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A Sequential Mixed Method Study of Employee Job Satisfaction in Upscale Restaurants, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT


The study determines the main factors affecting job satisfaction in upscale restaurants and their degree of comparative influence. The research initially involves qualitative data analysis of 20 interviews with restaurant employees representing five upscale restaurants in Kuala Lumpur (KL), followed by structural equation modeling of data retrieved from 368 questionnaires from 16 KL restaurants. The impact variance of four main determinants of job satisfaction are revealed, where the “working environment” has the highest impact, followed by “payment and compensation,” “promotion”, and finally, “workplace fairness”. Crucially, “workplace relationships” have a moderating effect on the relationship between the “work environment” and job satisfaction, implicating industry-applied recommendations to strengthen job satisfaction levels.

KEYWORDS

Job satisfaction; restaurants; workplace relationships; fairness; payment; promotion; working environment

Introduction

Research commonly illustrates that high levels of employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry significantly reduce employees' turnover rates, enhancing their job performance and commitment to the organization (Alhelalat et al., 2017, DiPietro & Bufquin, 2018). Scholastic attention to issues and concerns pertaining to job satisfaction amongst hospitality and tourism industry employees in Malaysia has gradually evolved (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012, Long et al., 2014, Yew, 2008). One qualitative study concerning casual dining restaurants in Malaysia discovered that job-hopping amongst restaurant employees has become a common practice, who often leave restaurants when they are not satisfied with their employment (Ghazali & Roslan, 2020). Therefore, it is within the restaurant industry's economic interests that there is a close correlation between high job satisfaction and organizational productivity, where employees who have high job satisfaction will be able to contribute constructively to the success of the organization. Employees are a crucial part of the competitive advantage of the restaurant business (Yen et al., 2016), where high-level

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employee satisfaction can positively influence a customer's perception of the product and/or service, thereby creating an environment to attract new customers, retain customers and lessen the level of customer complaints (Delcourt et al., 2013, Kim et al., 2005). As restaurants are highly dependent on employees as the industry is labor intensive and given the organizational merits of high levels of employee job satisfaction, it is essential that the main factors affecting job satisfaction in restaurants and their degree of comparative influence are assessed, especially in relation to specific types of restaurants and in particular regional contexts.

Through conducting research which identifies factors influencing employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, a more precise understanding should unfold concerning the vital impact of job satisfaction on a restaurant's service quality, customer satisfaction response, and financial performance. Past research has conducted qualitative research to uncover how job satisfaction is associated with employee motivation and engagement, and employees' relationships with others in the organization (Hassanein & Özgüt, 2022, Lefrid, Torres, & Okumus, 2022, Valk and Yousif, 2021). Some studies focused mainly on quantitative research to empirically test the emotional components of frontline employees in relation to levels of job satisfaction within the hospitality industry (Amissah et al., 2022). Past enquiries concerning job satisfaction amongst hospitality employees have largely conducted either qualitative or quantitative research rather than a combination of methods. To close the research gap, the current research adopts a sequential mixed method design. This approach that has generally gained popularity over the past decade (Bowen et al., 2017, Larkin et al., 2014) and only sporadically applied to the study of hotels and restaurants (Ivanov et al., 2020, Mathe-Soulek et al., 2015), and thus has not been forthcoming in understanding employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry.

However, when the mixed method approach is applied to understanding employee satisfaction in other service sector industries some useful findings have resulted. Rezaee et al. (2018), for instance, applied a mixed-method study to empirically test the job satisfaction levels of teachers in private schools and found that payment, reward, promotion, and supervision were significant indicators of high levels of job satisfaction and performance. Morsiani et al.'s (2017) study adopted a similar approach to evaluate job satisfaction among nurses in public and private hospitals, resulting in findings that indicate that managers' transactional leadership style, including excessive monitoring of work tasks and emitting acts of punishment, negatively impact nurses' job satisfaction.

The current study adopted the sequential mixed method approach to encourage the collection of qualitative data to explore interviewees' experiences as well as facilitate researchers to systematically reframe the research problem to then design the quantitative study. The mixed-method approach

has been valued as credible as it combines the strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative methodology, minimizing the errors that may arise in relying on one single data retrieval method and providing a meaningful interpretation of the information encoded in specific variables (McKim, 2017). Through the mixed-method approach, the advantage of conducting qualitative research relates to the richness of the produced data. However, such data cannot necessarily be consistently generalized to represent a larger population, as is often the case with quantitative research (Polit & Beck, 2010). Nonetheless, the current approach arguably contributes to ensuring that methodological sophistication, empirical ambition and verification continue to be taken seriously in the service sector industries (for instance, see Morsiani et al., 2017, Rezaee et al., 2018).

The paper presents the literature review, which draws on identifying the various variables and related framework believed to have a firm impact on employee job satisfaction. The paper thus discusses and justifies the employment of a sequential mixed method design, consisting of two main phases: the first phase, the qualitative and explorative part of the research, which involves the employment of 20 interviews with restaurant employees in Kuala Lumpur (KL, Malaysia) to develop an initial understanding of job satisfaction in restaurants and produce a conceptual framework involving eight hypotheses; and the second phase, the quantitative part of the research, which involves the employment of a questionnaire survey directed to a sample of 368 restaurant employees across 16 restaurants that are also based in KL. This second phase conducted a detailed survey derived from the key themes that emerged from the qualitative study. Following the findings, analysis sections and the discussion of the main findings, the theoretical contribution is then outlined. The work then draws out the managerial implications of the enquiry so as to ensure high levels of employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, finally paying critical attention to the research limitations and providing recommendations for future research.

Literature review

Job satisfaction in the restaurant industry

Research concerned with the study of “satisfaction” issues and concerns in the restaurant industry has been dominated by the customer perspective (e.g., Byun & Jang, 2019, Zhong & Moon, 2020), particularly as customer satisfaction is considered a crucial variable in the strengthening of purchase behavior and the restaurant’s financial performance. Although critical attention to employee job satisfaction within the restaurant environment has traditionally been less prioritized in academic research, the last two decades have nonetheless witnessed evolving research in this field. Research has been evident in

terms of both quantitative research on employee job satisfaction, particularly in the context of quick-service restaurants (Feinstein & Vondrasek, 2001, Hancer & George, 2003, Koys, 2001), and qualitative research among casual dining employees (Brewster, 2002, DiPietro et al., 2020).

Research has found that various variables influence levels of job satisfaction, notably organizational trust (Sendjaya et al., 2019), organizational commitment (Gheitani et al., 2019), work ethic (Gheitani et al., 2019), workplace stress (Lambert et al., 2018), job security (Cuyper et al., 2018), job engagement (Yan et al., 2019), emotional factors (Wen et al., 2019), reward incentives, employee empowerment, work environment (Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021), personality factors (Törnroos et al., 2019) and gender (Andrade et al., 2022). Employee job satisfaction plays a vital role in the working life of individuals since it affects their social and personal adjustment within the organization (Soomro et al., 2018). Therefore, high levels of job satisfaction among restaurant employees can produce positive attitudes and patterns of behavior, fostering valuable personal and organizational outcomes.

