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## Job Satisfaction and Gender: A Global Comparison of Job Satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Research has been inconclusive in determining if men or women experience more job satisfaction. A global comparison examining extrinsic and intrinsic factors, work relations, and work-life balance determinants found few differences; however, work relations and work-life balance factors were more significant for male than female workers across occupations. The current study uses International Social Survey Program data representing 37 countries to explore differences in job satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Findings demonstrate that mean job-satisfaction scores for females are lower across hospitality occupations except for hotel receptionists, housekeeping supervisors, and hotel cleaners. Regression results revealed additional differences such as the significance of coworker relations, the negative impact of being discriminated against and harassed at work, working weekends, marital status, and supervisory status for women with autonomy, work stress, education, and employment relationship being more salient for men. Interesting work, work being useful to society, job security, pay, relations with management, and work interfering with family were significant for both males and females.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Hospitality industry; job satisfaction; gender; global comparison

Research on gender and job satisfaction has been extensive but somewhat inconclusive. Some findings indicate that women experience more job satisfaction than men (Bender et al., 2005; Clark, 1997; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000) while others indicate comparable levels (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Fields & Blum, 1997; Hodson, 1989; Westover, 2009). Additional research indicates that job satisfaction for women is based on intrinsic rewards (e.g., workplace relations) and men by extrinsic rewards (e.g., pay and responsibility) (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Clark, 1997; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Hodson, 1989; Konrad et al., 2000).

Hospitality industry workers experience conditions that cause low job satisfaction for both genders. These include low pay, low skilled work, educational mismatch, the need for contingent employment, lack of career development, long hours, work-life conflict (Deery, 2008; Deery & Jago, 2009, 2015), and stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (Deery, 2008; Deery & Jago, 2009, 2015; Jung

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et al., 2012; Yavas et al., 2013). Hospitality workers have high turnover as a result (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000, p. 2009).

Although research has examined gender differences across occupations and determinants of job satisfaction in the hospitality industry, for the most part, these focus on single country analyses. Global comparative studies on gender and job satisfaction for hospitality workers are limited. To gain global insights, this research is based on International Social Survey Program data (International Social Survey Program, 2015) to explore extrinsic, intrinsic, work–life balance, and work relation determinants for hospitality industry workers across 37 countries.

#### Literature review

The paradox of the satisfied female worker, which posits that women have higher levels of job satisfaction than men in spite of lower salaries is supported in some contexts (Clark, 1997; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Kristensen & Johansson, 2008; Losocco & Bose, 1998; Metle, 2001; Mulinge & Mueller, 1998; Sloane & Williams, 2000) and for some occupations (Bashaw, 1999; Dhawan, 2000; Grissom et al., 2012; Hull, 1999; McDuff, 2001). In other cases, no differences between job satisfaction for men and women have been found (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Ehrenberg, 2003; Fields & Blum, 1997; Hodson, 1989; Mobley et al., 1994; Robst et al., 2003; Westover, 2009; Zoghi, 2003).

A global study examining all occupations found few gender differences in the impact of extrinsic work characteristics and slight differences in intrinsic work characteristics; work relations and work-life balance factors were more significant to job satisfaction for male than female workers (Andrade, Westover, Peterson et al., 2019b). Another global comparative study found significantly lower levels of job satisfaction for hotel housekeepers, a role dominated by women, compared to other hospitality workers in terms of work-life balance, relationships with management, pay, perceptions of work being useful to society, and interesting work (Andrade et al., 2021). This review discusses job satisfaction and gender in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, work relations, and work-life balance for all occupations and specific to the hospitality industry.

#### **Intrinsic and extrinsic rewards**

A study in Turkey found that job satisfaction for male and female 5-star hotel employees was significantly different on four dimensions when controlling for monthly income: personal fulfillment (e.g., feelings of accomplishment, being able to follow one's conscience, the freedom to use one's judgment, steady employment, and keeping busy), using one's ability in the job (e.g., making use of one's abilities, working independently, doing things for others, using one's own methods, telling others what to do), management conditions (e.g., supervisor competence, boss' method of handling workers,

working conditions, coworker relations, praise), and job conditions (e.g., task variety, recognition in the community, advancement changes, policy implementation) (Kara et al., 2012). Women scored highest on personal fulfillment and job conditions and men on managerial conditions and use of their abilities.

