

EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION, JOB SATISFACTION, CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, AND FIRM PERFORMANCE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract. This study mainly focuses on examining the effects of employee motivation on Job Satisfaction, job satisfaction on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction on firm performance, and the moderating role of employee empowerment on the relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction. The current study follows convenience sampling to collect the data. The questionnaire uses the survey method of self-administered. To analyse the relationship between the variable and test the hypothesis PLS3 (Partial least-squares) equation is used. The main contributors to the current study were staff of the hotels. The sample size of the study is 380 worker staff of a hotel. The findings of the study indicated that employee motivation effect significantly and positively on job satisfaction, job satisfaction effect significantly and positively on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction effect significantly and positively on firm performance, and for the moderation the finding shows that Employee empowerment effect positively and significantly on the relationship between Employee motivation and Job Satisfaction.

Keywords: employee motivation, job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, firm performance, employee empowerment.

JEL Classification: M21, M5.

Introduction

Globally the sector of the hotel is considered the main chunk of the tourism industry and staff of employee is the key factor that plays an important role to satisfy the customer by delivering good services. Wang et al. (2021) in their study found that human capital effect positively on firm performance. Thus, the motivation and satisfaction of the employees will lead to customer satisfaction then improving the firm performance. The major concern of the service sector is to keep motivated the employee whether skilled, professional or unskilled. Employee motivation in the hotel sector is a key issue. For every organization, it is a challenge to motivate their employee to increase performance and their loyalty to the organization and offer good service to the customer, this phenomenon also applies on the hotel industry (Jonić, 2018). The rate of competition and unemployment increases in Jordanian Hotel industry that in return demands improved performance

by the employees so that they can achieve or maintain a competitive advantage in case if the employee unable to perform well he or she will be fired. Due to this reason, it is expected that employee will perform better in order to retain his or her job without any extrinsic rewards. Wright (2003) pointed out the human behaviour that every individual have needs and if they are not fulfilling it will cause an indirect or direct effect on the work performed. As there is continues increase in the hotel it also boosts the competition as well as it peeks unemployment, in this situation managers' offer fewer salaries to the employee, offer no promotion or training to the staff and follow the activities that weaken the relationship between management and employee (Ahmed, 2015). Sampson and Akyeamong (2014) emphasize the fact that unbalances work-life, long hours of working and stress at the workplace in the hotel industry make employee unproductive and make it difficult for the employer to know the actual reason of their bad performance. There is huge literature available that

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discussed the motivation and employee performance at the workplace. There are numbers of studies from different industries that claim job performance is affected by non-monetary and monetary incentives (Olusadum & Anulika, 2018; Ackah, 2014; Ibrahim & Brobbey, 2015). Likewise, the hospitality industry also has studies that focus on motivation and its impact on Firm performance (Ghebregiorgis, 2018; Nigussie, 2018).

The above discussion evidences the main focus of the previous works was related to the motivation in general and we found a research gap on incentive packages. This point motivates the authors to assess the above said view point. Moreover as far as the studies related to the Jordanian context we also find lack of work in this regards hence it is unavoidable to persuade the research in this vein. In a nutshell the above study is proposed to examine the effect of employee motivation on job satisfaction, job satisfaction on customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction on firm performance. Additionally the study aims examine how employee empowerment interacts employee motivation and then impact on customer satisfaction in Jordanian hospitality industry. It is important to study the above relationships not only to add in the existing body of knowledge but also to provide implications of the current work such as the lack of employment opportunities where individuals have left with no choice other than accepting any job with any conditions. More it is important to understand how non-monetary (job satisfaction, working conditions etc.) factors are important for better performance of the employees.

