest behaviors, foster a divisive culture, and fail to listen or act on employee concerns (Pelletier, 2010). Being very egoistical, narcissistic, and Machiavellian (Singh et al., 2016), these individuals also tend to lie to their employees, demean and marginalize some of their people, and do not mind breaching their basic human rights (Lipman-Blumen, 2006), which on the whole becomes them in supervisors who dehumanize the workplace (Tavanti, 2011).

Because human interactions in the workplace usually constitute an important influential element on the dignity of people in the workplace (Sturm & Dellert, 2016), human dignity is closely associated with issues of respect, worth, esteem, equality, autonomy, and freedom (Gini, 2001; Hodson, 2001; Sayer, 2005), and is thus seriously harmed in such workplaces, where undignifying and disrespectful supervisors are present (Sturm & Dellert, 2016). Although the relationships that are established between these supervisors and employees appear to be close to meeting some elemental, basic human needs, which people are usually eager to meet (i.e. need for authority, belonging, security, feeling special) (e.g. Lipman-Blumen, 2006), this does not really happen; they are rather falsely believed to be satisfied. What really happens, however, is that these supervisors, as Machiavellians they are (Singh et al., 2016), exploit and use these needs (they also play to these needs, Pelletier, 2010), to satisfy their own self-interests (e.g. Ruiz-Palomino & Bañón-Gomis, 2017), regardless of whether the employees' sense of dignity and self-worth is inflicted. Thus, not only are employees not really satisfying these needs, but other higher order, more compelling ones (i.e. self-esteem, self-worth, self-actualization, Maslow, 1943) are rather clearly depressed.

Of course, the psychological and organizational well-being of employees who experience supervisors' behavior is seriously harmed (Pelletier, 2010). According to Plato and Aristotle, human dignity, which is related to pursuing the form of life that produces the highest level of satisfaction and happiness, is compatible with reaching the highest potential in life. Human dignity, thus, from immemorial times, is conceived as an element very linked to satisfaction with different areas of life, which is applied to the workplace scope. Here two basic elements come into scene: general job satisfaction and personal growth satisfaction.



In the presence of supervisors who carry out undignifying behaviors, employees are highly likely to feel injured or robbed of their dignity. When these types of feelings are internalized, and thus translated to their sense of lowered personal value in work, they consequently might lead to a loss of general well-being, and thus lowered job satisfaction feelings. Based on Locke (1976), general job satisfaction can be defined 'as a pleasure or positive emotional and subjective state resulting from and appraisal of one's job or job experiences' (p.1300), and that has to do with attitudes, feelings and beliefs towards one's job (Bañón-Gomis & Ruiz-Palomino, 2015). Importantly, general job satisfaction is indicative of the degree to which anyone is satisfied and happy with their job (Hackman & Oldham, 1974). It is no surprise then that in the presence of this undignifying supervisor—one important element determining job satisfaction perceptions (Zhu, 2012; Bañón-Gomis & Ruiz-Palomino, 2015)—, employees who feel stripped of their dignity rarely feel well. Furthermore, when the workplace is dehumanizing, employees feel dissatisfied with their work (Sayer, 2007). Indeed, when employees are the object of behaviors that harm human needs, such as respect, truth, friendship, security, equal opportunity, or justice, they are less likely to feel their lives as happy, good, meaningful, or happy (Wong, 2012). Rather, their sense of dignity in the workplace is harmed, involving direct negative implications in terms of attitudes and feelings towards one's job.

Some recent studies have confirmed the important role that human dignity plays in contributing to job satisfaction perceptions. Sturm and Dellert (2016) found that when employees feel a strong sense of dignity in work, they are more likely to be satisfied with their work. Accordingly, we propose the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1.** Supervisor's un-dignifying behavior relates negatively to employees' general job satisfaction.

It is generally recognized that human beings value themselves to a great extent. They value their own human growth and development, need to affirm their sense of worth, and, importantly, need to develop their potential as maximally as possible (Hodson, 2001). In other words, human beings have 'the tendency to become more and more what they are, to become everything that they are capable of becoming, such that a musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy...what a man can be, he must be' (i.e. self-actualization, Maslow, 1943, p. 382). However, when individuals face supervisors who carry out undignifying behaviors such as verbal abuse, humiliation, or disrespectful treatment, human dignity would be seriously harmed (Hodson, 2001), and the possibility of realizing one's human potential, very connected with meeting human growth needs (i.e. self-actualization, Alderfer, 1969), would also be undermined. This is very likely to occur because in the presence of this type of (un-dignifying) supervisor, who would awake the worst of human kind (Pelletier, 2010), the social and material conditions for employees to flourish, the highest aspiration of human beings, would be totally lacking (e.g. Ciulla, 2004). Thus, because supervisors' undignifying behavior in the workplace constitutes a serious threat to preserving the human dignity of employees, they are highly unlikely to have a sense of human growth and development for doing their work (e.g. Bandura, 1995). In this context, jobs, rather than being a natural expansion of human abilities and interests, which allows employees to fulfill themselves, would not let employees be independent, feel a sense of power, be in control of their destinies, and have a purpose in life (Hodson, 2001). As such, employees are likely to be less satisfied with these (growth-type) needs, and thus will reflect less satisfaction with their personal growth when doing their work. Formally, we propose:

**Hypothesis 2.** Supervisor's un-dignifying behavior relates negatively to employee personal growth satisfaction.

## **2.2. Understanding Employee General Job Satisfaction: the mediating role of personal growth Satisfaction**

When human needs are satisfied owing to work and the workplace, general job satisfaction is likely to emerge. However, needs that are commonly satisfied externally, on which other externals (i.e. supervisors and the organizational climate) play an important role in their satisfaction process, are suitable candidates to call for the satisfaction of other needs (i.e. similar nature or higher) to achieve well-being and happiness in life that do not end ever. However, under the umbrella of ancient Greek understanding (i.e. Brink, 1999), attaining happiness, a human good that is an end good, not a means to achieve other

goods (or satisfy other needs), requires important personal efforts by the actors who aspire to it. This suggests that more than providing rapid satisfaction of physiological and security needs, as undignifying supervisors might make employees believe in some occasions (e.g. Lipman-Blumen, 2006), it is principal to offer work with the necessary possibilities for employees to expand and develop their own abilities and realize their own potential in life. Thus, offering them a work that, by taking an active part in it, allows them to fulfill, develop both physically and cognitively, and, importantly, grow as human beings. These are good elements of life, but not easy; however, with them, employees are likely to reflect more positive and permanent attitudes towards their jobs.

The amount of personal growth offered at work is usually considered an important aspect to be assessed in jobs (Spector, 1997; Hackman & Oldham, 1975) as a separate facet of the job satisfaction of employees (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). The extent to which it is satisfied is considered an important dimension of well-being (Straume & Vittersø, 2015) as also a good element of life associated with Aristotle's idea of eudaimonia (Ryff & Singer, 1998), which, as different surveys on professionals show (i.e. Bayt.com survey, 2015), is likely to determine the extent to which employees reflect high levels of satisfaction (with their jobs). For example, Straume and Vittersø, (2015) found in their study that people who are satisfied with their personal growth also show high levels of satisfaction in general. In addition, several other studies have shown the important role that satisfaction with growth and development opportunities plays in enhancing work attitudes (i.e. job satisfaction) (Landeweerd & Boumans, 1994). Accordingly, we hypothesize as follows:

**Hypothesis 3.** Personal growth satisfaction relates positively to employees' general job satisfaction.

With this latter hypothesis in mind and the rationales described earlier, suggesting decreased personal growth satisfaction in the presence of undignifying supervisors, leads to the proposal that personal growth satisfaction could mediate the relationship between supervisors' undignifying behavior and general job satisfaction. The findings of Straume and Vittersø, (2015) suggest that personal growth satisfaction might influence other constructs (i.e. subjective health) through general satisfaction measures (i.e. life satisfaction) that appear to support its mediating role in the earlier relationship. However, this mediation is thought to be partial, as undignifying supervisors appear to reduce employees' general job satisfaction. Having to deal with these types of supervisors might directly impair employees' personal and occupational well-being (Pelletier, 2010) and, thus, their levels of job satisfaction. Thus, we propose:

**Hypothesis 4.** Personal Growth Satisfaction mediates the negative relationship of Supervisor's Un-dignifying behavior with General Job Satisfaction.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Ethical validity

The ethical validity of this research is described as follows. First, we prepared a detailed report of the research project, including its purpose, methodology, potential risks and benefits, and other relevant details. This report was then submitted to the Ethics Committee of the University of Castilla-La Mancha in Spain (REG. 2023/PI00123). The committee thoroughly reviewed the project and determined that it was ethically sound, providing a favorable response and allowing the research to proceed. Following the approved ethical guidelines, informed oral consent was obtained from all participants.

The Declaration of Helsinki outlines ethical principles for research involving human subjects. According to the declaration, informed consent is a fundamental requirement. While it primarily emphasizes written consent, it acknowledges that oral consent can be appropriate in certain circumstances, provided that the conditions of full explanation, voluntary participation, documentation of the process, and compliance with legal and ethical standards are met to ensure the protection of participants' rights and well-being.

Therefore, the process of obtaining oral consent in this research involved several key steps to ensure that participants were fully informed and voluntarily agreed to participate. First, we provided detailed and understandable information about the study, including its purpose, procedures, how reply to surveys, risks, and benefits, during a meeting in every company. Second, all participants were given the



opportunity to ask questions and discuss any concerns they might have. Third, all participants verbally agreed to participate in the study, free from any coercion or undue influence. The entire process was documented by taking detailed notes about the consent discussion.

Oral consent is ethical for several reasons. It respects the participant's right to make an informed decision about their involvement in the research. It considers cultural sensitivity, as signing documents may be viewed with suspicion and oral consent can be more culturally appropriate in some service firms' contexts. This type of consent is more accessible for participants with issues or disabilities that make reading and signing documents difficult. Additionally, it can help protect participants' anonymity and reduce the risk of stigma or harm.

### 3.2. Sample and procedure

The survey was pretested at several meetings with academics, employees, and human resource managers working in the same industries surveyed in our study. Once changes to the wording of some items were made, and no further revisions were perceived to be necessary, the survey was handed out directly to various blue-, white-, and pink-collar employees of different businesses operating in the manufacturing and services industries (public, social, retail, and financial services).