Personal fulfillment and using one's ability in the job are largely intrinsic rewards while management conditions and job conditions are extrinsic. This finding shows that job satisfaction for male and female hotel managers may be contingent on both types of rewards. Previous research indicates that job satisfaction for men is primarily based on extrinsic work benefits (Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Konrad et al., 2000; Sloane & Williams, 2000), and also that men value both types of rewards more than women and experience greater overall job satisfaction (De Vaus & McAllister, 1991). Pay, an extrinsic reward, was related to job satisfaction for female university professors in the UK but not for men, and both men and women experienced declining job satisfaction with age and time on the job (Oshagbemi & Hickson, 2003). The impact of promotion on job satisfaction also varies by gender. Men are typically promoted sooner in their careers than women, resulting in higher job satisfaction earlier in their employment (Clark et al., 1996; Ng & Feldman, 2010). Overall, findings are mixed as to whether intrinsic or extrinsic rewards are associated with job satisfaction for a particular gender.

Some studies have found that men and women look for different features in a job (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Clark, 1997; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Hodson, 1989; Konrad et al., 2000; De Vaus & McAllister, 1991; Westover, 2009). People tend to select jobs that are personally fulfilling (Bender et al., 2005). These preferences may be based on the types of rewards offered (Malka & Chatman, 2003). Women may have more flexibility to self-select or change jobs than men, particularly if they are not the sole financial provider in their households. Consequently, job satisfaction for married women has been found to be higher than for married men and unmarried women (Carleton & Clain, 2012).

Additionally, job satisfaction (consisting of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards) has been found to increase with age for both genders (Wilks & Neto, 2013). However, at the start of their careers, women have higher job satisfaction than men and at mid-career more work pride, possibly because women expect to be in entry-level positions at the beginning of their careers and are satisfied with that; when they are promoted, though, their work pride increases (Magee, 2014; Yap & Konrad, 2009).

#### Work-life balance

A lack of work-life balance can be explained by the scarcity of time and energy available to any one individual. As these resources are fixed in amount, using more of them in one role creates deficiency in another and may cause conflict (Marks & MacDermid, 1996). Conflict can also arise when job and family roles are incompatible (Baltes et al., 2010). Balance occurs when a person is equally committed to and satisfied with both roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus et al., 2003). High levels of work-family conflict and the inability to manage non-work responsibilities decrease job satisfaction; however, supportive supervisors and work environments can have a mediating influence (Armstrong et al., 2015; Beham & Drobnic, 2010; Hsu, 2011; Narayanan & Savarimuthu, 2013).

Work in the hospitality industry is associated with intensive labor, round-the-clock operations, and low status and prestige; many hospitality jobs are filled by women (Burke et al., 2008). Long and often late hours associated with this work as well as low pay can cause work-family conflict (Namasivayam & Mount, 2004). Intensive work demands also cause exhaustion, which, for frontline workers, leads to decreased job satisfaction (Adisa et al., 2016; Karatepe, 2010; Zhao et al., 2011).

Women in the hospitality industry may not attain leadership positions due to barriers such as marriage, motherhood, and discrimination as well as fears of work encroaching on their private lives (Kara et al., 2012). Stress for culinary employees has a greater impact on job satisfaction for women than men (Kim et al., 2009). Problems associated with work–life balance identified by female hotel staff include insufficient time for family and friends, lack of advancement, low pay, insufficient time for hobbies and home responsibilities, and difficult working conditions (Okumus et al., 2010).

In all occupations, women may place more value on work-family balance than do men, who prioritize pay over flexibility; when work flexibility was controlled for in one study, however, job satisfaction was equal (Bender et al., 2005). Disparity between actual and preferred work hours has been shown to impact life satisfaction (which correlates with job satisfaction) equally for both genders (Başlevent & Kirmanoğlu, 2014; Tait et al., 1989). However, age may impact work-life balance differently for men and women. A meta-analysis determined that role overload (e.g., having multiple roles requiring extensive time commitments) decreased for older women but not for men (Ng & Feldman, 2010). As children grow up and leave home, women with children would likely have fewer roles.

#### **Work relations**

When hospitality industry employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to satisfy customers (Noe et al., 2010; Pettijohn et al., 2004), contribute in positive ways to working conditions, exhibit organizational commitment (Ryan et al., 2011; Yang, 2010), and have less turnover (Ghiselli et al., 2001). This relationship is reciprocal. A focus on service orientation has also been found to enhance job satisfaction (Lee et al., 1999).



Work relations can contribute to job satisfaction but may do so differently depending on gender.

Women report more rewarding work relations, greater job satisfaction (Fricke & Beehr, 1992; Smart & Ethington, 1987), and more satisfaction with their organizations in female-dominated employment contexts (Clerkin, 2017), and less satisfaction in male-dominated work environments (Clark, 1997; Sloane & Williams, 2000). Based on this, one might expect job satisfaction for females in the hospitality industry to be relatively high; however, other factors, such as those related to extrinsic and intrinsic rewards and work-life conflict, may decrease job satisfaction.