1. Literature review and hypothesis development

1.1. Employee motivation and job satisfaction

Motivation is considered as the key factor to achieve firm goals; it is a significant part of human resources and cogitate as a foremost issue in behavioural sciences (Amollo, 2021). The factors of job satisfaction and motivation have been discussed in detailed by many researchers and managers. Precisely, Vavra et al. (2021) conclude that motivation is a tendency to perform productively and manage to undertake objective and needs. Motivation is a process as defined by Luthans and Youssef (2007) it helps to direct, provoke, sustains and energizes behaviour and Firm performance. Whereas, Hitka et al. (2021) claim motivation as an inner force which is used to accomplish goals either organizational or personal. Motivation is the force to satisfy and fulfil the needs while job satisfaction is the response of the individual to the available working conditions (Xie & Haidung, 2013). Prior researches show that the satisfied employee has more capability and commitment to perform a task than an unsatisfied employee, it also boosts their motivation level and thus causes a positive impact on firm performance and productivity. In today's corporate world the resources are usually available and it can be acquired, the main issue is to heir talented employees because it is not available in the market easily and it involves

time to develop them and involve HR management's efforts to polish them so that these employees will work actively and productively. Having a motivated employee to consider as the key element to have a competitive advantage (Chen et al., 2012). Eneizan et al. (2021) found that the motivation of employees by Rewards and compensations will lead to high job satisfaction. As discussed above the clear connection has been confirmed between job satisfaction and motivation (Varma, 2017; Belias et al. 2014; Bangcheng, 2009). Consequently, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Employee motivation has a direct positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

1.2. Job satisfaction and customer satisfaction

Jobs satisfaction involve a process of evolution, where the actual work been compared with the expected or standard work (Homburg & Stock, 2004). Taking further this concept, Hulin and Judge (2003) claim that satisfaction of job depends on the psychological multidimensional response to job and it has emotional (affective), evaluative (cognitive) and behavioural aspect. The framework of service climate based on employee perception regarding the support of management facilities available to perform service lead to higher customer satisfaction. Researchers like Towler et al. (2011) found that service climate is a perception of employee that focuses on procedures, practices and behaviours that are rewarded, supported and expected by the employee in the customer service quality or customer service. It has been observed by previous studies that satisfy employee help to make customer satisfied. Because the satisfaction of employee makes them more committed to their work and customers (Amoopour et al., 2014). Eneizan et al. (2021) confirmed the positive effect of job satisfaction on customer satisfaction. A satisfied employee is key to accomplish organizational goals. They put their maximum effort to improve the service quality for the customer. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Job Satisfaction is positively correlated with Customer Satisfaction.

1.3. Customer satisfaction and firm performance

In the literature, customer satisfaction has been viewed as a market-based asset relevant to the efficient and effective orchestration of business resources and the development of firm performance. (Otto et al., 2020). The empirical study conduct by Anderson et al. (1994) of the Swedish market from the period of 1989–1990 by using the shared data of market level, concluded that the satisfaction level of customer has a positive impact on firm financial returns. The behaviour of repurchase can be provoked by making the customer satisfied (Verhoef, 2003; Stank et al., 1999). When an organization set prices at a premium level, the satisfied customers are those who are willing to purchase that product and contribute profitability ratio

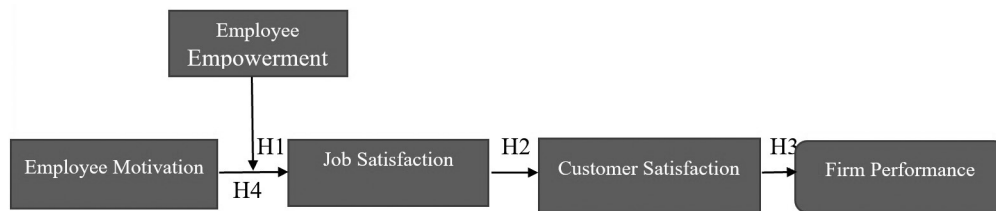


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

(Homburg et al., 2005). As for the current study, most reliable studies are Behn and Riley (1999) and Dresner and Xu (1995). The research of Dresner and Xu (1995) examine the above-discussed association of customer satisfaction and customer service along with the evaluation of the relationship between profitability and satisfaction by using the data of the airline industry. The result shows that the higher level of satisfaction of customer leads to a higher level of profit, it can be attained by controlling the extra cost that spends to provide higher satisfaction to the customer. Another study conducted by Yee et al. (2008, 2010) using two airline industries, the finding shows a positive and significant relationship between firm performance and customer satisfaction. In short, we can state that customer satisfaction help to enhance firm performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Customer Satisfaction has a positive influence on Firm Performance.

