

Factors Influencing Employee Job Satisfaction in the Three-Star Hotels in Shangrao, China

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Abstract

With the rapid growth of China's economy and rising living standards, the tourism industry, particularly in Shangrao, has experienced significant expansion. However, the three-star hotel sector in Shangrao faces challenges, including a decline in employee job satisfaction, high turnover rates, and reduced service quality. This study investigates the factors influencing job satisfaction among full-time employees in three-star hotels in Shangrao. Using a quantitative research approach, data were collected through an online survey distributed to employees across 16 three-star hotels, resulting in 380 valid responses analyzed with SPSS. Techniques such as descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, validity analysis, exploratory factor analysis, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis were employed. The findings revealed significant positive relationships between salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, leadership, and overall job satisfaction. Specifically, a unit increase in salary and rewards led to a 0.316 increase in job satisfaction, while leadership, career growth, and workplace environment contributed increases of 0.293, 0.254, and 0.250, respectively. This study offers theoretical and practical implications for improving employee satisfaction in Shangrao's three-star hotels, suggesting that enhancing factors such as compensation, leadership, career growth opportunities, and workplace environment can help reduce turnover and improve service quality. Additionally, the findings provide valuable guidance for the Shangrao Municipal Tourism Bureau to strengthen the overall competitiveness of the tourism sector.

Keywords: Employee Job Satisfaction, Three-Star Hotels, Shangrao, Tourism Management, China

Introduction

The tourism industry has emerged as a key driver of economic recovery and sustainable growth in the post-pandemic era, particularly in China. As one of the world's largest tourism

markets, China's domestic tourism sector demonstrated strong resilience, generating 2.92 trillion yuan in revenue in 2021, reflecting a 31.0% year-on-year increase (Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, 2023). This recovery has fueled the development of the hotel industry, with three-star hotels playing a pivotal role as providers of affordable and accessible accommodations. Accounting for 3,686 establishments nationwide, three-star hotels form the backbone of the mid-range hospitality market, making them indispensable for supporting domestic tourism growth (National Star-Rated Hotels Statistical Survey Report, 2022).

However, despite their critical role, three-star hotels are grappling with substantial challenges, including labor shortages, declining service quality, and high employee turnover rates. These issues not only weaken their operational competitiveness but also hinder their ability to contribute to the tourism sector's sustainable development (Li, Wang, & Zhang, 2021). Given the growing importance of the mid-range hotel market in post-pandemic tourism recovery, addressing these challenges is essential for strengthening the sector's resilience and long-term performance.

The situation in Shangrao, a key tourist city and transportation hub in Jiangxi Province, epitomizes these challenges. Renowned for its abundant natural and cultural tourism resources, Shangrao attracts millions of domestic tourists annually (Shangrao City Culture and Tourism Development Report, 2023). Nevertheless, the city's three-star hotel industry has experienced a sharp decline. Between 2012 and 2022, the workforce shrank from 4,300 to 2,230 employees, while the number of hotels fell from 34 in 2017 to 16. The Shangrao City Culture and Tourism Development Report, 2023, further exacerbated this issue by downgrading or "de-staring" several hotels due to deteriorating service quality.

Low employee job satisfaction has been identified as a primary factor contributing to these challenges. Existing studies highlight the critical role of employee satisfaction in improving workforce retention, enhancing service quality, and increasing organizational performance (Ding, Borbon, & Deng, 2022). In hospitality settings, satisfied employees contribute directly to customer satisfaction and profitability, with research demonstrating that a 3% increase in employee satisfaction can lead to a 5% rise in customer satisfaction and a 20% improvement in profitability (Strenitzerová & Achimský, 2019). Conversely, high turnover rates—such as the 20%-40% reported in Shangrao's three-star hotels—exceed the industry's optimal level of 16% (Qianzhan Industry Research Institute, 2022), significantly disrupting service quality, operational efficiency, and long-term competitiveness.

Given the paucity of empirical studies focusing on employee satisfaction in three-star hotels—particularly in regional tourist cities like Shangrao—this study addresses a critical research gap. The objectives of this study are twofold: (1) to identify the key factors influencing employee job satisfaction, such as compensation, career development opportunities, workplace environment, and leadership; and (2) to examine the relationship between these factors and overall satisfaction.