For hotel workers in Turkey, no overall differences were found in satisfaction between men and women (Petrović et al., 2014). However, customer focus, or relationships with guests and ensuring they were satisfied, was more important for female hotel workers than for men, who valued organizational support, defined as procedures, encouragement from management, loyalty, and interpersonal relations (Petrović et al., 2014). Interestingly, work relations were significant for both genders but manifest in different ways with men valuing respect from managers as a result of customer service (an extrinsic motivation) and women exhibiting motivation to satisfy customers and valuing direct customer appreciation. In contrast, a study in China showed that organizational support positively impacted job satisfaction for women but not men and that gender bias perceptions negatively impacted women's career satisfaction (Ngo et al., 2014).

Women show empathy, pleasantness, and helpfulness in work contexts more than men (Caruso et al., 2002), Work characteristics important to women include social relations (Clark, 1997; Harris et al., 2001; Konrad et al., 2000), a good supervisor, and job significance (Konrad et al., 2000). Findings of a meta-analysis indicated that greater satisfaction with supervisors among older women compared to men (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Teaching, which involves interpersonal relationships, resulted in greater satisfaction for female university professors in the U.S. and Canada than for men who were more satisfied by doing research (Kessler et al., 2013).

#### Summary

Mixed results regarding gender and job satisfaction may be due to the failure to control for specific variables (Kara et al., 2012) or to differences in the determinants studied. In spite of variations, the findings tend to favor higher levels of job satisfaction for men with extrinsic rewards being a key factor. Women, particularly in the hospitality industry, appear more motivated by work relations and intrinsic rewards. However, substantial evidence exists that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are salient to job satisfaction for both genders albeit different aspects of these reward types. Work-life balance appears to be a more significant factor for women than men as well. The reciprocal relationship between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry and the rising number of women at all levels of employment in the hotel industry, in particular (Pinar et al., 2011), however, indicates the importance of additional research to understand how gender affects job satisfaction.

#### Theoretical framework and model

Based on the available literature to date, the following theoretical model was developed to pull together the various disparate drivers of one's satisfaction at work (see Figure 1). Like many other studies, we utilize a range of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, work-life-balance characteristics, and variables related to relationships in the workplace relations. In addition to the main study variables of focus, we included a range of personal demographic and contextual organization control variables.

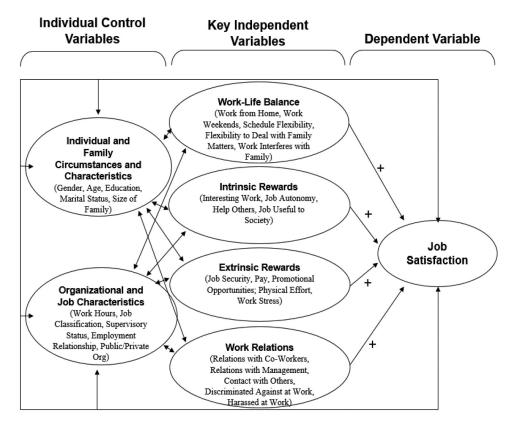


Figure 1. Factors influencing work characteristics and job satisfaction.



#### Research design and methodology

As noted earlier, many studies point to female workers generally, and female hospitality workers more specifically, experience greater satisfaction with their job than their male counterparts (Clark, 1997; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Kristensen & Johansson, 2008; Losocco & Bose, 1998; Metle, 2001; Mulinge & Mueller, 1998; Sloane & Williams, 2000). However, other studies find no differences between job satisfaction for men and women (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Ehrenberg, 2003; Fields & Blum, 1997; Hodson, 1989; Mobley et al., 1994; Robst et al., 2003; Westover, 2009; Zoghi, 2003).

The debate around gender differences in the experiences of men and women at work within the hospitality industry continues, with men experiencing greater motivation through extrinsic rewards and less motivation through intrinsic rewards, work-life balance indicators, and the quality of workplace relations than their female counterparts (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Clark, 1997; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Hodson, 1989; Konrad et al., 2000).

#### **Hypotheses**

The literature review led to the following hypotheses.

H1: Male hospitality industry workers will have greater job satisfaction than female hospitality industry workers.

H2: Both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards will predict overall perceived job satisfaction for male and female hospitality industry workers.

H3: Work-life balance determinants will be more salient in predicting job satisfaction for female hospitality workers than male hospitality workers.

H4: Work relations will be more salient in predicting job satisfaction for female hospitality workers than male hospitality workers.

Each of the hypotheses above are directly related to the theoretical model identified in Figure 1, specifically the key independent variables of extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, work-life balance, and work relations. The specific variables in each of these categories are identified in the model.

#### Description of the data

Using data from the Work Orientations Module IV from the International Social Survey Program (International Social Survey Program, 2015), we apply and extend Westover's (2012a, 2012b) methodology to examine differences in the individual experiences of men and women who work in the hospitality industry across the world. The Work Orientations Module IV utilized a multistage stratified probability sampling methodology in the data collection process, across the 37 countries that participated. Each key study variable is a single-item indicator on a Likert scale (not including control variables).