1.4. The moderating role of employee empowerment

The term empowerment is described by the researcher as the process of transferring the control between employer and employee (Randolph, 1995). Empowerment does not only allow the worker to work freely but it also required responsibility and accountability. Ignoré (2009) highlighted that employees must be empowered to become more committed and motivated to their work. Seibert et al. (2004), explain job satisfaction as a positive emotion that provides pleasure gain by job experience. The concept of empowerment may weaken the culture of the organization where subordinates are trained to take orders from upper authorities (Saengchai et al., 2019). If the employees are empowerment the motivation level is higher which lead to employee performance. Former studies found positive association between employee empowerment and attitudinal and behavioural responses of a worker. Saengchai et al. (2019) quantified that job performance increase with the empowerment level, it also helps to reduce the stress among the employee which work positively on the performance and enhance the confidence of the worker and finally increase the capability to perform the task. Researchers reported the different elements that motivate the employees such as appreciation of good work, work challenge, personal growth and learning, responsibilities, active participation of work task. Researcher further claim that other intrinsic factors affect the motivation level of the employee like process and participation in making a

decision, control over work, increased autonomy, challenging work and skill to take a right decision (Walsh & Taylor, 2007). The above argument provides a base that the empowered employees are more motivated and hence in this case their performance level is higher than the less empowered employees. Hence it a moderating role of employee empowerment can be claimed leading to the following hypotheses:

H4: Employee empowerment moderates the effect of employee motivation and Job Satisfaction.

2. Methodology

The current study is quantitative in manner the data was collected using a close ended questionnaire that included the demographic characteristics of the participant as well as the questions related to the constructs and their items based on likert type scale where 1 equals to strongly disagree and 5 equals strongly agree. See Figure 1 shows the variables, the first variable of the study was employee motivation; the items of employee motivation were adopted from Curtis et al. (2009). The items of Job Satisfaction were adopted from Al-dalahmeh et al. (2018), Hanaysha and Tahir (2016). The items of customer satisfaction were adopted from Bamberger et al. (2021), Eneizan et al. (2021). The items of firm performance were adopted from Al-dalahmeh et al. (2018). The items of Employee engagement were adopted from Hanaysha and Tahir (2016). The sampling was done on convenience basis. The questionnaire was initially distributed to 420 individuals working in the hoteling industry of Jordan however 380 questionnaires were returned completely filled.

2.1. Data analysis

Before conducting the main analysis some preliminary analysis were conducted using SPSS. Those analysis included missing value treatment, outliers and normality tests. As far as missing values are concerned the questionnaires which have been fully filled were part of the study hence no missing values were found. The outliers were tested using z score of the items we found that all values of z-scores ranged between -5 and $+5$ hence no issues found related to the outliers. The multivariate normality was also tested and we found the normality issues in the data hence we decided to perform such analysis to hypotheses where normality is not the preliminary condition. As the model included latent constructs and it also had the moderator

it made the model a little complex model hence we decided to perform structure equation modelling. As we had a non-normal data the Partial least square method was found suitable to test the model as Hair et al. (2018), suggest that to measure and analyze the complex model, PLS-SEM is considered one of the best methods. Moreover in the current study, we focus on both theory and prediction testing by using PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2018; Petter, 2018) This study also focuses to predict interrelationships without restricting the data (Hair et al., 2018; Garson, 2016). We employed SMART PLS 3 to analyse the model. The following section provides the results and discussion.