Both industries were selected because of their different working conditions (level of compensation; working environment) and job characteristics (e.g. job autonomy and skill variety), which are suggested to have a distinct impact on the final dependent variable in our study, that is, the level of general satisfaction with the job (Kahya, 2007; Krueger & Schkade, 2008).

After obtaining consent from the general manager of each company, 480 questionnaires were distributed directly to employees. An acceptable response rate of 31.5% for the field of study was obtained, which means that 151 useable surveys were received in the end. As we designed the study in a cross-sectional manner and used self-reporting measures, common method bias (CMB), evaluation apprehension, and social desirability biases could have affected our research (Conway & Lance, 2010). However, the questionnaire design followed Podsakoff et al. (2003) and Conway and Lance (2010) suggestions to mitigate these issues. For example, prior to responding to the questionnaire, honesty and frankness were strongly appreciated and individual and corporate anonymity were strongly guaranteed. To specifically mitigate CMB (Podsakoff et al., 2003), the questionnaire was designed as follows: a) to make predictors and criterion variables appear unrelated and part of different general topic areas; b) to include various contextual variables in the questionnaire to serve as distracters; and c) to show simple, specific, and concise items.

To test for non-response bias, we assumed that late respondents were more similar to non-respondents than early ones (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). Accordingly, the first and last quartiles of the submissions received were compared using independent sample t-tests for the study variables. Because no significant differences were revealed, non-response bias did not appear to be a major problem in this study. While the average age of our respondents was 34 years, which makes the sample relatively young, the age of respondents ranged from 21 to 63 years. Most of these respondents worked in low and middle job positions (37% and 60%, respectively) and in companies operating in services-related areas (68%), either in the private or the public industry.

#### 3.2.1. Measures

To measure our latent constructs, we needed to choose between reflective and formative indicators (Henseler et al., 2009). Reflective measurements are highly correlated indicators, likely caused by the targeted latent construct, whereas formative measures feature indicators that determine the construct without necessarily being highly correlated. In our survey, all measures were reflective (see Table 3 for the full list of the items of each reflective construct).

**3.2.1.1. Supervisor undignifying behavior.** A selection of 10 items adopted from Leader's Integrity Craig and Gustafson (1998) original 31-item scale was used. These items consisted of a set of 10 disrespectful and harmful behaviors very oriented to harm the sense of employees' human dignity and encompassed most of the eight toxic leadership dimensions conceptualized in previous literature (i.e. attacks to self-esteem, lacks of integrity, threats to security, ignoring employees' concerns, abusive behaviors,

inequality promotion, divisiveness, social exclusion, Pelletier, 2010). Sample items include 'My supervisor would blame me for his/her own mistake' 'My supervisor deliberately makes employees angry at each other', and 'My supervisor would risk me to get back at someone else'. Respondents indicated how well each of these un-dignifying acts described their supervisors from 1 (not at all) to 5 (exactly), such that higher values represented a higher supervisory undignifying behavior. Using EQS 6.1, we performed confirmatory factor analysis for this independent variable. Maximum likelihood robust estimates were utilized to measure the fit of the model designed for this construct (Satorra & Bentler, 2001, Satorra, 2003). As seen in Table 2, common indexes used to evaluate the goodness of fit (RMSEA, NFI, NNFI and CFI; Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010) showed that the model had a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2$  Satorra-Bentler = 43.31, non-significant), thus providing good reliability for this measure.

**3.2.1.2. Personal growth satisfaction.** We adopted the Hackman and Oldham (1980) four-item scale utilized in the JDS to assess the extent to which respondents were satisfied with the personal growth they experienced from doing the job. In a 5 point Likert response format, respondents assessed their level of satisfaction (1=totally dissatisfied, 5=totally satisfied) with the amount and feeling of various outputs they could experience from doing their work (i.e. personal growth, worthwhile accomplishment, independent thought and action, challenge). The scale was averaged such that higher values reflected a stronger employee personal growth satisfaction.

**3.2.1.3. General job satisfaction.** The three-item scale utilized in the JDS (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1980) was adopted to measure the respondents' overall feelings about the work and work organization. A sample item was 'I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job'. Respondents again used the Likert format (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), such that after the scale was averaged, higher scores reflected stronger employees' general job satisfaction.

### 3.2.2. Control variables

A priori, in any research, control variables are needed to be included in any analysis to isolate the effect of our main independent variable(s), including our mediator, on the employee general job satisfaction (cf., Atinc et al., 2012). Thus, by controlling for these factors, the analysis more accurately accounts for potential confounding factors that could influence the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, thus providing more credible and valid results. This way, since the model was intended to see 'which' factors best explain our main dependent variable: overall job satisfaction, control variables only pointed toward that final dependent variable. As control variables, we included some important aspects related to the level of job satisfaction in our analysis. Age, for example, was included as this variable appears to have an important influence in studies on job attitudes (Gamero, 2003). Moreover, because enjoying social benefits is a very appreciated element by employees, much more so in crisis times, this aspect was also considered in our study for its potential influence on job satisfaction levels. Specifically, five possible social benefit items were included in our survey (i.e. pension plans, study grants, meal tickets, company car, and products/services discounts), such that this variable could range from 0 to 5, according to the number of items provided by the company. Finally, working conditions and job