While we examined all workers from all industries and countries using our model (for comparison purposes), we then focused on all hospitality workers, followed by separate models for male and female hospitality employees to determine key differences by gender and better understand the best predictors of job satisfaction for each group of respondents (Westover, 2012a, p. 3).

#### **Operationalization of variables**

Following the approach of Westover (2012a, 2012b), and as can be seen in Table 1, our job satisfaction model allows for comparisons in job satisfaction across groups, including similarities and differences in respondents' perception of various intrinsic and extrinsic workplace rewards, work-life-balance factors, and the nature of one's relations in the workplace (e.g., see also Spector, 1997; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000; de Bustillo Llorente & Macias, 2005).

#### Individual controls

Control variables used include the following individual characteristics: (1) Sex, (2) Age, (3) Years of Education, (4) Marital Status, and (5) Size of Family (e.g., see Hamermesh, 2001; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000; Hodson, 1989; Carlson & Mellor, 2004).

#### Organizational and job controls

Organizational and job characteristics control variables used in this analysis included the following: (1) Work Hours, (2) ISCO Job Classification, (3) Supervisory Status, (4) Employment Relationship, and (5) Public/Private Organization (e.g., see Hammermesh, 1999; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000).

lable	<ol> <li>Respondent</li> </ol>	totals by	hospitality	occupational	category a	nd gender.
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·	Male – HM Occupations	Female – HM Occupations	Total
Hotel Managers	8	14	22
Restaurant Managers	36	30	66
Chefs	16	22	38
Hotel Receptionists	15	25	40
Cooks	114	167	281
Waiter	46	138	184
Bartender	21	23	44
Hotel Housekeeping Supervisors	23	27	50
Food Counter Helpers	32	55	87
Hotel Cleaners	73	361	434
Fast Food Cooks	8	19	27
Kitchen Helpers	18	79	97
Total	410	960	1,370



#### Statistical methodology

Using data from the Work Orientations Module IV in the 2015International Social Survey Program, we used a variety of statistical approaches (including correlations, cross-tabulations, differences of means tests, ANCOVA, and general descriptive statistics) to examine the similarities and differences between the experience of men and women in hospitality industry jobs, across 37 countries. We then ran Ordinary Least Squares Regression (OLS) for each of these groups to make additional comparisons (see Handel, 2005).

#### Results

#### **Descriptive results**

Table 2 shows the breakdown of respondent totals by hospitality industry occupational category and supervisory status. Non-supervisors make up the largest category, when comparing based on supervisory status, with the exception of within those occupational categories that include a managerial or supervisory role.

Figure 2 shows mean job satisfaction scores for hospitality industry workers, by gender, with a comparison to mean job satisfaction scores by gender for all occupations. Overall, hospitality industry workers have lower mean job satisfaction scores than workers across all occupations. Additionally, male workers across all occupations have the highest job satisfaction levels (5.34), while male hospitality industry workers have significantly lower job satisfaction (5.21). Female workers have lower mean job satisfaction scores both within hospitality industry occupations and in all occupations (5.08 and 5.29, respectively).

In Figure 3, we see job satisfaction mean scores across various hospitality industry occupational categories, as well as by the sex of the respondent. It also includes a comparison to the overall mean job satisfaction score for that occupational category. In addition to wide variation in mean job satisfaction scores across hospitality industry occupation types, there is a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction mean scores between female and male respondents across each hospitality occupational category, except for cooks. Additionally, men have higher job satisfaction mean scores in each hospitality occupational category, except for hotel receptionists, housekeeping supervisors, hotel cleaners, and cooks. The job satisfaction premium for male employees is the strongest among restaurant managers and chefs.

Table 3 shows the number of respondents by gender and occupation type. Table 4 shows the means of job satisfaction and other main study variables, (1) broken down hospitality industry worker gender, and (2) broken down by worker gender for all jobs, regardless of occupation type, for respondents across the 2015 ISSP Work Orientations IV countries. This includes differences across