3. Analysis and results

PLS-SEM requires testing both models, measurement and structural as required by other structural equation modelling techniques. The reliability and validity of the model is ensured by assessing the measurement model first (Hair et al., 2019). After the confirmation of validity and reliability the structural method is proceeded. The convergent and discriminant validities are the two which have to be met in the structural equation modelling. The earlier is referred to the extent to that multiple items measures the same construct (Ngah et al., 2017). The convergent validity is confirmed by items loadings and the composite reliability of the construct. For the composite reliability it has to be at least 0.7, average variance extracted (AVE) has to be at least 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). Table 1 presents the values of items loading, the average variance extracted,

Table 1. Convergent validity, Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), AVE

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Customer satisfaction	CS1	0.888	0.928	0.949	0.822
	CS2	0.886			
	CS3	0.924			
	CS4	0.927			
Firm performance	FP1	0.872	0.918	0.942	0.803
	FP2	0.861			
	FP3	0.921			
	FP4	0.928			
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.801	0.933	0.947	0.749
	JS2	0.875			
	JS3	0.871			
	JS4	0.894			
	JS5	0.882			
	JS6	0.868			
Employee Empowerment	EE1	0.913	0.935	0.954	0.837
	EE2	0.893			
	EE3	0.937			
	EE4	0.916			
Employee Motivation	EM1	0.866	0.919	0.939	0.756
	EM2	0.873			
	EM3	0.897			
	EM4	0.875			
	EM5	0.835			

composite reliability and internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) values all the values meet the standards hence confirming the convergent validity of the constructs.

The discriminant validity is referred to the distinctiveness of the constructs means the degree to which constructs of the same model are distinct to each other. In other words the indicators related to a particular constructs must represent that specific construct rather than representing any other construct (Hair et al., 2011; Abd Aziz et al., 2020). HTMT ratio is the one the most used method for the assessment of discriminant validity all the values of HTMT have to be under 0.9 to ensure the discriminant validity of the constructs in the model. The HTMT ratios are presented in Table 2 showing all the values are under the threshold of 0.9 which indicated that the respondents understood the all five constructs distinct from each other.

Table 2. Heterotrait – Monotrait Ratio

Variables	Customer satisfaction	Employee empowerment	Employee motivation	Firm performance	Job Satisfaction
Customer satisfaction					
Employee empowerment	0.369				
Employee motivation	0.398	0.628			
Firm performance	0.371	0.344	0.329		
Job Satisfaction	0.312	0.277	0.338	0.281	

3.1. Structure Equation modelling

To check the hypotheses of the model bootstrapping was performed using 500 samples. The direct effects were tested to support the direct hypotheses (Hair et al., 2014; Soto-Acosta al., 2016).

Table 3. Path model direct effects

Variables	Beta	SE	T value	P Values
Customer satisfaction -> Firm performance	0.344	0.058	5.898	0.000
Employee motivation -> Job Satisfaction	0.320	0.046	6.977	0.000
Job Satisfaction -> Customer satisfaction	0.295	0.044	6.768	0.000

Table 3 shows the result for the direct hypotheses. It can be noticed that Job Satisfaction positively and significantly impacts Customer satisfaction with ($\beta = 0.295, P = 0.000$). The impact of Employee motivation on Job Satisfaction is also positive and significant with ($\beta = 0.320, P = 0.000$) and the impact of Customer satisfaction on Firm performance is an also having the same positive and sig-

nificant with ($\beta = 0.344, P = 0.000$). In this way all three direct hypotheses were found to be positive and significant.

3.2. Moderation analysis

Table 4 shows the moderation analysis that Employee empowerment effect positively and significantly on the relationship between Employee motivation and Job Satisfaction. The results show a significant moderation effect with ($\beta = 0.113, P = 0.004$).