**Table 2.** Fit indices for Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior Measurement.

Construct	Values	Rule of thumb
Number of observations	151	
Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square ( <i>df</i> )	43.31 (35)	This $\chi^2$ / <i>df</i> ratio was 1.23, much less than the restrictive cut-off of 2, which indicates a good fit (Ullman, 2001).
Probability Value for the $\chi^2$ Statistic	0.15	Probability associated with this chi-square should be greater than 0.05 (Ullman, 2006; Ullman & Bentler, 2003)
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.97	CFI $\geq$ 0.95 is often indicative of good fit (Ullman, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999), resolving some of the sample size-sensitivity issues (Bentler, 1990)
Bollen's (IFI) Fit Index	0.97	IFI $\geq$ 0.95 is often indicative of good fit (Ullman, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999)
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.89	NFI > 0.90 is an acceptable fit (Byrne, 2010), but when samples are lower than 200, model fit might be underestimated (Bentler, 1990; Byrne, 2010).
Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index	0.97	NNFI $\geq$ 0.95 is often indicative of good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999), resolving some of the sample size-sensitivity issues (Mueller, 1996)
McDonald's (MFI) Fit Index	0.97	MFI > 0.90 indicates good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Blunch, 2016).
Root Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.04	RMSEA $\leq$ 0.06 indicates a close fitting model (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Ullman, 2006)
90% Confidence Interval of RMSEA	(0.00-0.07)	

Notes: *df* indicate degrees of freedom.

nature (limited work autonomy, monotonous work, direct contact with the client, discretion, work time flexibility, etc.) vary with the sector industry, which implies that satisfaction with the job (Kahya, 2007; Krueger & Schkade, 2008) sector industry was included in our analysis. A dummy variable was designed for this purpose, where the service industry was excluded from the analysis, as it was the reference point to interpret the effects of this variable on the other constructs of our study.

### 3.2.3. Data analysis

We used Smart PLS 4 (Ringle et al., 2024) to test our hypotheses. A powerful, robust statistical procedure (Henseler et al., 2009), PLS allows for causal analyses of complete situations, and as a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, it is well suited to test mediation hypotheses (MacKinnon et al., 2012). Furthermore, PLS does not require demanding assumptions regarding the distribution of variables (Henseler et al., 2009). It is also the only SEM technique that supports the inclusion of both reflective and formative measures in the same analysis (Henseler et al., 2009). We used bootstrapping (5000 resamples) to generate standard errors and t-statistics for hypothesis testing. Specifically, as recommended for mediation (MacKinnon et al., 2012), we also used the bootstrap method with 5000 resamples (e.g. Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Measurement model

Following Conway and Lance (2010) recommendations to rule out CMB effects in our results, we provide evidence in Tables 3–5 of the reliability and validity of our reflective measures. Table 3 reports individual and construct reliability and convergent validity, whereas Tables 4 and 5 show convergent and discriminant validity. Table 4 also provides the correlations across all variables in our research.

**Table 3.** Measurement Model: item loadings and weights, construct reliability, and convergent validity.

Reflective Constructs and their corresponding items	Breached Human Good/Need	Decent Work Dimensions	Dignity Orders	Loading	Construct reliability		
					Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
<b>Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior (SUB). My supervisor...</b>					0.94	0.95	0.66
would blame me for his/her own mistake	Just reward	Equity in work	Objective Order of Dignity	0.83			
would treat me better if I belonged to a different ethnic group	Equal Opportunity			0.69			
would risk me to get back at someone else	Security	Security at work		0.88			
would use my performance appraisal to criticize me as a person	Security/Self-Esteem			0.78			
would lie to me	Respect/Truth	Dignity in the workplace	Subjective Order of Dignity	0.61			
makes fun of my mistakes instead of coaching me as to how to do my job better	Respect/Self-Esteem			0.80			
would deliberately distort what I say	Respect/Truth			0.89			
deliberately makes employees angry at each other	Friendship			0.83			
is a hypocrite	Truth			0.91			
enjoys turning down my requests	Respect			0.85			
<b>Personal Growth Satisfaction (PGS). I am satisfied with....</b>					0.83	0.89	0.67
The amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job				0.85			
The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job				0.85			
The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job				0.76			
The amount of challenge in my job				0.81			
General Job Satisfaction (GJS)					<b>0.77</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.70</b>
<b>Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job</b>				0.88			
I seldom think of quitting this job				0.76			
I'm generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job				0.85			

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics, correlation matrix and square roots of the reflective constructs' AVE.

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior	4.36	0.82	<b>0.81</b>					
2. General Job Satisfaction	3.62	0.89	−0.41	<b>0.83</b>				
3. Personal Growth Satisfaction	3.55	0.84	−0.40	0.65	<b>0.82</b>			
4. Age	34.60	9.20	0.11	0.18	0.10	n.a		
5. Industry Sector	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	0.06	−0.03	−0.11	0.05	n.a	
6. Social Benefits	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	−0.09	0.23	0.22	0.18	−0.32	n.a.

Notes: All correlations between 0.16 and 0.20 are significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two tailed). All correlations above 0.20 are significant at  $p < 0.01$  (two tailed). Bold values on the diagonal are square roots of AVE (variance shared between the constructs and their measures). Off-diagonal elements are correlations among the constructs. n.a.: not applicable. Because the square root of each construct's AVE is higher than its correlation with other variables, discriminant validity is established in light of the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Henseler et al., 2009).