**Table 2.** Key characteristics related to job satisfaction.

Dependent Variable:	
Job Satisfaction <sup>3</sup>	"How satisfied are you in your main job?"
Intrinsic Rewards <sup>4</sup> :	
Interesting Job	"My job is interesting."
Job Autonomy	"I can work independently."
Help Others	"In my job I can help other people."
Job Useful to Society	"My job is useful to society."
Extrinsic Rewards <sup>5</sup> :	
Pay	"My income is high."
Job Security	"My job is secure."
Promotional Opportunities	"My opportunities for advancement are high."
Physical Effort <sup>6</sup>	"How often do you have to do hard physical work?"
Work Stress <sup>7</sup>	"How often do you find your work stressful?"
Work Relations:	
Management-Employee	"In general, how would you describe relations at your workplace between
Relations <sup>8</sup>	management and employees?"
Coworker Relations <sup>9</sup>	"In general, how would you describe relations at your workplace between workmates/colleagues?"
Contact with Others <sup>10</sup>	"In my job, I have personal contact with others."
Discriminated against at Work <sup>11</sup>	"Over the past 5 years, have you been discriminated against with regard to work, for instance, when applying for a job, or when being considered for a pay increase or promotion?"
Harassed at Work <sup>12</sup>	"Over the past 5 years, have you been harassed by your supervisors or coworkers at your job, for example, have you experienced any bullying, physical, or psychological abuse?"
Work-Life Balance	
Work from Home <sup>13</sup>	"How often do you work at home during your normal work hours?
Work Weekends <sup>14</sup>	"How often does your job involve working weekends?
Schedule Flexibility <sup>15</sup>	"Which of the following best describes how your working hours are decided (times you start and finish your work)?
Flexibility to Deal with	"How difficult would it be for you to take an hour or two off during work hours, to
Family Matters <sup>16</sup>	take care of personal or family matters?
Work Interferes with Family <sup>17</sup>	"How often do you feel that the demands of your job interfere with your family?"

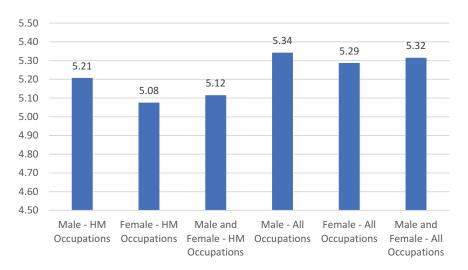
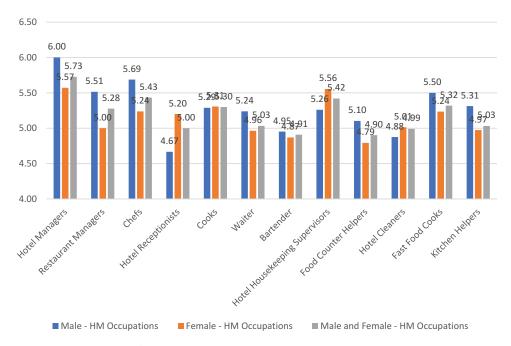


Figure 2. Mean job satisfaction scores by gender, 2015.

occupational category and supervisory status for the main study variables and the difference between male and female workers, both within the hospitality



**Figure 3.** Mean job satisfaction scores by HM occupational category and gender, 2015.

Table 3. Hospitality management worker totals by occupational category and gender, 2015.

	Male – HM Occupations	Female – HM Occupations	Total
Hotel Managers	8	14	22
Restaurant Managers	36	30	66
Chefs	16	22	38
Hotel Receptionists	15	25	40
Cooks	114	167	281
Waiter	46	138	184
Bartender	21	23	44
Hotel Housekeeping Supervisors	23	27	50
Food Counter Helpers	32	55	87
Hotel Cleaners	73	361	434
Fast Food Cooks	8	19	27
Kitchen Helpers	18	79	97
Total	410	960	1,370

industry occupations, and for all workers. While the difference in mean job satisfaction levels has already been mentioned, additionally females within hospitality industry jobs have lower mean scores than male hospitality industry workers and much lower scores than other workers, in relation to the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards factors, the nature of a respondent's relationships in the workplace, and across the various work-life-balance indicators. Findings in prior research are consistent with our results (Bokemeier & William, 1987; Hodson, 1989; Blau & Kahn, 2003; Lynch, 1992; Mobley et al., 1994; Clark, 1997; Konrad et al., 2000; Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Westover, 2012a, 2012b).