High levels of employee job satisfaction significantly impact an organization's reputation by enhancing its financial performance (Kowalczyk & Kucharska, 2020). According to Kowalczyk and Kucharska (2020), reputation is a critical aspect of the organization and links employees, who are an organization's most valuable resource, to the organization's brand, which is the most critical asset for any organization. Research regarding job satisfaction is crucial since employees are vital assets in the service provision of restaurants (Alhelalat et al., 2017). Service industries such as restaurants can attempt to attract customers and achieve customer satisfaction by enhancing employee satisfaction, especially as employee satisfaction can arguably lead to a better quality of service delivery and thus positively influence customer satisfaction (Jung & Yoon, 2013).

Finally in the current study, the Herzberg two-factor conceptual framework serves as a foundation to examine causes that affect the job satisfaction of employees and influence employee turnover intention and retention (Herzberg et al., 1959). This framework comprises two main factors: "motivational factors" (especially self-achievement, recognition, fairness, promotion, and growth) and "hygiene factors" (especially working conditions, work-related relationships, HR policies, and payment/salaries) (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Herzberg's theory is a frequently utilized application in research enquiries concerning the investigation of job satisfaction in the hospitality industry (e.g., Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020, Valk & Yousif, 2021, Zhao et al., 2016.) and among large pools of hospitality employees in general (Ann & Blum, 2020; McPhail et al., 2015).

Upscale restaurants

Muller and Woods (1994) classified restaurants into two types: quick service restaurants and upscale restaurants. In quick-service restaurants customers are

more price-conscious, while in upscale restaurants customers expect high levels of service quality. The unique experience in upscale restaurants is one of the important factors of luxury dining, where consumers pay premium prices for such offerings as personalized services and high-quality food (Thomas, 2023). Failing to meet consumer expectations relative to these standards in the luxury restaurant market often leads to disqualification and negative evaluation of the restaurants (Jin et al., 2016). The dining experience at upscale restaurants induces customers to set high expectation in receiving high-quality and healthy food as well as enjoyable cuisine (Bonfanti et al., 2023). Therefore, research often focuses on the consumer perspective (Thomas, 2023, Lo et al., 2023, Ismail et al., 2022). Thomas (2023), for instance, investigated the impact of upscale restaurants on the willingness of customers to pay higher price. Another study by Lo et al. (2023) also investigated consumer-generated media in upscale restaurants through the exploration of online written comments on food and service quality with regards to hygiene prevention and safety precautions.

The importance of employee performance in the upscale restaurants is emphasized in research conducted by Ryu et al., (2021), who explored the interrelationships between the physical environment, employee job performance, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. This study found that employee behavior in upscale restaurants had a greater impact on customer pleasure (Ryu et al., 2021). Kang and Hyun's (2012) study concerning customer-oriented employees in upscale restaurants revealed that their attentive, friendly, impressive, open and relaxed communication styles bear a positive impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, the customer-oriented service employee can play a crucial role in inducing consumers to visit such restaurants. Also, employees' physical attractiveness and positive energy can influence customer appreciation and favorable reciprocal behavior between employees and customers in upscale restaurants (Jin & Merkebu, 2015). Alternatively, a limited customer-oriented approach can have a negative outcome. Bavik and Bavik (2015), for instance, investigate the effect of employee incivility on customer retaliation in upscale restaurants, discovering that customers who have a high moral identity are more likely to engage in vindictive forms of complaining after experiencing employee incivility.

Consequently, the majority of research on upscale restaurants has mainly focused on customer satisfaction rather than employee satisfaction, with little attention to organizational behavior and the perspectives of employees (Bonfanti et al., 2023). Of the few that exist, Lee et al. (2017) conducted research on employee performance in luxury hotel restaurants and indicated that an employee's job fit was influenced by the degree emotional association they had toward their organization and the job itself. Meanwhile, Kim et al. (2020) acknowledged that workplace bullying can lead to decreased job satisfaction. However, their research enquiry concerning 288 employees in upscale

hotel restaurants indicated that a reticent employee was more likely to be bullied, with a tendency to participate in inefficient work behavior or display passive and nonaggressive behavior.

In upscale restaurants, customers expect high levels of service quality which can result in high customer return intentions, as well as a strong and positive reputation (Wall & Berry, 2007). As these restaurants are very dependent on trained employees as service providers, it may well be in the interests of organizations to ensure high levels of job satisfaction to retain skilled staff. There have been no notable studies on employee job satisfaction in upscale restaurants, particularly in Malaysia. Therefore, the current research study explores dimensions of employee job satisfaction within this regional context by using a mixed method approach.

Qualitative study

Research method and data collection

Given that the main research question is intended to find out the likely factors that provide high levels of job satisfaction for restaurant employees, interviews were constructed to yield deeper information about the likely factors that influence job satisfaction, particularly from the perspectives of the employees working in upscale restaurants. The purposive sampling method, which was utilized to interview employees from five upscale restaurants, helped to select respondents on the basis of their relevancy to the research topic and capacity to provide adequate information to achieve the research objectives (McKenzie & Addis, 2018). The qualitative research approach was applied to develop an initial understanding of employee satisfaction in upscale restaurants and, in this sense, could be described as the “exploratory” part of the research. Therefore, 20 interviews were conducted across 12 consecutive weeks with professional employees working in five upscale restaurants in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). The interviewed participants were 11 males and 9 females, and their job positions included four chefs, four cooks, eight serving staff, two bartenders, and two hosting staff. In protecting the identity of the participants, numbers are utilized to distinguish participants rather than personal names. Interviewers asked participants for their permission to participate in interviews, with the length of the interviews varying between 30 and 40 minutes. Throughout the semi-structured interview sessions, employees highlighted the main reasons that determined levels of job satisfaction, identifying factors responsible for feeling (or not feeling) satisfied in their employment.

The interview questions were designed to enable researchers to understand the personal perspectives of the interviewees – a crucial element of qualitative-based research (Bryman & Bell, 2003). The emerging conceptual components highlighted in the literature review as factors influencing job satisfaction were

presented to the interviewees to comprehend the perceived importance they attached to such factors. The semi-structured interviews were conducted following Herzberg's two-factor theory, that is, how motivational factors and hygiene factors yield levels of job satisfaction. Four main questions were directed to the interviewees: (1) What are the most frequent sources of satisfaction in the workplace? (2) What are the most frequent sources of dissatisfaction? (3) Can you explain any positive feelings that you have had in relation to your work? (4) Can you explain any negative feelings that you have had about your work? In an endeavor to help understand the degree of importance interviewees attach to particular influences of job satisfaction, probing questions were also employed, aiming to resolve and clarify particular viewpoints (Fielding, 1993). Participation in the interview was voluntary, and respondents were provided with basic information about the nature of the research enquiry. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Data findings and analysis

After collecting interview data in the first phase of the research the information was then transcribed. Data sets were examined through a thematic analysis approach, utilized to classify, generate and scrutinize emerging codes and themes (categories) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is considered one of the most appropriate qualitative forms of analyses, especially as it can focus on what the participants perceive as being important or valuable (Lochmiller, 2021). Data were primarily coded by the researchers and then formulated into categories. Accordingly, similar codes were ordered into tentative categories reflecting the respondents' opinions and responses about factors affecting their satisfaction. For instance, the codes such as "low salary", "high payment", "bonus" and "increment", were categorized into "payment and compensation". The same process was repeated for other categories. Analysis of interview data yielded five main categories that reflected how motivation and hygiene factors contributed to job satisfaction among the participants. Four of these categories were variously prioritized by the majority of the respondents as being important indicators of being satisfied in the workplace: (1) payment and compensation; (2) promotion; (3) working environment; and (4) workplace fairness (see Table 1). However, one other category that emerged but was not as significant as the other four variables was "workplace relationships" (5).