**Table 5.** Cross-loadings matrix for reflective constructs.

Items	Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior	Personal Growth Satisfaction	General Job Satisfaction
SUB1	<b>0.83</b>	−0.40	−0.36
SUB2	<b>0.69</b>	−0.25	−0.23
SUB3	<b>0.88</b>	−0.37	−0.34
SUB4	<b>0.78</b>	−0.30	−0.26
SUB5	<b>0.61</b>	−0.21	−0.25
SUB6	<b>0.80</b>	−0.26	−0.28
SUB7	<b>0.89</b>	−0.31	−0.31
SUB8	<b>0.83</b>	−0.32	−0.37
SUB9	<b>0.91</b>	−0.40	−0.43
SUB10	<b>0.85</b>	−0.35	−0.37
PGS1	−0.38	<b>0.84</b>	0.51
PGS2	−0.31	<b>0.85</b>	0.51
PGS3	−0.38	<b>0.77</b>	0.56
PGS4	−0.24	<b>0.81</b>	0.54
GJS1	−0.37	0.59	<b>0.88</b>
GJS2	−0.29	0.52	<b>0.76</b>
GJS3	−0.36	0.51	<b>0.85</b>

Notes: Bold figures express that the individual indicators loaded on their own construct. Because they are higher than their correlations with the other constructs, all these constructs are conceptually distinct (Henseler et al., 2009).

According to our findings (Table 3), all individual items of our reflective variables can be considered reliable. Most of these items' standardized loadings were above the desired threshold of 0.707 (Henseler et al., 2009), indicating good reliability. Only two of these items, which were utilized to measure Supervisor's Undignifying Behavior, possess an individual reliability that is lower but above 0.60, which is an acceptable threshold for new measures and cultural contexts, as in this case. In addition, their individual reliability was far above the minimum required threshold of 0.55 (Falk & Miller, 1992) and their inclusion did not adversely affect any of the other measurement criteria. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (pc) values indicated good reliability and internal consistency for reflective constructs (Table 3), as the latter (pc) were above the threshold of 0.80 required for advanced research (Henseler et al., 2009). The AVE for each construct was greater than 0.50 (Table 3) indicating convergent validity (Henseler et al., 2009).

Finally, we assessed the divergent validity of the three reflective measures by using several methods. At the construct level, we assessed Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. Because the AVE for each construct was greater than the variance shared by each construct with the remaining latent variables (Table 4), this criterion was satisfied (Henseler et al., 2009). At the item level, we evaluated the cross-loading criterion such that, as required, a cross-loading matrix showed that all items loaded on their intended constructs more highly than on the others (Table 5).

#### 4.2. Structural model: Hypothesis testing

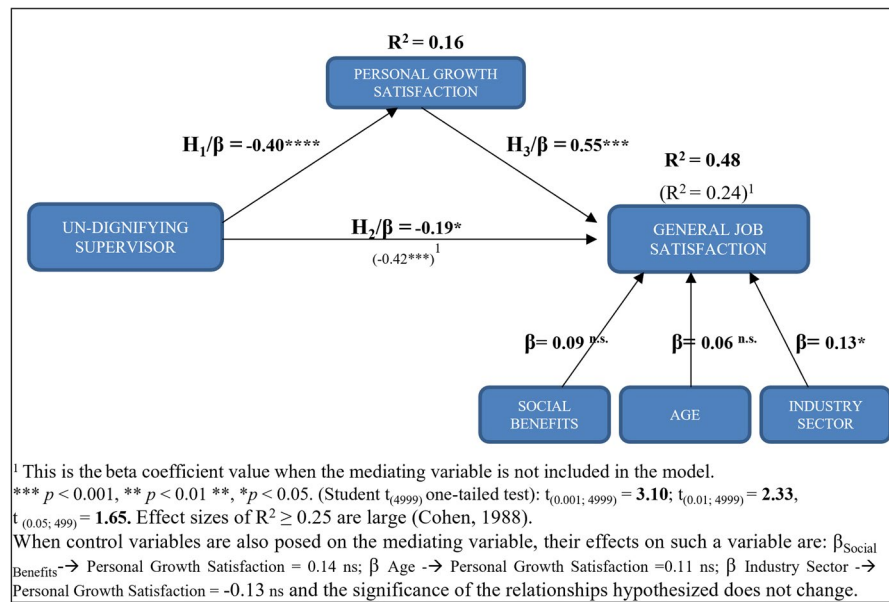
Figure 1 and Table 6 contain the findings related to our hypotheses, all of which were confirmed. Regarding the first group of hypotheses, H1 and H2 were supported in that supervisors'

undignifying behavior was significantly and directly related to employees' general job satisfaction and personal growth satisfaction in a negative manner ( $\beta = -0.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ;  $\beta = -0.20$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; see [Figure 1](#)). While the effect on general job satisfaction is of medium size ( $R^2_{\text{explained}} = 0.08$ ; see [Table 6](#)), the effect on personal growth satisfaction is medium-large ( $R^2_{\text{explained}} = 0.16$ ; see [Table 6](#)). In addition, as predicted, personal growth satisfaction was directly and positively related to general job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.55$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; see [Figure 1](#)), thus providing a large effect ( $R^2_{\text{explained}} = 0.36$ , see [Table 6](#)). Our findings reveal that both supervisors' undignifying behavior and employees' personal growth satisfaction are important antecedents of general job satisfaction, confirming hypotheses H1, H2, and H3.