**Table 4.** Mean job satisfaction of the main study variables by gender, 2015.

		Female –	Male and			Male and
	Male – HM	HM	Female – HM	Male – All	Female – All	Female – All
VARIABLE	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations
Job Satisfaction	5.21	5.08	5.12	5.34	5.29	5.32
Interesting Work	3.64	3.28	3.39	3.83	3.83	3.83
Job Autonomy	3.68	3.49	3.55	3.85	3.78	3.82
Help Others	3.73	3.68	3.69	3.81	3.96	3.88
Job Useful to Society	3.73	3.77	3.76	3.89	4.00	3.94
Job Security	3.75	3.61	3.66	3.76	3.79	3.77
Pay	2.75	2.28	2.43	2.96	2.68	2.82
Promotional Opportunities	2.85	2.30	2.47	2.87	2.68	2.78
Physical Effort	3.23	3.33	3.30	2.92	2.49	2.71
Work Stress	3.20	3.02	3.08	3.17	3.17	3.17
Relations with Coworkers	4.26	4.09	4.14	4.19	4.18	4.19
Relations with Management	4.02	3.93	3.95	3.92	3.90	3.91
Contact with Others	4.24	4.19	4.20	4.17	4.29	4.23
Discriminated Against at Work	1.79	1.78	1.79	1.82	1.81	1.82
Harassed at Work	1.88	1.82	1.84	1.88	1.84	1.86
Work from Home	4.23	4.45	4.38	3.96	4.04	4.00
Work Weekends	2.31	2.86	2.69	3.03	3.25	3.14
Schedule Flexibility	1.57	1.39	1.45	1.68	1.57	1.63
Flexibility to Deal with Family Matters	2.41	2.50	2.47	2.15	2.35	2.25
Work Interferes with Family	3.67	3.82	3.78	3.63	3.68	3.66
Age	38.18	44.19	42.38	43.51	43.23	43.37
Education	12.57	11.60	11.90	13.00	13.69	13.34
Size of Family	3.30	3.14	3.18	3.30	3.16	3.23
Work Hours	44.06	37.73	39.64	44.01	37.81	40.96

#### **Regression results**

We applied and extended the methodology of Andrade and Westover (2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b) to build an OLS model based on the theoretical framework provider earlier<sup>2</sup>:

- Model 1 all control variables
- Model 2 all intrinsic reward variables
- Model 3 all extrinsic reward variables
- Model 4 all work relation variables
- Model 5 all work–life balance variables
- Model 6 combined model of elements in models 1–5 above

As we built our model, nearly all variables in each sub-model (Models 1–5) were statistically significant (p < .001) (not including working on weekends and family size). When we ran the combined model (Model 6), several of the



variables fell out of statistical significance, including several individual control variables, having contact with others, physical effort at work, the opportunity to work from home. We also found variations in the adjusted r-squared values in Models 2-5 (Models 2 and 3 held the strongest overall predictability in isolation from each other), while the combined model (Model 6) had an adjusted r-squared of 0.428. In other words, Model 6 accounts for nearly 43% of the variation in respondents' job satisfaction.

We then ran Model 6 for all workers regardless of job types, for all male and female workers, and then for all hospitality workers, by gender. As can be seen in Table 5, there are significant differences in the size of standardized beta coefficients and the statistical significance for the study variables in predicting job satisfaction, particularly when we make comparisons across male and female workers, both within hospitality industry occupations and in all occupations. Of particular note is that many of the statistically significant independent variables in the model for all workers were not significant in the model for all hospitality jobs or the models for male and female hospitality workers. Part of this is likely due to the relatively small N for the hospitality occupations generally, but we also see some clear patterns of difference in the driving indicators of job satisfaction in hospitality versus all jobs, particularly when comparing male and female workers.

For male hospitality industry workers, we see statistical significance for job autonomy, work stress, education, and work relationship in predicting job satisfaction, while these same variables were not significant for female hospitality workers. Additionally, relations with management had the largest beta coefficient score in the model for male hospitality workers, while interesting work was the most impactful variable in each of the other models.

For female hospitality workers, we see statistical significance for relations with coworkers, discriminated against at work, harassed at work, working weekends, marital status, and supervisory status in predicting job satisfaction, while these same variables were not significant for male hospitality workers. Additionally, work interferes with family and relations with coworkers each had much stronger beta coefficient scores for females than for male hospitality workers or for male or female workers outside of the hospitality occupations.

Finally, as can be seen in Figure 4, regression results show a significant difference in overall model predictability between the male hospitality workers, when compared with all other models. OLS model fit is the worst for female hospitality workers (adjusted r-squared = 0.412) and best for male hospitality workers (adjusted r-squared = 0.524).

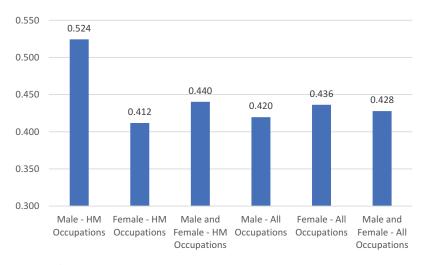
Table 5. OLS regression results of job satisfaction and main study variables by HM and non-HM occupation and gender, 2015.