A review was undertaken of the collection of coded respondents' statements, especially to certify that the coding results accurately signified respondents' proposed meanings. This stage was crucial in constructing eight hypotheses, as constructed below.

Payment and compensation

There was a fundamental belief and a consensus that high satisfaction in the workplace relates to payment and compensation. For instance, IP1 noted that



Table 1. Qualitative results- interviewee responses.

| No | Category | Examples from Interview Participant (IP) | Frequency of Participants | % |
|----|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|------|
| 1 | Payment and Compensation | <p>"Salary is the most important part" (IP1).</p> <p>"I wish our human resources should consider our low wages" (IP2)</p> <p>"Definitely, payment is one of the most important things that makes me satisfied" (IP3)</p> <p>"I am happy to work extra as long as I am properly compensated. (IP6)</p> <p>"The salary is not quite well comparing to the working hours" (IP10)</p> <p>"I feel very satisfied when my salary increases" (IP12)</p> <p>"I am not satisfied with my wage and benefits I receive" (IP14)</p> <p>"I am happy with this restaurant because the salary that they pay is higher than other restaurants" (IP16)</p> <p>"I feel disappointed when I think about what they pay me" (IP18)</p> <p>"The salary and benefits we receive are better than most other restaurants" (IP20)</p> <p>"There is not too much chance for promotion in my job" (IP2)</p> | 20 | 100% |
| 2 | Promotion | <p>"I am satisfied since still I have chances for promotion" (IP7)</p> <p>"My main motivation to work is the promotion" (IP11)</p> <p>"I would be more satisfied with my job if promotion opportunities were more available" (IP18)</p> <p>"One of the reasons I stayed here, and I am satisfied, is that they promoted me after two years. They see my effort which means a lot to me" (IP19)</p> | 9 | 45% |
| 3 | Working Environment | <p>"I wish the working environment was friendlier. Sometimes I don't dare to share my feeling" (IP5)</p> <p>"Sometimes I feel that my work environment is a source of frustration, full of stress" (IP7)</p> <p>"There are many conflicts among the staff members which makes the work environment very stressful" (IP10)</p> <p>"The environment sometimes is frustrating, work assigned is sometimes not fully explained" (IP15)</p> <p>"Many of our instructions and procedures make doing our job difficult. Sometimes it is so difficult to tolerate the environment" (IP17)</p> <p>"I feel happy because my work environment is very comfortable. I am very comfortable communicating with coworkers and supervisor, very friendly environment" (IP20)</p> | 12 | 60% |
| 4 | Workplace Fairness | <p>"I feel my supervisor's interactions with us is effected by our race, ethnicity, I don't feel he behave equally to all of us" (IP3)</p> <p>"I will be really satisfied if employees' responsibilities and workloads are organized fairly" (IP7)</p> <p>"I feel that the work I do is not appreciated, while others can be recognized by doing only small things" (IP14)</p> <p>"Sometimes I feel like, no matter what I do, my manager doesn't see me. He can even notice small acts from some colleagues but not me" (IP15)</p> <p>"I feel job responsibilities not divided equally, I feel it's unfair" (IP16)</p> <p>"I feel satisfied if my supervisor behaves equally and fairly with all of us" (IP18)</p> <p>"For one small mistake, I can easily get scolded, but some other colleagues' mistakes can be easily ignored" (IP19)</p> | 13 | 65% |
| 5 | Workplace Relationships | <p>"Even sometimes I am unhappy about my job, I am very happy with my coworkers and my supervisor, and continue working. We talk, we share everything and we forget the problem" (IP1)</p> <p>"The relationship with my coworkers and supervisor just helps me for a few hours to forget the problems" (IP12)</p> | 2 | 10% |

“salary is the most important part. The pay is necessary for surviving”. IP2 emphasized the importance of wages in the workplace, indicating that “everybody is trying to get as much money as they can” and further expressed: “I wish our human resources should consider our low wages”. IP3 directly indicates the importance of wages in ensuring job satisfaction, thus stating: ‘Definitely, payment is one of the most important things that make me satisfied’. IP16 reiterated employees’ general opinion by self-reflecting on the incentives received from their own employer: “I am happy with this restaurant because the salary that they pay is higher than other restaurants, and we also receive the bonus”. All the respondents perceived payment and compensation as having a major effect on their level of job satisfaction.

Promotion

IP11 indicated that the process of being promoted is a “great motivation” for staying longer in their current establishment. However, if the opportunity for promotion was not available, then IP11 affirmed that they would leave the restaurant. IP19 expressed: “One of the reasons I stayed here and I am satisfied is that they promoted me after two years. They see my effort, which means a lot to me.” IP18 also explicitly evoked the crucial relationship between job satisfaction and promotion, stating: “I would be more satisfied with my job if the promotion opportunities were more available.” IP7 also indicated the need to be promoted to be ultimately satisfied, declaring: “I will be really satisfied if I am able to be promoted as a head cook, and definitely will stay longer here.” Around 45% of respondents agreed that job promotion affected their level of job satisfaction. Although various feelings concerning promotion were vocalized, ranging on a continuum from being happy/satisfied to being unhappy/unsatisfied, it was generally clear that promotion was an intervening variable influencing job satisfaction.

Working environment

It was clear from interviewees’ narratives that being satisfied at work was determined by the nature of their working environment, which partly related to managerial attentiveness pertaining to issues of employee well-being. As IP7 expressed: “Sometimes I feel that my work environment is a source of frustration, full of stress. It is very good if managers listen to our troubles”. Correspondingly, IP10 stated: “There are many conflicts among the staff members which makes the work environment very stressful”. The trust factor was a concern for IP5, who emphasized: “I wish the working environment was friendlier. Sometimes I don’t dare to share my feeling, even with my colleagues”. Related to the trust factor was the concern of having the right support structures in place. Consequently, around 60% of respondents perceived the working environment as having a major effect on job satisfaction. Although respondents indicated a range of feelings concerning their workplace

environment, ranging from being happy/satisfied to being unhappy/unsatisfied, it was clear that the environment was considered a crucial intervening variable in influencing the job satisfaction of most employees.

Workplace fairness

One interrelated theme emerging from the interview narratives was concerned with how managerial inequity influences low levels of job satisfaction. For instance, IP15 expressed: "Sometimes I feel like, no matter what I do, my manager doesn't see me. He can even notice small acts from some colleagues but not me. This is sometimes really disappointing". IP19 also implicated unfair treatment by their company's management, stating: "I'm confused from the attitude of different people in the restaurants. For one small mistake I can easily get scolded, but some other colleagues' mistakes can be easily ignored. It's not fair". IP7 also indicated: "I will be really satisfied if employees' responsibilities and workloads are organized fairly." Unfairness was evoked as a concern by the majority of respondents and thus represents a powerful qualitative indicator of job satisfaction. Accordingly, around 65% of respondents perceived workplace fairness as having a major effect on job satisfaction.