This research offers significant contributions to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it enriches the existing body of literature on human resource management and employee satisfaction in the mid-range hotel sector, which remains underexplored. Practically, the

findings provide hotel managers and policymakers with actionable strategies to enhance employee retention, improve service quality, and optimize workforce performance. By addressing the unique challenges faced by Shangrao's three-star hotels, this study delivers insights that are broadly applicable to similar regional markets, ultimately supporting the sustainable growth and competitiveness of China's mid-range hotel industry.

Literature Review

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, proposed in 1943, remains a cornerstone for understanding human motivation, emphasizing that individuals' needs progress in five hierarchical levels: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). The theory posits that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs before progressing to higher levels of fulfillment (Dohlman et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2021). At the base, physiological needs, such as food, water, and rest, serve as the foundation for well-being. Research highlights that meeting these basic needs through improved wages, enhanced working conditions, and sufficient rest periods significantly boosts employee motivation and satisfaction (Lu et al., 2016; Taheri et al., 2020).

Safety needs, the second tier, include economic stability, health security, and workplace safety (Maslow, 1954). Organizations can fulfill these needs by offering robust employment policies, comprehensive insurance, and job stability, which have been shown to correlate positively with retention rates (Pekerşen & Tugay, 2020; Kabak et al., 2014). At the third level, belongingness needs reflect individuals' desire for emotional connection and social interaction. Workplace studies suggest that fostering team collaboration and creating a supportive organizational culture enhance job satisfaction (Zheng & Chi, 2015; Kurdi et al., 2020).

The fourth level—esteem needs—encompasses self-respect and external recognition, which organizations can address by providing career advancement opportunities, public recognition, and employee rewards (McPhail et al., 2015; Hristov & Chirico, 2019). Lastly, self-actualization, the highest tier, focuses on achieving one's potential and personal growth. Organizations can nurture this need by designing personalized tasks, fostering decision-making participation, and encouraging creativity (Noltemeyer et al., 2021; Wright & Kim, 2004). This approach aligns with contemporary research emphasizing the dynamic nature of employee needs and the importance of aligning organizational policies to promote job satisfaction and reduce burnout (Taheri et al., 2020; Stenitzerová & Achimský, 2019).

Job Satisfaction

Hoppock (1935) first introduced the concept of job satisfaction, defining it as the sense of achievement and fulfillment experienced by employees in their work, thus providing critical insights into its emotional dimensions. Berry (1997) expanded this perspective by framing job satisfaction as a psychological response that develops over time through work experiences, highlighting the intricate relationship between emotions and work conditions. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1966) further differentiated between motivators (intrinsic factors), such as achievement and responsibility, and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors), such as compensation and working conditions, as dual influences on job satisfaction. Despite these

contributions, the interaction between individual needs and these factors across varying industry contexts remains underexplored (Dohlman et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2021).

Smith (1969) identified promotion opportunities and intrinsic job characteristics as key determinants of job satisfaction, while Hellriegel et al. (1999) extended this analysis by addressing employee attitudes and intrinsic satisfaction derived from role fulfillment, offering a more holistic perspective. Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management underscored a strong link between efficient production, higher wages, and employee satisfaction (Sweeney, 1990). Over time, scholarly definitions of job satisfaction have evolved into three distinct frameworks. The integrated definition encompasses subjective emotional responses, spanning psychological and physiological dimensions, to reflect overall work experiences. The expectation-discrepancy definition posits that job satisfaction arises from the alignment between actual work conditions and employee expectations—satisfaction increases when reality surpasses expectations and declines otherwise (Chopra & Meindl, 2016). Finally, the component-dimensional definition contends that job satisfaction is a multifaceted construct shaped by the interplay of various factors, as employees assess their work environments and personal experiences from multiple dimensions (Judge et al., 2021).

Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Early research by Hoppock (1935) identified key determinants of employee job satisfaction, including leadership style, employee fatigue, job content, job enrichment, and working conditions, laying the foundation for understanding the complex mechanisms influencing job satisfaction. Building upon this, Locke (1976) conceptualized job satisfaction as an emotional expression of employees toward their work, highlighting critical factors such as job position, compensation and benefits, work environment, and career growth. Locke's work further emphasized the importance of personal experiences and expectations in shaping job satisfaction. Similarly, Kondo (2001) emphasized that enhancing employee satisfaction and mental fulfillment ultimately contributes to achieving customer satisfaction, underscoring the interconnectedness between job satisfaction, organizational quality management, and customer experience.