For Hypothesis H4, evidence of significant indirect effects involving supervisors' undignifying behavior and general job satisfaction was found, following the Preacher and Hayes (2008) approach. In the bootstrap test with 5,000 subsamples (Hayes, 2009; Preacher & Hayes, 2008), the indirect effect was significant ( $b = -0.22$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; see [Table 6](#)), and 0 was absent from the 99% bias-corrected and accelerated (BCA) bootstrap confidence interval. Evidence of the significance of this indirect effect is important to conclude that mediation exists (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Zhao et al., 2010), and provides an empirical basis for testing our mediation effect (MacKinnon et al., 2012), by using Tippins and Sohi (2003) procedure. This procedure includes Baron and Kenny (1986) criteria, but better applies to SEM because it compares an initial (not mediated) model with a mediated model to find any significant differences ([Figure 1](#) shows beta coefficients when the mediating variable is not included). This four-step procedure includes four conditions for mediation to be met (Tippins & Sohi, 2003): (1) the mediated model explains more variance in the dependent variable than the initial model; (2) the independent and mediating variables are significantly related; (3) the mediator and the dependent variable are significantly related; and (4) any significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables becomes non-significant or weaker when the mediator is added to the model.

Our analysis of findings revealed that the first condition was met; the mediated model accounted for more variance in general job satisfaction than the unmediated model ([Figure 1](#),  $R^2_{\text{Mediated Model}} = 0.48$  vs.  $R^2_{\text{Not Mediated Model}} = 0.24$ ; see [Figure 1](#)). In addition, as described above, H1 was accepted; in other words, the supervisor's undignifying behavior was significant and negatively related to general job satisfaction ([Figure 1](#), [Table 6](#)), thus supporting the second requirement for mediation. In addition, because we found support for H3, the third condition was also met: the mediating variable, PGS, was significantly and positively related to general job satisfaction ([Figure 1](#), [Table 6](#)). Finally, we observed that the significant positive effect of supervisors' undignifying behavior on general job satisfaction decreased in significance and size ( $\beta_{\text{Mediated Model}} = -0.20$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ;  $\beta_{\text{Not Mediated Model}} = 0.55$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), thereby implying an important partial mediation effect classified as large in size (see [Table 7](#);  $f^2 = 0.46$ ).

In addition, we tested if endogeneity was a problem in our research model and by using the Gaussian copula approach suggested by Park and Gupta (2012), and implemented in PLS software, we observed that there were no critical problems of endogeneity in the model. After ensuring that none of the independent (and/or mediating) variables were normally distributed (i.e. the Cramer-von Mises test revealed p-values below the 0.05 cutoff for the independent and the mediating variables), the GC test showed that all the GCs of our independent variable (Undignifying Supervisor) showed GCs parameters that were non-significant (p-values above the 0.05 cut-off, Becker et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2024). More specifically, when evaluating the Undignifying Supervisor-Employee Personal Growth Satisfaction relationship, the GC was equal to -0.242 (p-value = 0.586). Furthermore, the GCs for the relationships in which Undignifying Supervisor and Personal Growth Satisfaction were involved in a mediated model showed GCs which were non-significant, either when each one was calculated separately (c Undignifying Supervisor—Employee General Job Satisfaction = -0.471, p-value = 0.355; c Personal Growth Satisfaction—Employee General Job Satisfaction = 0.318, p-value = 0.303) or when both were calculated simultaneously (all p-values of the GCs were again non-significant, i.e. they all were above 0.05). Thus, the causal relationships presented in our research model reflect the true relationships between the variables of interest in the population.



**Figure 1.** Hypothesis testing results.

**Table 6.** Mediated model: direct, indirect, total effects, and explained variance.

Effects on Dependent Variables	Direct Effects ( $\beta$ )	Indirect Effects	Total Effects	Variance Explained ( $R^2$ ) Size Effects	Effect Sizes <sup>b</sup>
Personal Growth Satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.16$ )					
Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior (SHB)	$-0.40^{***}$ (13.80)	---	$-0.40$	0.16 Medium	Medium-Large
General Job Satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.48$ )					
Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior	$-0.20^*$	$-0.22^a$	$-0.41$	0.08	Small-Medium
Personal Growth Satisfaction	$0.55^{***}$	---	$0.55$	0.36 Small-Medium	Large
Age	$0.13^*$			0.02	
Industry Sector	$0.06^{n.s.}$			0.00	
Social Benefits	$0.09^{n.s.}$			0.02	

Notes: For the effects of the principal independent variables a one-tailed t-test was used:  $***p < 0.001$  ( $t_{(4999)} = 3.10$ );  $**p < 0.01$ : ( $t_{(4999)} = 2.33$ );  $*p < 0.05$  ( $t_{(4999)} = 1.65$ ); ns. = not significant.