Workplace relationships

This variable was only significantly noticeable in only two of the interviewee scripts. It thus became apparent that workplace relationships do not directly impact employee satisfaction, though such relationships make the environment more tolerable. Importantly, IP1 declared: "Even sometimes I am unhappy about my job, I am very unhappy with my coworkers and my supervisor, and continue working. We talk and share everything and we forget the problem ... I like my coworkers and my supervisor here more than anyone I worked with before. That's why I tolerated the situation and stayed." On a similar note, IP12 stated: "Even sometimes I am unhappy about my job ... The relationship with my coworkers and supervisor just helps me for a few hours to forget the problems. These two respondents were asked directly if their relationship with others made them more satisfied with their job. IP1 responded: "Not exactly ... how to say, you feel at least you have some people to share the same problems and they back you up ... you can rely on them and tolerate the situation and stress." IP12 replied: "Cannot say satisfied ... This relationship helps me to get through it all, to tolerate it." Therefore, although workplace relationships do not seem to directly affect job satisfaction, they act as a source of moral support and help moderate difficult situations and circumstances. Accordingly, only 10% of respondents indicated that workplace relationships positively affect job satisfaction.

The results of interviews thus emphasize four important factors impacting the job satisfaction of restaurant employees, namely: "payment and compensation", "promotion", "working environment" and "workplace fairness".

However, the most dominant variables were “payment and compensation”. Nonetheless, given that workplace relationships were mentioned by only two respondents in the interviews, this component did not seem to have a direct effect on the employees’ job satisfaction; despite such relationships commonly emerging from research inquiries as having the potential to influence satisfaction (Karanges et al., 2015, Nayak, 2013, Xesha et al., 2014). Consequently, the qualitative-based study implied that workplace relationships were more likely to act as a moderating factor in the association between job satisfaction and each of the four variables identified above.

Quantitative study

Conceptual model, framework, and hypotheses

The qualitative study became the basis for developing the conceptual framework (see Figure 1 below) for the quantitative study. From this model, eight hypotheses were established and derived from each of the four variable components that were derived from the qualitative (exploratory) study. These components form the conceptual framework and are deconstructed below to comprehend the sub-characteristics and justify the subsequent hypothesis formation.

“Payment and compensation” are recognized to be key components of work fulfillment (Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021, Ramli, 2018). Such financial incentives as advantageous salaries, increments and bonuses are considered key instruments by which employers and management gauge employee commitment and worth to organizations (Koo et al., 2020). Limited recognition of employees’ work performance through the production of low salaries can contribute

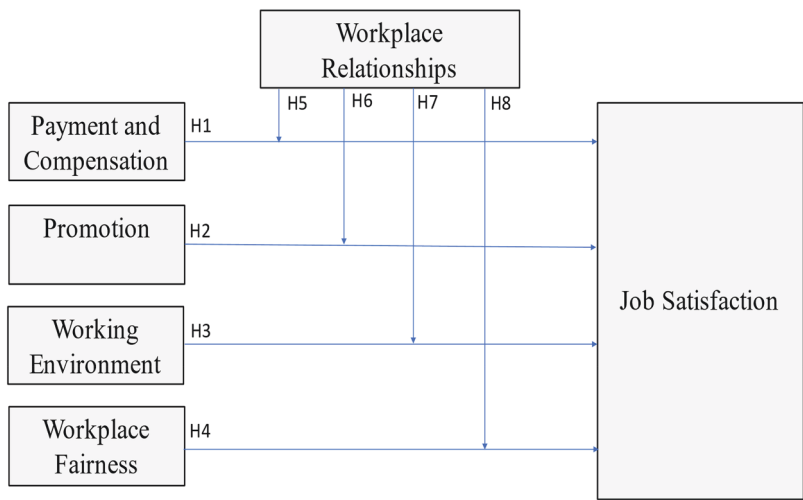


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework derived from the qualitative findings.

to the high turnover of employees (Boggie, 2005). Nonetheless, there are different opinions concerning the relationship between payment and job satisfaction. For instance, Brainard (2005) found that high-level payments do not affect job satisfaction, though this can vary depending on the type and nature of the work/career. Nonetheless, a significant amount of research indicated that financial incentives demonstrate a determining role in influencing job satisfaction levels (Chan & Ao, 2018, Froese et al., 2018, Koo et al., 2020). Higher incentives may thus significantly influence employee job satisfaction in restaurants.

Hypothesis 1: Payment and compensation have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

“Promotion” at work is a motivating device that synchronizes organizational objectives with individual objectives (Lazear & Rosen, 1981). Promotion is an essential motivation for an employee’s career advancement, which arguably has a knock-on effect on other aspects of the workplace, such as performance (Yadav & Dhar, 2021) and satisfaction (Kosteas, 2011). The positive and individual outcomes of promotion have been widely investigated. It has been indicated, for instance, that if an organization offers attractive opportunities for employee promotion, individuals could stay longer with that organization (Ashton, 2018). However, failure to deliver promotional advancement could provoke negative attitudes toward the organization, influencing individuals to exit the organization. Relatedly, Lichtenthaler and Fischbach (2019) found that promotional opportunity encourages increased job performance and productivity. Consequently, there is a strong empirical correlation between promotional opportunities and high levels of job satisfaction (Bowling et al., 2018)

Hypothesis 2: Promotion has a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

“Working environment” conceptually incorporates the physical, psychosocial, and organizational aspects of work and is associated with the productivity and well-being of employees (Markey et al., 2012). The positive link between job satisfaction and the work environment has been empirically well-established (e.g., Nantsupawat et al., 2017, Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021, Robbins, 2001), where good working conditions generate positive levels of job satisfaction since employees feel more comfortable and less stressed (Robbins, 2001). It is thus worth investigating the degree to which the work environment affects the job satisfaction levels of restaurant employees, especially as it has been

emphasized that low satisfaction is influenced by such factors as unsociable working hours (e.g., weekend work and long working hours) and staff shortages causing workplace stress (Ghazali & Roslan, 2020). A suitable working environment is seemingly necessary for the restaurant industry since it is highly dependent on good customer service from employees, which may only occur if employees are satisfied with their working environment.

Hypothesis 3: The working environment has a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

“Workplace fairness” concerns how individuals evaluate and react to differences in how they are treated by their organization. This component represents “equity theory”, emphasizing that perceptions of fairness relate to motivational factors which significantly affect individual behavior and job performance (Adams, 1965). Subsequently, managers may be obliged to understand how their employees perceive equitability. Research has concluded that perceived organizational justice in the workplace is a primary factor affecting employee job satisfaction in the hospitality and service industries (Gholampour & Pourshafei, 2018, Sia & Tan, 2016). Moreover, employees who are treated fairly will be motivated to do their job effectively and propagate positive information about the organization. Crucially, perceived fairness among employees positively impacts service recovery performance in hospitality organizations (Yao et al., 2019), especially as individuals who are treated equitably tend to increase their performance levels and display more job acceptance practices (Cropanzano et al., 2017). Consequently, workplace fairness significantly contributes to enhanced job satisfaction (Abid et al., 2016, Yao et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 4: Workplace fairness has a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

“Workplace relationships” concern interpersonal relations which can affect individuals and their relationship with one another and the organization (Sias, 2005). These relationships, which include employee relations with coworkers, supervisors, or managers can impact employee commitment and, thus, job satisfaction (Sias, 2005). Effective employee relations could foster a positive aura within the working environment, advancing favorable workplace attitudes and encouraging openness in communication. Positive workplace relationships can also enhance the well-being of employees (Chaubey et al., 2017). Karanges et al.’s (2015) research found that employees who did not have a close relationship with their managers, face problems in communication and interaction. Also, employers who have less of an ability to motivate their staff

will likely influence employees to have lower levels of job satisfaction (Xesha et al., 2014). However, employees who maintain favorable relationships with their superiors are likely to feel comfortable with their working environment (Nayak, 2013). Samwel's (2018) study found that strong relationships between coworkers could result in high productivity. Subsequently, good workplace relations are essential for organizations as they can help to pacify potential workplace conflicts and assist managers in building adequate trust-based relationships, thus increasing overall levels of job satisfaction.