The role of leadership in job satisfaction has also received significant attention. Heuss and Datta (2023) demonstrated that leadership style moderates the relationship between team communication and job satisfaction, showing that effective leadership significantly enhances employee satisfaction. Na, Kim, and Han (2024) further reported a positive correlation between job satisfaction, work effort, and quality of life, emphasizing the far-reaching effects of job satisfaction on employees' lives outside the workplace. Additionally, Arian et al. (2018), in their study of nursing educators, identified six primary factors influencing job satisfaction: personal, team, managerial, academic, professional, and economic dimensions, illustrating the diverse determinants of satisfaction within specific career fields.

Ueno and Kraus (2018) highlighted a mismatch between educational attainment and career progression among the younger generation in the United States, leading to a sense of career stagnation and lower job satisfaction. Furthermore, Urquijo, Extremera, and Azanza (2019) explored the role of emotional intelligence in job satisfaction, emphasizing its importance in fostering career growth, accessing sustaining resources, and creating a positive work environment. Wolter et al. (2019) extended this understanding by demonstrating the

reciprocal relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, emphasizing that increasing employee satisfaction is essential for enhancing customer experience. Maan et al. (2020) reinforced the positive impact of organizational support and professional development on employee satisfaction, highlighting organizational support as a critical driver for improving satisfaction levels.

Robbins et al. (2021) systematically summarized key determinants of job satisfaction, including challenging job roles, equitable compensation, supportive organizations, harmonious coworker relationships, and alignment between individuals and their work environments. In the service industry, Chen and Deng (2017) stressed the importance of leadership with a strong service orientation, particularly as employees' values and educational levels rise, leading to increased expectations for leadership support and motivation. Their study indicated that service-oriented leadership significantly improves job satisfaction.

The Relationship between Compensation, Rewards, and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between compensation and job satisfaction is both complex and critical, profoundly impacting employee well-being, organizational commitment, and performance. Sitorus and Hidayat (2023) highlighted that scientifically designed and equitable compensation systems enhance employee satisfaction by fostering a sense of value and recognition, which, in turn, boosts motivation and productivity. Similarly, Sorn et al. (2023) demonstrated that well-structured pay and reward systems significantly improve employee performance, providing a solid basis for promotions and additional incentives. Conversely, a mismatch between compensation and employee expectations may lead to dissatisfaction, decreased motivation, and higher turnover rates, posing challenges to organizational sustainability.

Both financial and non-monetary rewards play vital roles in driving employee satisfaction. Financial incentives, such as performance bonuses, commissions, and salary increases, are critical motivators that acknowledge employee efforts and elevate morale (International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts, 2023). However, Wang et al. (2020) emphasized the equal importance of non-monetary rewards, including recognition programs, flexible work arrangements, career development opportunities, and supportive work environments. These rewards address employees' holistic well-being, promoting a balance between professional growth and personal needs.

Individual variability further complicates the relationship between compensation and job satisfaction. Chen et al. (2023) found that some employees prioritize monetary rewards, while others value career advancement or work flexibility. For instance, employees with family responsibilities may favor flexible schedules, whereas younger employees are more inclined to pursue career growth and promotion opportunities. To optimize job satisfaction, organizations must tailor compensation strategies to align with employees' diverse needs and career stages.

Finally, job satisfaction plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' perceptions of compensation. Hossain and Islam (2024) revealed that satisfied employees are more likely to perceive compensation as a form of organizational recognition, fostering loyalty and motivation. In contrast, dissatisfied employees may view compensation less positively, diminishing its intended impact. This dynamic underscores the importance of cultivating a

positive organizational culture that enhances job satisfaction, ensuring the effectiveness of compensation strategies, and promoting sustainable organizational outcomes.