Table 4. Moderation result

Variables	Beta	SE	T value	P Values
Employee motivation > Job Satisfaction	0.343	0.066	5.186	0.000
Employee empowerment > Job Satisfaction	0.170	0.058	2.930	0.004
EM > JS (Moderator Employee empowerment)	0.113	0.039	2.903	0.004

The results showing a positive and significant impact of motivation and job satisfaction showing the consistency with the results of Graen et al. (1982) and Faraji et al. (2008). These results agree with other studies (Risambessy et al., 2012; Snyder & Grasberger, 2004; Varma, 2017; Belias et al., 2014; Schlesinger & Zornitsky, 1991). Regarding effect of employee empowerment on Employee motivation and job satisfaction, Employee empowerment effect positively and significantly on the relationship between Employee motivation and Job Satisfaction, and This results agrees with other studies (Ignore, 2009; Karatepe, 2013; Bose, 2018; Saengchai et al., 2019).

4. Discussion

The study aimed to examine the three direct and 1 moderated relationships. The first hypothesis claimed a positive relationship of employee motivation and job satisfaction. The results show that there is a significance relationship between the employee motivation and job satisfaction. When discussing about the performance every firms need high level of performance from its employees and there must be a balance between the employees' set of skills and the organizational work environment. The above discussed results are well aligned with the existing literature as mentioned in the study of (Abdi Mohamud et al., 2017). Moreover Hartati (2020) states that higher motivation level of employees is responsible for increased performance. Chien et al. (2020) state that highly motivated employees make more efforts that leads to higher performance.

There are number of studies that found positive relationship of job satisfaction and customer satisfaction such as (Harter et al., 2002; Koy, 2003; Eneizan et al., 2019). The same is theorized in the social exchange theory of Emerson (1976) which states that how the employees are treated by the employer the same way they behave to their customer

hence satisfied employees behave the customer in a better way hence customer satisfaction is achieved. The second hypothesis is related to the job satisfaction-customer satisfaction relationship, while in the third hypothesis the study claims the relationship between customer satisfaction and firm performance. This relationship found to be positive and consistent with (Fornell et al., 2016; Sorescu & Sorescu, 2016; Aziz & Arif, 2020). The moderating role of empowerment was also found to be significant between the relationship of two motivation and job satisfaction.

Conclusions

The objectives of the current study is to investigate the relationship between employee motivation with job satisfaction, job satisfaction with customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction with firm performance, and the moderating role of employee empowerment between employee motivation and job satisfaction. The research used approach of the survey to collect the data. To test the hypothesis SEM-PLS is used as a statistical tool in the study. The participant of the study is the worker of Jordan Hotels. The findings of the study indicated that employee motivation effect significantly and positively on job satisfaction, job satisfaction effect significantly and positively on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction effect significantly and positively on firm performance, and for the moderation the finding shows that Employee empowerment has a moderating role between the relationship of Employee motivation and Job Satisfaction. The study has some practical implication such as investor use market information related to the investment decision making for that they can use customer satisfaction as the indicator of performance and they can relate the customer satisfaction with the stock prices of the company hence it will help them decide their investment portfolio (Rehman & Arif, 2015; Khan et al., 2020). Moreover the companies are recommended to keep in consideration the satisfaction of their employees in order to achieve customer satisfaction that will ultimately translate into better performance.

Recommendations for further research

The study being read was aimed to explore and provide the relationship between job satisfaction and employee motivation. A thorough literature review was conducted to understand the current state of the phenomena and the data was collected from the employees working in hospitality sector. The context of the research is Jordan. The finding of the study are important for the stakeholders of this research hence it is recommended that employers in the hospitality sectors should focus on the satisfaction of their employee by motivating them. It is important for them to understand the motivators of their employees so that they may be motivated and this motivation leads to their job satisfaction which later on translated in the better performance. More research in this area is required in the Jordanian concept so that this important sector can

develop and add value to the economy of the country. Moreover the cross country comparison is also recommended so that the effect of country based differences can be examined.

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