According to the qualitative findings in phase one, it is apparent that workplace relationships do not have a direct impact on employee satisfaction, though they do make the working condition more tolerable. While many factors in restaurants can thwart job satisfaction, employees can become happier and tolerate the challenges by forming good relationships with colleagues. Workplace relationships thus seem to have a moderating effect (rather than a direct influence) on job satisfaction. However, based on the above findings, the potential moderating role of workplace relationships on job satisfaction has not really emerged in hospitality-based research inquiries. Hence, it is suggested that workplace relationships have a moderating effect (rather than a direct influence) on job satisfaction and its relationship to the four variables.

Hypothesis 5: Workplace relationships have a moderating effect on the relationship between payment and compensation, and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: Workplace relationships have a moderating effect on the relationship between promotion and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: Workplace relationships have a moderating effect on the relationship between the working environment and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8: Workplace relationships have a moderating effect on the relationship between workplace fairness and job satisfaction.

Data collection and design

The researchers utilized the variables sought from phase one, especially to construct a deductive framework to establish a valid questionnaire, to then distribute to 400 employees from 16 upscale restaurants in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). Accordingly, 368 employees responded, denoting a 92% response rate. Smart PLS 3 software was used to conduct the quantitative analysis, which was assisted by structural equation modeling. The questionnaire for this second phase of research was designed based on previous research with high reliability, explained

as follows: the researchers measured “job satisfaction (JS),” “payment and compensation (PC)” and “promotion (PR)” using a 5-item scale established by Bowling et al. (2018); “working environment (WE)” using a 10-item scale established by Crilly et al. (2017); “workplace fairness (WF)” using a 9-item scale established by Cheng et al. (2011); and finally, “workplace relationships (WR)” using a 5-item scale established by Bowling et al. (2018). The questionnaire included 39 items (measurement scales), and all the scales duly demonstrated high reliability with Cronbach’s alpha, which reached more than 0.7. The complete questionnaire survey, including measurement scales, is shown in [Appendix 1](#).

The significance of qualitative study is to generate factors (variables) which deeply affect employee satisfaction. After exploring the variables (which were PC, PR, WE, WF, ER), the study needed to design quantitative scales for each factor/variable. For designing quantitative scales, the researchers utilized previous quantitative scales with high reliability and validity to be able to collect reliable data. Therefore, prior studies with high reliability were referred to in the current study, where the scales used were changed slightly in order to be suitable for evaluating those variables in the restaurant industry. The rationale for this approach relates to the need for the scales to demonstrate high reliability and enable the results to be generalized. Mixed-method researchers have significantly used the same method of utilizing scales from past research to develop the instrument for conducting the quantitative part of the studies (Lee et al., 2013, Ismayilova & Klassen, 2019).

Descriptive analysis of the sample profile

As shown in [Table 2](#) below, the sample represents 368 respondents with a fairly equal distribution of male (51.9%) and female (48.1%) respondents.

Table 2. Demographic profile.

| | Characteristics | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Female | 177 | 48.1 |
| | Male | 191 | 51.9 |
| Age(years) | Up to 25 Years | 99 | 26.9 |
| | 26–35 Years | 93 | 25.3 |
| | 36–45 Years | 96 | 26.1 |
| | 46 Years and Above | 80 | 21.7 |
| Education | High School | 50 | 13.6 |
| | Diploma | 88 | 23.9 |
| | Bachelor | 220 | 59.8 |
| | Post Graduate | 9 | 2.4 |
| | Other | 1 | 0.3 |
| Ethnicity | Malay | 213 | 57.9 |
| | Chinese | 99 | 26.9 |
| | Indian | 51 | 13.9 |
| | Other | 5 | 1.4 |
| Monthly Income | Less than 1500 RM | 125 | 34.0 |
| | 1500–3000 RM | 98 | 26.6 |
| | 3001–5000 RM | 78 | 21.2 |
| | 5001–8000 RM | 48 | 13.0 |
| | More than 8000 RM | 19 | 5.2 |

Also, 52.2% of respondents were 35 years and below, 59.8% of respondents had bachelor degrees, 57.9% of respondents described themselves ethnically as “Malay,” and 60.6% of respondents received less than RM3000 (USD\$710) per calendar month.

Validity and reliability of the constructs

Essential quantitative measures, including reliability, evaluation of outer loading, and evaluation of convergent and discriminant validity, were conducted for the proposed model. Also, measures of reliability and validity were scaled based on the principles proposed by Hair et al. (2017). As shown in Table 3 below, Cronbach’s Alpha and reliability values were above 0.70 and thus considered an appropriate achievement for the reliability of the measurement model. No collinearity issue existed since “variance-inflation-factor” (VIF) values were between 0.2 and 5.0, which are considered valid numbers. As mentioned, the complete model has 39 items (as seen in Figure 3 below). However, six items (three items of the “working environment” [WE] and three

Table 3. Construct reliability and validity of research variables.

| Variable | Items | Outer Loading | AVE | VIF | Cronbach Alpha | Composite Reliability (CR) |
|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|------|------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction (JS) | JS1 | 0.73 | 0.70 | 1.46 | 0.89 | 0.92 |
| | JS2 | 0.80 | | | | |
| | JS3 | 0.79 | | | | |
| | JS4 | 0.76 | | | | |
| | JS5 | 0.77 | | | | |
| Payment and Compensation (PC) | PC1 | 0.82 | 0.66 | 1.34 | 0.87 | 0.91 |
| | PC2 | 0.79 | | | | |
| | PC3 | 0.78 | | | | |
| | PC4 | 0.76 | | | | |
| | PC5 | 0.92 | | | | |
| Promotion (PR) | PR1 | 0.82 | 0.70 | 1.34 | 0.89 | 0.92 |
| | PR2 | 0.79 | | | | |
| | PR3 | 0.81 | | | | |
| | PR4 | 0.79 | | | | |
| | PR5 | 0.96 | | | | |
| Working Environment (WE) | WE1 | 0.88 | 0.59 | 2.07 | 0.83 | 0.88 |
| | WE5 | 0.75 | | | | |
| | WE6 | 0.74 | | | | |
| | WE7 | 0.75 | | | | |
| | WE8 | 0.75 | | | | |
| | WE9 | 0.83 | | | | |
| | WE10 | 0.92 | | | | |
| Work Fairness (WF) | WF1 | 0.73 | 0.65 | 1.51 | 0.89 | 0.92 |
| | WF2 | 0.78 | | | | |
| | WF4 | 0.87 | | | | |
| | WF5 | 0.92 | | | | |
| | WF7 | 0.75 | | | | |
| | WF8 | 0.75 | | | | |
| Workplace Relationships (WR) | WR1 | 0.77 | 0.66 | 1.62 | 0.87 | 0.91 |
| | WR2 | 0.79 | | | | |
| | WR3 | 0.75 | | | | |
| | WR4 | 0.83 | | | | |
| | WR5 | 0.90 | | | | |

items of “workplace fairness” [WF]) were deleted because of weak loading. Therefore, indicator reliability was achieved as outer loading for 33 items was above 0.7 with no cross-loading. Finally, convergent validity was also achieved as the “average variance extracted” (AVE) had a value greater than 0.5.