The Relationship Between Career Growth and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between career growth and job satisfaction is mutually reinforcing, directly influencing employees' career trajectories and organizational performance. According to Inegbedion (2024), increased job satisfaction enhances employees' work motivation, organizational commitment, and performance outcomes. It also helps reduce job stress and facilitates work-life balance, thereby fostering career development and long-term success. Similarly, Bellmann and Hübler (2021) emphasize that organizations can effectively enhance employees' job satisfaction and sense of career achievement by offering career development opportunities and skills training programs.

Wai et al. (2024) further highlight that career growth serves as a critical driver of job satisfaction. When employees perceive clear promotion pathways and have opportunities to participate in challenging projects, their sense of work value and engagement significantly improves.

The Relationship Between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

The work environment has a direct impact on employees' job satisfaction, encompassing physical settings, social dynamics, and organizational culture. According to Chen and Deng (2017), a positive and inclusive work environment enhances employees' sense of belonging and respect, thereby increasing job satisfaction. Conversely, high-pressure conditions, poor communication, and insufficient resources can diminish employee morale and hinder collaborative efficiency.

Santo (2020) found that satisfied employees are more likely to engage in organizational improvement initiatives and provide constructive feedback, which in turn helps optimize the work environment. In contrast, employees with low job satisfaction may negatively affect team dynamics and reduce overall productivity (Cindy Zhang, 2019).

The Relationship Between Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Effective leadership is a crucial factor in enhancing employees' job satisfaction. Leaders who provide clear expectations, constructive feedback, and career development opportunities foster a work environment characterized by trust and motivation (Chen & Deng, 2017). In contrast, leadership styles marked by poor communication and lack of recognition can result in employee dissatisfaction and decreased morale (Santo, 2020).

Zhang (2019) highlights that leaders who encourage autonomy and skill development are more likely to enhance employees' sense of achievement and satisfaction. Moreover, satisfied employees are more inclined to positively evaluate their leaders and exhibit stronger commitment and proactivity toward organizational goals. This bidirectional relationship underscores the importance of cultivating effective leadership, which can drive improvements in both employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

In summary, compensation and rewards, career growth, work environment, and leadership all have a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. Organizations must holistically

consider these factors and implement scientifically grounded management strategies to enhance job satisfaction. Doing so not only promotes employees' personal development but also contributes to the long-term success of the organization, creating a mutually beneficial outcome.

Construction of the Research Framework

Based on existing research, compensation and rewards are regarded as key material incentives (Tovmasyan et al., 2020). Compensation and rewards significantly enhance employees' work efficiency and enthusiasm, thereby improving the organization's economic performance. Studies have shown that compensation and rewards are closely related to employee work motivation. To achieve effective enterprise management, the management of compensation and rewards should align with the overall development strategy of the organization (Malik, 2018).

Employee career growth is another critical factor driving organizational development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). Organizations that integrate employees' personal career growth with their strategic development trajectory can motivate employees to achieve personal career goals while contributing to organizational objectives. Clear career growth goals encourage employees to actively participate in relevant training programs, enhancing their skills and sense of achievement. Career design enables employees to transcend mere economic gains and status, driving them to pursue higher levels of self-worth and personal fulfillment (Taheri et al., 2020).

The work environment is considered one of the fundamental needs for maintaining organizational efficiency and fostering positive growth (Taheri et al., 2020). A supportive work environment improves job satisfaction and productivity. Additionally, leadership plays a critical role in shaping employee job satisfaction and is identified as a key predictor of satisfaction levels (Puni, Mohammed, & Asamoah, 2018; Cansoy, 2019). Effective and supportive leadership creates a positive work atmosphere, further enhancing job satisfaction. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, human needs are diverse and hierarchical. Initially, employees aim to satisfy their basic survival needs through work. As their status improves, they may pursue higher-level needs such as wealth, recognition, and ultimately, self-improvement and self-actualization. Numerous studies confirm the significant positive correlation between compensation and benefits and job satisfaction. Higher compensation often leads to higher job satisfaction (Buciuniene, 2005; Khan et al., 2011; Kabak, 2014; Ricardo, 2022). Additionally, opportunities for career growth show a positive relationship with job satisfaction (Wright, 2004; Fritzsche et al., 2005; Mwititi et al., 2021). A positive work environment is also strongly correlated with job satisfaction, highlighting its role in enhancing employees' overall well-being (Nyamubi, 2017; Raziq et al., 2015; Agbozo, 2017; Taheri, 2020). Simultaneously, effective leadership is closely associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Bartolo et al., 2000; Bratt et al., 2000; Cogaltay et al., 2016).