For the effects of the control variables, a two-tailed t-test was used:  $**p < 0.01$  ( $t_{(4999)} = 2.58$ );  $*p < 0.05$  ( $t_{(4999)} = 1.96$ ) ns. = not significant. <sup>a</sup>Significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Zero is not included in the bias corrected and accelerated (BCA) 99% confidence interval (lower level =  $-0.48$ ; upper level =  $-0.10$ ) (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

<sup>b</sup>Effect sizes of  $R^2 \geq 0.01$ ,  $\geq 0.09$ , and  $\geq 0.25$  are small, medium, and large, respectively (Cohen, 1988). n.a. = not applicable; these specific effect sizes are shown in Figure 1.

**Table 7.** Mediation Effect Size of Personal Growth Satisfaction.

Independent-Dependent Variable Relationship	Variance Explained for the Dependent Variable			Size of the Mediation Effect
	Not Mediated Relationship	Mediated Relationship	$\Delta$ Variance explained	( $f^2$ )
Supervisor's Un-dignifying Behavior-General Job Satisfaction	0.24	0.48	0.24	0.46 (large effect)

Notes:  $f^2 = (R^2_{\text{included}} - R^2_{\text{excluded}}) / (1 - R^2_{\text{included}})$ ; effect sizes of  $f^2 \geq 0.02$ ,  $\geq 0.15$ , and  $\geq 0.35$  are as small, moderate, and large, respectively (Chin, 1998; Cohen, 1988).

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

### 5.1. Theoretical contributions and practical implications

In organizational behavior research, understanding employees' job satisfaction has received significant attention. However, some elements and perspectives remain unexplored. In this study, we adopted a fresh perspective rooted in workplace human dignity (Bolton, 2006, 2007; Hodson, 2001). By linking the



literature on human dignity and job satisfaction, we highlight the crucial role of the subjective aspect of overall job satisfaction. Specifically, experiencing supervisors' undignifying behavior negatively affects various aspects of job satisfaction, including personal growth and general job satisfaction.

First, we linked the literature on human dignity in the workplace (Bolton, 2006, 2007) and job satisfaction research (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1980) to emphasize the important role of the subjective element in understanding the general job satisfaction of employees. One important subjective element of a relational nature is experiencing workplace supervisors' undignifying behavior. Previous literature conceives this type of manager as undermining employees' sense of worth and dignity, and general well-being (Pelletier, 2010; Veldsman, 2014), devaluing and demeaning work experiences (Veldsman, 2014) and thus as a barrier to positive job outcomes (e.g. Neubert et al., 2013; Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2011). Consistent with these parameters, our findings revealed that experiencing supervisors' undignifying behavior negatively affects various aspects of job satisfaction, including both personal growth and general job satisfaction.

Second, our results have brought into light a new influential variable: personal growth satisfaction, which has been addressed for more than 40 years as a job facet that emerges as an important output from high-motivating jobs (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976, 1980), has received little or no attention in research, much less regarding its influential role in making employees satisfied with their jobs. Specifically, our results have demonstrated that, beyond being a facet of the job, it importantly determines general job satisfaction, as it represents a primary element that humans aspire to cover in life. Our study demonstrated the partial but large mediating role of personal growth satisfaction in the relationship between supervisors' undignifying behavior and the general job satisfaction of employees. Thus, personal growth satisfaction, because of its connection with attaining eudaimonic well-being (Fowers et al., 2010) -an inherent dimension of human existence and aspiration in life.

- appears to play an important role in employees' levels of job satisfaction and, importantly, would explain why the experience with supervisors' undignifying behavior would undermine employees' general job satisfaction.

In terms of practical implications, our findings are relevant for managers interested in fostering general job satisfaction in their workplaces by highlighting the need to make jobs dignified and thus helpful for employees to grow and develop as human beings. More importantly and based on the two proposed orders of dignity described here (i.e. dignity at work, dignity in work, Bolton, 2006, 2007) our thinking can help managers improve their understanding of how to create decent work, and thus increase both personal growth and general job satisfaction in their employees. Managers who focus solely on the objective order of dignity—the procedural dimension—have incomplete understanding. They should also consider the subjective order of dignity, the relational dimension. Managers promote employees' sense of dignity by fostering respect, trust, and positive relationships. Achieving integral dignity, which combines both subjective and objective elements, leads to positive organizational outcomes. Moral virtuousness plays a crucial role in this process by enabling managers to inspire and transmit virtue to their subordinates. Virtuous leaders empower employees to attain human dignity through their own actions.

## **5.2. Limitations and further research directions**

Despite the valuable contributions of this study, several limitations warrant further investigation. First, the cross-sectional study design precludes strong causal inferences. While ensuring absolute anonymity for sincere responses, we sacrificed the opportunity for longitudinal analysis. Second, a potential common method bias (CMB) arises from self-report data from the same source. Although procedural remedies and post hoc tests mitigate this, future research could incorporate more objective measures of supervisors' undignifying behavior. Although our analysis highlights the role of personal growth satisfaction in determining general job satisfaction, certain personal variables could enhance our understanding. For instance, employees' growth needs strength, reflecting their desire for growth-related satisfaction from their jobs, might moderate the negative relationship between supervisors' undignifying behavior and job satisfaction. Additionally, considering employees' sense of dignity as a mediating variable could further support our argument that human dignity connects supervisors' behavior to job satisfaction.

through personal growth satisfaction. Another crucial variable to consider is employees' moral virtuousness, which positively contributes to their sense of human dignity regardless of the context. According to Hodson (2001), employees play an active role in earning dignity. Future research could explore the impact of employees' moral virtuousness on their personal growth and general job satisfaction, offering novel insights.