Table 4 below demonstrates the matrix of the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which confirms there were no issues regarding discriminate validity. Therefore, the proposed model demonstrated high reliability and validity.

Structural model analysis

According to Henseler et al. (2009), each path coefficient of the PLS structural model can be understood as standardized beta coefficients of ordinary least squares regressions. The standard values of path coefficient range from -1 to 1 , with coefficients nearer to 1 demonstrating strong positive relationships and coefficients nearer to -1 representing negative relationships (Hair et al., 2014). To implement the moderator analysis through the product indicator approach, the researchers drew a path relationship between the added moderator variables and job satisfaction, including the interaction term for each moderator. The SmartPLS software offers an option to automatically include an interaction term with product indicators. The bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples is calculated to analyze the hypothesis results (Hair et al., 2014). Figure 2 below shows the causal relationships among model variables after running the PLS-SEM algorithm.

It can be seen that the predictive power (R^2 of job satisfaction) was 0.706, showing the predictive power of the outcome variables (Hair et al., 2017). To test the proposed hypothesis, a bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples is calculated. The results of the proposed model of relationships are also tabulated in Table 5 below.

Table 5 shows that the four direct relationships of job satisfaction with payment and compensation, promotion, working environment and workplace fairness were accepted. The SmartPLS moderating effect tool is used with the product indicator approach recommended by Chin et al. (2003). In PLS-SEM analysis, the moderating effect exists if the path coefficient of the interaction effect is significant. As demonstrated in Table 5, three moderation effects of workplace relationships on the relationship between job satisfaction and payment and compensation, job satisfaction and

Table 4. Discriminant validity – Fornell-Larcker criterion.

| Variable | JS | PC | PR | WE | WF | WR |
|----------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| JS | 0.770 | | | | | |
| PC | 0.616 | .817 | | | | |
| PR | 0.506 | .296 | .838 | | | |
| WE | 0.761 | .466 | .477 | 0.804 | | |
| WF | 0.540 | .461 | .372 | 0.508 | 0.804 | |
| WR | 0.635 | .427 | .333 | 0.595 | 0.333 | 0.812 |

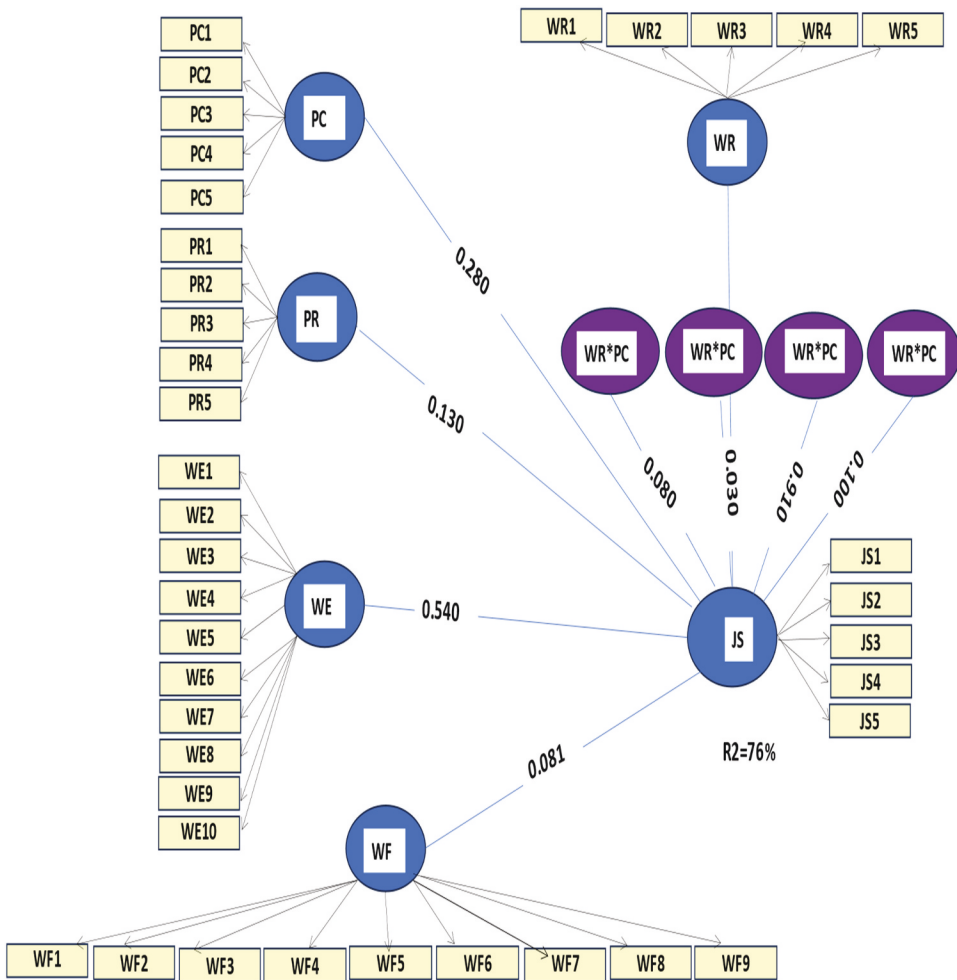


Figure 2. PLS algorithm path model. Source authors: PC= Payment and Compensation, PR= Promotion, WE= Working Environment, WF= Work Fairness, WR= Workplace Relationships, $p < .05$

promotion, and job satisfaction and workplace fairness were not accepted. Only the moderation effect of workplace relationships on the relationship between job satisfaction and working environment was accepted. The threshold for accepting or rejecting any regression-based relationship is considered accepted if T-value is more than 1.96 or P-value is less than 0.05.