Based on the existing literature and informal interviews conducted with hotel managers who have over 10 years of experience at three-star hotels in Shangrao, this study selects compensation and rewards, career growth, work environment, and leadership as independent variables and job satisfaction as the dependent variable. Drawing on previous studies (Waqas et al., 2014; Hang, 2016), the following research framework (Figure 1) is established.

In this framework, the directional arrows represent potential promoting relationships among variables, specifically, the influence of independent variables (compensation and rewards, career growth, work environment, and leadership) on the dependent variable (job satisfaction). This framework aims to provide significant managerial implications for three-star hotels in Shangrao, enabling targeted strategies to enhance employee job satisfaction. In doing so, it contributes to improving the overall service quality of the tourism and hospitality industry.



Figure 1 Proposed Conceptual Framework

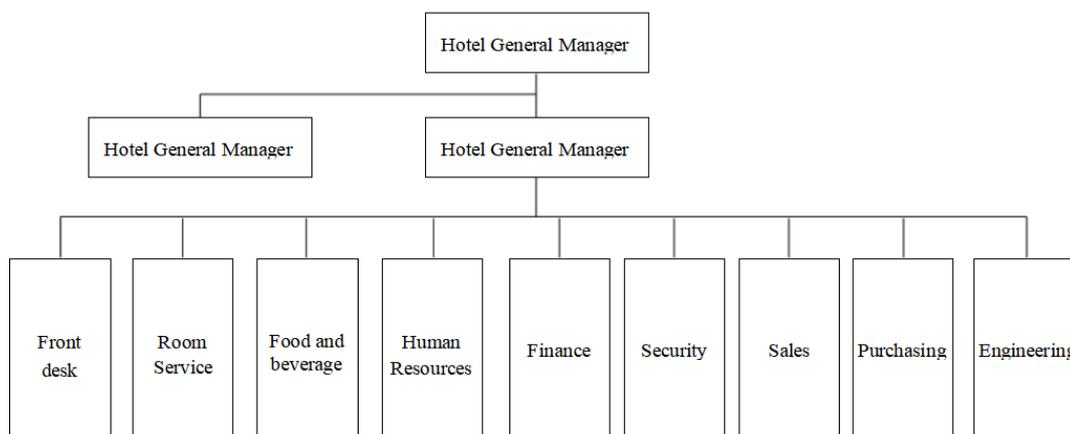


Figure 2 Hotel Organization Chart

Methodology

This study adopts a positivist, quantitative research approach to explore the key factors influencing job satisfaction among employees in three-star hotels in Shangrao, including compensation and rewards, career growth, work environment, and leadership (Tovmasyan et al., 2020; Taheri et al., 2020; Puni, Mohammed, & Asamoah, 2018; Cansoy, 2019). A structured questionnaire was selected as the data collection tool, divided into three sections: Section A collects demographic information of employees, Section B evaluates independent variables (compensation and rewards, career growth, work environment, and leadership), and Section

C measures the dependent variable, job satisfaction (Sari et al., 2019; Pekerşen, 2020; Zhong, 2014; Wang Yanling, 2019). All questions were designed using a 5-point Likert scale to ensure objectivity and consistency of the collected data.

The study employed a simple random sampling method to select formal employees from 16 three-star hotels in Shangrao. The final sample size was determined to be 339 employees, based on Yamane's (1967) formula, and 380 valid questionnaires were ultimately collected using the online survey tool "Questionnaire Star," distributed and retrieved through the WeChat platform. In the data analysis stage, SPSS software was used for statistical analysis, including descriptive statistical analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis (Amisshah et al., 2016; Chow et al., 2017).