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## Author contribution

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: study conception and design: Ph.D. Ricardo Martínez-Cañas, Ph.D. Alexis Bañón-Gomís, Ph.D. John Opute and Ph.D. Graca Silva. Data collection: Ph.D. Ricardo Martínez-Cañas, Ph.D. Alexis Bañón-Gomís, Data analysis and interpretation: Ph.D. Ricardo Martínez-Cañas, Ph.D. Alexis Bañón-Gomís, Ph.D. John Opute and Ph.D. Graca Silva. Data manuscript and preparation: Ph.D. Ricardo Martínez-Cañas, Ph.D. Alexis Bañón-Gomís, Ph.D. John Opute and Ph.D. Graca Silva. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of manuscript.

## Ethical approval

All procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Informed consent

Informed oral consent was obtained from all individual participants included in this study.

## Job satisfaction survey

Below we will ask you several questions related to your work, designed to obtain your perceptions and reactions to it. Please answer as honestly and frankly as possible. There are not good or bad responses. Responses are completely anonymous and confidential and will not be provided to your superiors either individually or collectively.

Age:

Sector:

Please rate from 0 to 5 your social benefits (from 0 to 5).

- Pension Plan:
- Study grant:
- Meal tickets:
- Company Car:
- Products/services:

The following statements are referred to your immediate superior/boss. You should consider your immediate superior as the person who, in your opinion, has the most control over his daily work activities. Please rate from 1 to 5 to what extent the following statements describe your immediate superior (completely agree [5] or [1] complete disagree). He or She:

would blame me for his/her own mistake	1	2	3	4	5
would treat me better if I belonged to a different ethnic group	1	2	3	4	5
would risk me to get back at someone else	1	2	3	4	5
would use my performance appraisal to criticize me as a person	1	2	3	4	5
would lie to me	1	2	3	4	5
makes fun of my mistakes instead of coaching me as to how to do my job better	1	2	3	4	5
would deliberately distort what I say	1	2	3	4	5
deliberately makes employees angry at each other	1	2	3	4	5
is a hypocrite	1	2	3	4	5
enjoys turning down my requests	1	2	3	4	5

With regard your Personal Growth Satisfaction, please rate from 1 to 5 your degree of satisfaction (totally dissatisfied [1]) and totally satisfied [5]):

The amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job	1	2	3	4	5
The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job	1	2	3	4	5
The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job	1	2	3	4	5
The amount of challenge in my job	1	2	3	4	5

With regard of your General Job Satisfaction, please rate from 1 to 5 the following statements (completely dissatisfied [1]) and completely satisfied [5]):

Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job	1	2	3	4	5
I seldom think of quitting this job	1	2	3	4	5
I'm generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job	1	2	3	4	5

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## About the authors

**Ricardo Martínez Cañas**, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Area of Business Organization at the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain). He has been a visiting Scholar in Lisbon School of Economics & Management (Portugal), Manchester Institute of Innovation Research (UK), Catholic School of Eichstätt Ingolstadt (Germany) and. His research interests span various areas, including social capital, business ethics, leadership, human resources, entrepreneurship, and value co-creation. His research has appeared in Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Management Journal, International Journal of Human Resource Management, European Management Review amongst others.

**Alexis Jacobo Bañón Gomis**, Ph.D., is a part-time researcher and academic. He holds a position at Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain) and has made significant contributions to the field of business ethics, organizational behavior, trust and organizational commitment. Dr. Bañón-Gomis is particularly known for his work on ethical dimensions within business activities. His research has been published in Business Ethics: A European Review, Universia Business Review, European Management Journal, European Management Review among others.

**Graça Silva**, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Lisbon School of Economics & Management (ISEG) at Universidade de Lisboa (Portugal). She earned her PhD in Industrial Engineering, majoring in quality management, from Faculdade de Ciencias e Tecnologia (FCT-UNL). Her research primarily focusses on Quality Management, Innovation Management, Human Resources and Sustainability. Her research has appeared in International Journal of Operations & Production Management, Business Strategy and the Environment, Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Business Research and Journal of International Marketing, amongst others.

**John Opute**, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer in Human Resources Management at London South Bank University. He joined LSBU in 2009 and currently holds the position of Associate Professor of International HRM. Additionally, he serves as the Course Director for the MSc International HRM program within the School of Business. Dr. Opute brings over 20 years of industry experience in general and human resources management, having held key HR positions in multinational companies such as Alcan Aluminium Company of Canada and Cincinnati Bell in Ohio State, USA. His research has been published in Personnel Review, the International Journal of Human Resource Management, Employee Relations, and Corporate Communications among others.

## ORCID

Ricardo Martínez Cañas  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4629-5513>

Alexis Jacobo Bañón Gomís  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5240-0028>

Graça Silva  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5396-395X>

John Opute  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6719-6701>

## Data availability statement

Data and materials supporting the results or analyses presented in this paper are available upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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