The prediction model of job satisfaction was based on four antecedent variables. The highest impact was caused by the relationship between JS and WE, which was accepted at a 1% significance level with a path coefficient score = 0.54, T-statistic score = 13.08, and P-value score = 0.000. The second impact was caused by the relationship between JS and PC, which was accepted at a 1% significance level with a path coefficient

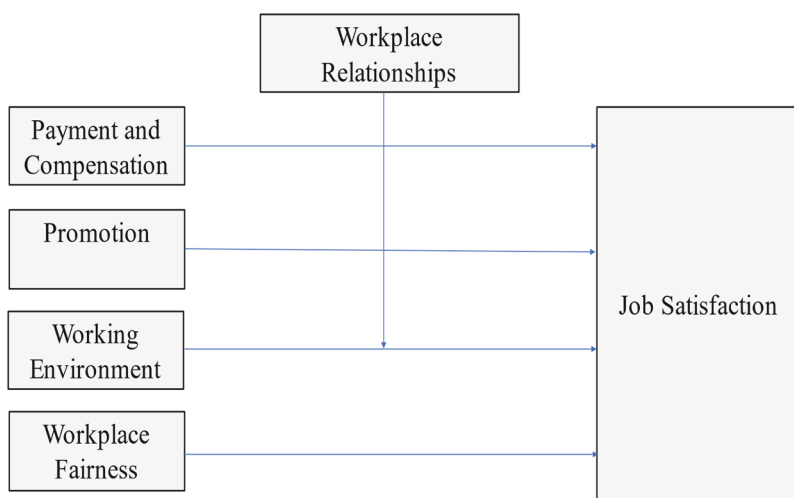


Figure 3. Revised conceptual framework.

score = 0.28, T-statistic score = 6.82, and P-value score = 0.000. The third impact was caused by the relationship between JS and PR, which was accepted at a 1% significance level with a path coefficient score = 0.13, T-statistic score = 3.44, and P-value score = 0.000. The least impact was caused by the relationship between JS and WF, which was accepted at a 5% significance level with a path coefficient score = 0.08, T-statistic score = 2.3, and P-value score = 0.011.

Workplace relationships (WR) have four moderation interactions in the relations between JS and the four antecedents. The only accepted moderation interaction was in the relationship between JS and WE, which was accepted at a 5% significance level with a path coefficient score = 0.91, T-statistic score = 2.09, and P-value score = 0.019. The moderating effect between other relationships (PC, PR, WF, and JS) was not accepted because T-statistics scores were above the threshold value of 1.96. Based on the above findings, the revised framework of the study is depicted in Figure 3 below.

Table 5. Structural relationships.

| Relation | Path Coefficient | Standard Deviation | T Statistics | P-Value | Status |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| PC → JS | .28 | 0.04 | 6.82 | .000 | Accepted |
| PR → JS | .13 | 0.04 | 3.44 | .000 | Accepted |
| WE → JS | .54 | 0.04 | 13.08 | .000 | Accepted |
| WF → JS | .08 | 0.03 | 2.30 | .011 | Accepted |
| PC * WR → JS | .08 | 0.35 | 0.22 | .413 | Not-Accepted |
| PR * WR → JS | .03 | 0.28 | 0.12 | .452 | Not-Accepted |
| WE * WR → JS | .91 | 0.43 | 2.09 | .019 | Accepted |
| WF * WR → JS | .10 | 0.36 | 0.29 | .386 | Not-Accepted |

Discussion of findings

The mixed method approach was conducted to evaluate employee job satisfaction in two phases. The findings from phase one of the study established four factors that directly influence employee job satisfaction: payment and compensation; promotion; working environment; and workplace fairness. However, while “workplace relationships” only showed a moderating effect between the relationships of all four variables with job satisfaction, this factor does not directly influence job satisfaction. The findings of phase two of the study confirmed the four variables responsible for influencing job satisfaction. Accordingly, the working environment has the highest degree of impact followed by “payment and compensation”, “promotion”, and finally, “workplace fairness”.

Nonetheless, phase two determined that workplace relationships are the only variable with a moderating effect on the relationship between the working environment and job satisfaction, not on the relationship between job satisfaction and the other three variables – as was predicted in phase one. The moderating effect that workplace relationships have on the close association between the working environment and job satisfaction denotes that, although the working environment may impact the job satisfaction of employees, those employees who have better workplace relationships with their coworkers and managers can still be satisfied with their jobs. The current study supports previous research on employee job satisfaction. For instance, the findings were consistent with Salisu et al.’s (2015) study, which indicated the significant relationship between payment (and compensation) and employee satisfaction, as well as endorsing research by Noor et al. (2015) revealing the close relationship between promotion and employee satisfaction. Moreover, the current study confirms Jain and Kaur’s (2014) findings that demonstrate that there was a significant association between the work environment and job satisfaction, as well as affirms previous research concerning the positive relationship between workplace fairness and employee job satisfaction (Umar & Amir, 2016).

Nonetheless, the current study is the first to indicate the importance of the moderating effect of workplace relationships on the relationship between job satisfaction and the working environment. Hence, the working environment has a stronger impact on job satisfaction among those restaurant employees who have better relationships with coworkers and managers. Therefore, such employees who have stronger relationships with coworkers or managers will be less affected by unfavorable working conditions than those who have weaker relationships.

The findings were achievable through the employment of a mixed-method approach, which has not been common in studies concerned with determining the reasons for employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, particularly in terms of upscale restaurants. Consequently, given that the findings did indicate some divergence from previous inquiries concerning job satisfaction, the merits of this approach are clear.

Theoretical contribution

The findings of the present research have raised theoretical and practical contributions. The underpinning model of the Herzberg two factor theory pertinently applies to this study concerning the nature and levels of job satisfaction in upscale restaurants, which explains that job satisfaction is indeed affected by motivational factors (e.g., recognition, achievement, responsibility, promotion, advancement, etc.) and hygiene factors (e.g., supervision, working conditions, salary, security, etc.). This research enquiry purposefully confirmed the strong and substantial link between job satisfaction and four crucial variables: “payment”, “promotion”, “workplace environment” and “workplace fairness”. Moreover, the findings of the research indicated the moderating effect that workplace relationships have on the relationship between the working environment and job satisfaction. The current study is the first to indicate the importance of this particular moderating effect, helping to extend existing theoretical approaches.

Current research offers various contributions to the body of knowledge concerning job satisfaction. While past research examined personal characteristics (Rotimi et al., 2023), job involvement (Al-refaei et al., 2023) and coping mechanisms (Woods et al. 2023) as moderators of job satisfaction, this research is unique in utilizing workplace relationships as a moderating component. Employees that develop constructive and productive workplace relationships could enhance their own well-being (Chaubey et al., 2017) and encourage a strong and close relationship with their superiors (Karanges et al., 2015). Generally, when strong bonds are formed between employees and employers, individuals are able to endure crises scenarios and appreciate positive achievements and outcomes together (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023).

Moreover, the study employed a mixed-method approach, which has not been common in studies concerned with determining the reasons for employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, particularly in terms of upscale restaurants. Therefore, this approach has arguably enabled a substantial theoretical contribution to the study of job satisfaction in upscale restaurants as well as indicating the value of such an approach to future enquires in this field of study.

Managerial implications

The research findings implicate practical recommendations for human resource managers and supervisors to consider different human resource practices, especially to strengthen the job satisfaction levels amongst restaurant industry employees. Moreover, there is a need for restaurant managers to improve and monitor the working environment and maintain good labor relations with employees. The employee and employer/supervisor relationship in the restaurant context can be improved by strengthening the communication networks between all parties, such as the encouragement of social events and team initiatives to create opportunities

for all colleagues to not only know each other more but to trust each other. Restaurant managers and supervisors ought to encourage employees to share their opinions and concerns about their work and responsibilities, especially to motivate them to work effectively in groups, encourage social connectedness and strengthen communication channels.