The results revealed that fairness in compensation, opportunities for career development, a positive work environment, and supportive leadership all have a significant positive impact on employees' job satisfaction (Bartolo et al., 2000; Bucuniene, 2005; Fritzsche et al., 2005; Nyamubi, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Profile of Respondents

This study collected a total of 380 valid responses. As shown in Table 1, respondents aged 46-60 accounted for the highest proportion (41.1%), followed by those aged 18-25 (31.3%) and 26-45 (27.6%), highlighting the predominance of middle-aged employees in the hotel industry. This trend aligns with the industry's workforce demands and the stability associated with long-term employee retention (Jiao Lingling, 2017). Gender distribution was relatively balanced, with male respondents accounting for 45.8% and female respondents 54.2%, reflecting the diversity and equal employment policies prevalent in the hotel sector.

In terms of educational attainment, over 95% of respondents reported qualifications ranging from junior high school to associate degrees, indicating the industry's emphasis on practical skills and work experience over higher academic credentials. Departmental distribution revealed that employees in the Food and Beverage Department (28.9%) and the Housekeeping Department (28.2%) constituted the majority, while staffing in other departments was relatively lower, aligning with the core operational focus of hotel services.

Additionally, 88.9% of respondents reported work experience of 0-3 years, suggesting a high level of employee turnover and the seasonal nature of employment in the hotel industry. Regarding income levels, 44.2% of employees reported a monthly income between 3,001 and 3,500 RMB, indicating that income levels in three-star hotels are largely influenced by industry standards and job types and remain at a relatively low level overall.

Table 1
Results of the Demographic Characteristic Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent%
Age	18-25	119	31.3
	26-45	105	27.6
	46-60	156	41.1
Gender	Male	174	45.8
	Female	206	54.2
Education	Junior high school and below	177	46.6
	High school, college, vocational high school	195	51.3
	Bachelor's degree	6	1.6
	Postgraduate and above	2	0.5
Department	Front desk	90	23.7
	Room Service	107	28.2
	Food and beverage	110	28.9
	Human Resources	9	2.4
	Finance	8	2.1
	Security	54	14.2
	Sales	2	0.5
	Purchasing	0	0
	Engineering	0	0
	Other departments	0	0
Working years	Less than 1 year	176	46.3
	1-3 years	162	42.6
	4-5 years	42	11.1
Monthly income (RMB)	2501- 3000	97	25.5
	3001-3500	168	44.2
	3501-4000	81	21.3
	4001-4500	20	5.3
	Over 4500	14	3.7

Reliability Test

As shown in Table 2, the reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with all variables achieving values above 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha values were as follows: Salary and Rewards (0.903), Career Growth (0.850), Workplace Environment (0.897), and Leadership (0.889). An analysis of item

deletion revealed that removing any items did not improve reliability, confirming that all measurement items were consistent and reliable. To achieve the first objective of identifying the factors influencing employee job satisfaction in three-star hotels in Shangrao, the study employed Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to extract key influencing factors, alongside Descriptive Analysis to summarize the data effectively.

Table 2
Results of the Test

Variables	Title Item	CITC	Cronbach's α if Item Deleted	Cornbach's α
Salary and Reward	I think my salary links to my performance reasonably	0.780	0.876	0.903
	I earn the same or more people in a similar job	0.724	0.889	
	I think the speed of my salary increase is decided in a fair manner	0.741	0.885	
	I think the set and distribution of my rewards is reasonable	0.773	0.878	
	I think rewards motivate me to perform well when working	0.771	0.879	
Career Growth	I think my career growth speed is fast currently	0.697	0.811	0.850
	I think the probability of being promoted in my present organization is very high	0.658	0.821	
	I think my position in current hotel is ideal compared with my previous or similar organizations	0.700	0.810	
	I think the hotel's career development plan for me is clear	0.587	0.839	
	I think my hotel should provide vocational training for career growth	0.666	0.819	
Workplace Environment	My workplace makes me feel comfortable	0.761	0.871	0.897
	I think safety and security measures of my workplace are good	0.774	0.867	
	I think the hotel's logistics areas (such as changing rooms, rest rooms, etc.) are clean and tidy	0.777	0.865	
	I think the hotel's facilities are outdated and of poor quality	0.773	0.867	