	, ,					
		Female –	Male and			Male and
	Male – HM	HM	Female – HM	Male – All	Female – All	Female – All
VARIABLE	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations	Occupations
Interesting Work	0.254***	0.245***	0.255***	0.279***	0.295***	0.287***
Job Autonomy	0.102*	0.016	0.041	0.018*	0.020*	0.019**
Help Others	0.002	0.006	0.010	0.0170	0.028**	0.022**
Job Useful to Society	0.131*	0.124***	0.121***	0.042***	0.031**	0.037***
Job Security	0.127**	0.097**	0.103***	0.061***	0.064***	0.063***
	0.127***	0.134***	0.103***	0.092***	0.103***	0.098***
Pay				0.060***	0.105***	0.057***
Promotional Opportunities	0.020	-0.052	-0.029	0.060****	0.055	0.057
Physical Effort	0.021	-0.033	-0.015	0.0086	0.002	0.005
Work Stress	-0.113*	-0.023	-0.049	-0.080***	-0.093***	-0.086***
Relations with Coworkers	-0.026	0.159***	0.08**	0.075***	0.094***	0.085***
Relations with  Management	0.344***	0.182***	0.238***	0.226***	0.224***	0.225***
Contact with Others	-0.021	-0.033	-0.014	0.019*	0.000	0.010
Discriminated Against at Work	-0.010	0.071*	0.049*	0.040***	0.034***	0.037***
Harassed at Work	0.049	-0.096**	-0.053*	0.026**	0.011	0.019***
Work from Home	0.008	-0.020	-0.019	0.0045	0.007	0.005
Work Weekends	-0.035	-0.086**	-0.081**	-0.033***	-0.015	-0.023***
Schedule Flexibility	0.073	-0.049	-0.015	0.019*	0.006	0.014*
Flexibility to Deal with Family Matters	0.058	-0.022	0.002	-0.044***	-0.027***	-0.036***
Work Interferes with Family	0.118**	0.203**	0.186***	0.086***	0.109***	0.097***
Age	0.072	0.021	0.037	0.029***	0.040***	0.033***
Education	-0.118**	-0.040	-0.063**	-0.051***	-0.037***	-0.045***
Marital Status	-0.049	-0.070*	-0.064*	-0.022*	-0.034***	-0.028***
Size of Family	-0.042	-0.039	-0.037	-0.0117	0.001	-0.007
Work Hours	-0.038	0.017	-0.006	0.0008	0.011	0.006
Supervisory Status	-0.039	-0.068*	-0.012	-0.0040	-0.005	-0.004
Employment Relationship	-0.116*	-0.031	-0.059*	0.0051	0.008	0.008
Public/Private Organization	-0.013	0.018	-0.064*	-0.021*	-0.037***	028***
N	293	689	982	9,481	9,235	18,716
ADJ. R-SQUARED	0.524	0.412	0.440	0.420	0.436	0.428
F	12.92***	18.84***	.000***	245.79***	256.25***	483.58***

Beta Values; Level of significance: \* = p < .05; \*\* = p < .01; \*\*\* = p < .001

#### Discussion and future research

Many empirical studies have been conducted comparing gender differences related to job satisfaction. As documented in the literature review, results have largely been inconclusive and contradictory, with perhaps females having a slight lead of higher job satisfaction overall (Bender et al., 2005; Bokemeier & William, 1987; Clark, 1997; Fields & Blum, 1997; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000). Our purpose was to test for significant gender differences of hospitality industry employees in job satisfaction and its determinants across 37



**Figure 4.** Model fit – adjusted r-squared value, by occupation and gender.

countries. Using data from the 2015 ISSP, descriptive mean scores and OLS regression results where compared across gender differences.

Male hospitality employees scored slightly higher on overall mean job satisfaction than their female counterparts (5.21 versus 5.08), providing marginal support for H1. H2 is partially supported, as six of the nine of the intrinsic/extrinsic variables were statistically significant for male respondents (interesting work, job autonomy, useful to society, job security, pay, and work stress). In these same categories, only four of the nine variables (interesting work, useful to society, job security and pay) were statistically significant for female workers. Other studies have found no overall differences in job satisfaction by gender but with differences on specific variables (Petrović et al., 2014). Previous research has had mixed results regarding the effect of intrinsic and extrinsic variables, but has mostly determined that job satisfaction for men is based on extrinsic work benefits (Donohue & Heywood, 2004; Konrad et al., 2000; Sloane & Williams, 2000); however, this study shows that job satisfaction for men can also be attributed to intrinsic variables such as interesting work, job autonomy, and being useful to society although there are variations in this pattern (Kara et al., 2012) similar to the current study.

In addition, H3 (work-life balance variables) is slightly supported by regression results, with two variables (work weekends and work interferes with family) statistically significant for female hospitality workers, whereas only one of five variables (work interferes with family) was statistically significant for the male hospitality workers. We expected greater gender differences in this category based on the literature review that points to women generally being more concerned with work-life balance issues (Bender et al., 2005; Kara et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2009; Okumus et al., 2010).

Finally, H4 (work relations) was strongly supported, as four of the five work relation variables (relations with coworkers, relations with management, discrimination, and harassment) were statistically significant for female hospitality workers. In contrast, relations with management were the only significant variable for their male counterparts. In this case, we were surprised by the large difference between males and females. Mean scores in this category were quite similar, yet OLS regression analysis shows that overall predictability of these variables leans heavily toward females. This result is a salient finding of the study and similar to previous research (Clark, 1997; Fricke & Beehr, 1992; Harris et al., 2001; Kessler et al., 2013; Konrad et al., 2000; Smart & Ethington, 1987).