In the provision of constructive relationships between coworkers and managers, restaurants can systematically implement emotional intelligence training programs for all employees (see Han et al., 2019). For instance, restaurant managers can incorporate different strategies such as developing team-building activities, promoting better listening skills, asking employees to share their problems and opinions, and fostering empathy and understanding at all levels. As restaurants can be busy places, often operating beyond normal daily working hours, it is crucial that employers ensure that training and staff development activities are prioritized and consistently scheduled.

The research findings acknowledge that the working environment has the strongest impact on employee satisfaction, which is arguably one of the major responsibilities of restaurant managers (and owners). Restaurant managers/owners can improve the working environment by motivating employees through utilizing general and specific mechanisms, such as providing regular performance-related feedback to employees. This would help to strengthen the professional atmosphere in the workplace and empower employees, especially by making them feel that they are being provided with opportunities for self-improvement. Other mechanisms include providing better resource facilities such as air conditioning and comfortable surroundings, setting appropriate working hours, and allowing flexibility in work schedules for some employees. Many of the recommended changes are not significantly costly but could augment job satisfaction.

Managers should ensure a fair promotional policy for employees and also improve the implementation of these policies, monitoring them accordingly. Restaurants can design transparent appraisal performance systems, for instance, implementing formal or informal reward agendas to recognize hardworking employees, thereby encouraging job satisfaction. As the research indicated that employees often compare their payments and compensation with their competitors, it is crucial that managers closely monitor promotional opportunities and address economic incentives for employee performance. Restaurateurs and human resource managers need to develop more compensation methods for enhancing employee job satisfaction, such as employee commissions, bonuses, and overtime payments, as well as other benefits, such as free or discounted family dinners for celebratory events.

Since the results of the current study indicate that workplace justice and fairness are important for strengthening employee satisfaction, it is fundamental that employers and managers need to create a work environment that is nondiscriminatory. Restaurant managers need to ensure that every employee will receive equal opportunities in the workplace, including transparency concerning economic

incentives and fair appeal processes for employees. This study supports the important sentiments of the work of Collins and Mossholder (2017), who stressed that “interactional fairness” between the employees and managers/supervisors should be the key intention for companies pursuing organizational justice. Moreover, managers should continuously monitor employee satisfaction, especially as the restaurant industry is notorious for experiencing high employee turnover rates. Given that the findings emphasize the importance of promotion for employees experiencing job satisfaction, managers need to provide constant training programs for employees to develop their skills and provide opportunities for career development. This approach may well have the added effect of professionalizing the restaurant industry, helping to ensure that it is popularly perceived as a career-driven industry with significant upward mobility. Nonetheless, the execution and effectiveness of all such initiatives, practices, and policies should be monitored accordingly.

Research limitations and future recommendations

Even though research employed a mixed-method approach, which has not been common in studies concerned with determining the reasons for employee job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, there is room for methodological improvement as there are some limitations to the current research that are important to disclose. The research is restricted to upscale restaurants, but the restaurant industry is complex as there are various subsectors. Accordingly, future research could extend the scope to other types of restaurants such as quick-service restaurants to increase the reliability and scope of the proposed model by dealing with different demographic variables. Despite the study's results indicating similar responses from both male and female employees in the restaurants, it would be useful to examine the issue of gender by conducting more in-depth comparative research to understand employee job satisfaction between male and female employees in the restaurant industry. In addition, it would be fruitful for future research to pay attention to how various demographic variables such as age, education, and ethnicity impact employee job satisfaction.

Moreover, future mixed-method research may focus on employee satisfaction in different service sectors, such as hotels and airlines. Through conducting such comparative approaches, researchers can consider other important antecedents of employee job satisfaction, such as personality and psychological variables of employees, which can help to advance an understanding of the multifarious determinants of job satisfaction within the context of the wider hospitality industry.

Importantly, the restaurant industry landscape has changed significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Jack, 2020). Many restaurants have had to diversify their products and services as well as become more cost-sensitive and

competitive in the marketplace, impacting working conditions and salaries. Therefore, the pressures of operating a restaurant business have arguably become more profound, potentially impacting degrees of job satisfaction. Research that tracks these recent pressures and impacts could add further dimensions to the relevance of the study's findings.

Disclosure statement

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

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Appendix 1

The following table demonstrates the measurement scales for survey questionnaire used in phase 2 (quantitative study)

| Constructs | Scales | Reference | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------|
| Payment and Compensation (PC1-PC5) | 1. Overall, I am very pleased with how much money I earn. 2. I would be more content with my job if my pay were not so low. 3. I am more satisfied with my pay now than I have almost ever been. 4. All in all, I am very satisfied with my pay. 5. All in all, I would rather have better pay. | Bowling et al. (2018) | .75 |
| Promotion (PR1-PR5) | 1. Overall, I am very pleased with my opportunities for promotion. 2. I would be more content with my job if my promotion opportunities were not so poor. 3. I am more satisfied with my opportunities for promotion now than with almost any other promotional opportunities I have ever had. 4. All in all, I am very satisfied with my chances of promotion. 5. All in all, I would rather have more opportunities for promotion. | Bowling et al. (2018). | .75 |
| Working Environment (WE1-WE10) | 1. What am I doing in the restaurant gives me a chance to see how good my abilities are. 2. What I do in the restaurant help me to have more confidence in myself. 3. I feel nervous or tense in this restaurant. 4. I am often worried about going to work. 5. I feel that I get the support I need when I am faced with difficult problems. 6. I find that I can use my knowledge and experience to work here in this restaurant. 7. I find that working is complicated by conflicts among the staff members. 8. I find that it can be difficult to reconcile loyalty toward your team with loyalty toward your profession. 9. I think the number of tasks imposed on me is too much. 10. I have a feeling that I should handle several responsibilities at the same time. | Crilly et al. (2017). | .83 |
| Workplace Fairness (WF1-WF9) | 1. My supervisor and management trust employees equally 2. Information released by my supervisor and management is reliable 3. My supervisor and management hide important information from employees 4. In this restaurant, employees' opinions are influential in the decision making 5. In this restaurant, employees' work duties and responsibilities are arranged fairly 6. In this restaurant, employees' monetary rewards, benefits, and welfare are arranged fairly 7. In this restaurant, employees' performance is evaluated fairly 8. During the process of making important decisions, my supervisor and management inform employees and provide sufficient information 9. My supervisor and management treat all employees with respect | Cheng et al. (2011) | .7 |

(Continued)

| Constructs | Scales | Reference | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------|
| Workplace Relationships (WR1-WR5) | 1. Overall, I am very pleased to work with my coworkers and supervisors. 2. I would be more content with my job if my coworkers did not work here. 3. I am more satisfied with my coworkers than with almost anyone I have ever worked with before. 4. All in all, I am very satisfied with my coworkers and supervisors. 5. All in all, I would rather work with some other kind of coworkers. | Bowling et al. (2018). | .75 |
| Job Satisfaction (JS1-JS5) | 1. Overall, I am very pleased with the types of activities that I do on my job. 2. I would be more content with my job if I were doing tasks that are different from the ones I do now. 3. I am more satisfied with the types of work I currently do than with almost any other work I have ever done. 4. All in all, I am very satisfied with the things I do at work. 5. All in all, I would rather have some other kind of duties in my work. | Bowling et al. (2018). | .75 |