Results presented herein also raise other interesting questions to pursue. For example, why do male respondents in the management positions (hotel managers, restaurant managers, and chefs) score significantly higher in overall job satisfaction than their female counterparts (Figure 3). In contrast, the line level/hourly positions (housekeepers, helpers, cooks, etc.) show one position with significant gender difference (receptionists), while all others have little difference and no significance.

Results from this and other studies, show the hospitality industry in general has lower job satisfaction scores than other industry classifications (Deery & D'Annunzio-Green, 2008; Deery & Jago, 2009, 2015; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000, p. 2009). In 17 of the 20 main study job satisfaction variables (Table 3), we find hospitality workers scoring lower than their counterparts measured in all other industries. Housekeeping departments and food operations especially are going to change practices, raise standards, and organize in a way that both employee and guest are protected and at ease in a transient environment crowded with people. These changes must consider the new work demands placed on the employee. In a female-dominated industry, particularly in the lower wage hotel job categories studied in this research (of the 1,370 total hospitality industry respondents to the survey, 960 were female) the findings can be particularly useful to management.

This study offers numerous tracks for future research. One particular area which could provide interesting and useful information is comparing job-satisfaction overall as well as among the genders between front-of-the-house (e.g., servers, front desk, bartenders, etc.) guest-interacting positions and back-of-the-house (housekeepers, cooks, etc.) non-guest contact positions. Much could be learned about the value of guest interaction in many of the job satisfaction variables measured here, particularly those variables in the intrinsic category, such as interesting work, helping others, and job useful to society.

Due to space limitations, we did not include data and analysis regarding the differences across individual countries. However, future studies should compare these differences and determine how culture and country economics and development relate to job satisfaction in hospitality jobs, particularly in exploring gendered differences in the experience in the workplace.



#### Conclusion

The findings here show females in positions of management have significantly lower job satisfaction than their male colleagues. We also found that males in all hospitality positions scoring higher in overall job satisfaction than females. In an industry where women make up the majority of hospitality employees in most countries efforts need to be made to concentrate on the factors than women score low on and create proactive approaches to seek greater parity.

We also found that male and female hospitality workers score lower than workers in the "all other industry" category. This should be a concern for all hospitality industry leaders. This study shows that there are many factors for this besides just pay. Too often the industry cites low pay as the hurdle to hiring and retaining capable labor (Dogru et al., 2019). Many of these variables can be improved with better awareness and understanding from management, and creative initiatives and programs targeting the individual factors.

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, hospitality industry leaders worldwide will have an opportunity to reset many of the practices and culture norms that existed previously. In an industry that was damaged particularly hard by the pandemic and has many current employees questioning the wisdom of returning to the industry (or potential future employees seeking a job in the industry), it is critical that job satisfaction at all levels be of paramount importance.

The hospitality industry has an opportunity in the coming years to readdress employee job satisfaction with specific objectives for female and male employees, and for management and hourly employees. An industry that has mastered guest satisfaction should require the same effort and concentration on mastering employee job satisfaction.

#### **Notes**

- 1. Australia, Austria, Belgium, Chile, China, Taiwan, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela
- 2. Full OLS regression model development results available upon request.
- 3. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Completely Dissatisfied, (2) Very Dissatisfied, (3) Fairly Dissatisfied, (4) Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, (5) Fairly Satisfied, (6) Very Satisfied, (7) Completely Satisfied.
- 4. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.
- 5. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.
- 6. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Always, (2) Often, (3) Sometimes, (4) Hardly Ever, (5) Never.



- 7. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Always, (2) Often, (3) Sometimes, (4) Hardly Ever, (5) Never.
- 8. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Very Bad, (2) Bad, (3) Neither good nor bad, (4) Good, and (5) Very Good.
- 9. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Very Bad, (2) Bad, (3) Neither good nor bad, (4) Good, and (5) Very Good.
- 10. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.
- 11. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Yes, (2) No.
- 12. Response categories for these variables include: (1) Yes, (2) No.
- 13. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Always, (2) Often, (3) Sometimes, (4) Hardly Ever, (5) Never.
- 14. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Always, (2) Often, (3) Sometimes, (4) Hardly Ever, (5) Never.
- 15. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Starting and finishing times are decided by my employer and I cannot change them on my own,
- 16. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Not difficult at all, (2) Not too difficult, (3) Somewhat difficult, and (4) Very difficult.
- 17. Response categories for this variable include: (1) Always, (2) Often, (3) Sometimes, (4) Hardly Ever, (5) Never.

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