Leadership	I think my leaders are competent in his/her job	0.787	0.852	0.889
	I think my leaders treat subordinates equally	0.704	0.871	
	I can get support and guidance from my leaders	0.706	0.871	
	My leaders respect and care for his subordinates	0.733	0.865	
	My leaders are able to communicate effectively with the person when problems are identified	0.725	0.866	
Job Satisfaction	I am satisfied with my totally income (including basic salary, rewards, ect.)	0.635	0.826	0.851
	I am satisfied with the insurance (such as endowment insurance, medical insurance, ect.) provided by the hotel	0.591	0.833	
	I am satisfied that my talents and skills are being utilized in my job	0.541	0.840	
	I am satisfied with the plan for my career growth offered by my hotel	0.684	0.819	
	I am satisfied with the safe and comfortable working environment provided by my hotel	0.567	0.836	
	I am satisfied with the good direction from my leaders	0.663	0.822	
	I am satisfied that I have good communications with my leaders during working	0.594	0.832	

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Validity Test

As shown in Table 3, the validity of the questionnaire was assessed to ensure its alignment with the content under examination, considering three types of validity: content validity, criterion validity, and structural validity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was conducted to evaluate the correlation among variables, yielding a value of 0.860, which exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.6, indicating strong correlations and suitability for factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's sphericity test produced a p-value less than 0.05, confirming that the data is not spherically distributed and that the variables are interrelated. These results demonstrate that the questionnaire possesses strong structural validity, making the data appropriate for further factor analysis.

Table 3

KMO and Bartlett Test

kaiser-Meyer-Olykin		0.860
Bartlett's spherical inspection	Appropriate Cardinal values	3840.128
	Degrees of freedom (df)	171
	Significance (Sig.)	.000

As shown in Table 4, the factor analysis results reveal that four public factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, meeting the criteria for subsequent empirical analysis. These factors collectively explain 70.094% of the total variance, with individual contributions of 21.825%, 17.497%, 16.590%, and 14.182%, respectively. The total variance explained exceeds the acceptable threshold of 50%, confirming the robustness of the factors. Following maximum variance rotation, the loadings of each factor converged after five iterations, enhancing the interpretability of the results. The four extracted factors were named based on the characteristics of their constituent variables as follows: "Salary and Rewards," "Leadership," "Career Growth," and "Workplace Environment." Among these, Workplace Environment had the highest eigenvalue of 4.147 (21.825% variance explained), followed by Leadership with an eigenvalue of 3.324 (17.497%), Career Growth with 3.152 (16.590%), and Salary and Rewards with 2.695 (14.182%). The cumulative variance explained highlights the significance of these four factors in capturing the underlying structure of the data.

Table 4

Variance Explained

Factor	Initial eigenvalue			Extract the sum of squares and load			Rotate the sum of squares to load		
	Eigen values	Percentage of Variance	Cum. % of Variance	Eigen values	Percentage of Variance	Cum. % of Variance	Eigen values	Percentage of Variance	Cum. % of Variance
1	4.147	21.825	21.825	4.147	21.825	21.825	3.615	19.028	19.028
2	3.324	17.497	39.322	3.324	17.497	39.322	3.482	18.325	37.353
3	3.152	16.590	55.912	3.152	16.590	55.912	3.149	16.572	53.925
4	2.695	14.182	70.094	2.695	14.182	70.094	3.072	16.169	70.094
5	0.629	3.313	73.406	--	--	--	--	--	--

The Rotated Component Matrix (Table 5) confirms that all question items have factor loadings greater than 0.4, indicating strong discriminant validity and a robust relationship between employee satisfaction and the questionnaire items. Four key factors were identified: Salary and Rewards, Leadership, Career Growth, and Workplace Environment.

Salary and rewards explain 21.825% of the variance, with high loadings on fair pay distribution, performance-linked salaries, and effective incentives. Leadership accounts for 17.497%, highlighting leader competence, effective communication, and equal treatment. Career growth explains 16.590%, focusing on career progression, promotion opportunities, and

training support. The workplace environment contributes 14.182%, with significant loadings on clean facilities, workplace comfort, and safety measures.

These findings align with the literature review, confirming that salary and rewards, leadership, career growth, and workplace environment are the primary factors influencing job satisfaction. The data is of high quality, ensuring its suitability for subsequent descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses.

Table 5

Factor Loading (Rotated)

	Factor Loadings			
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Factor 1: Salary and Rewards				
SAR1	0.864	--	--	--
SAR4	0.856	--	--	--
SAR5	0.856	--	--	--
SAR3	0.837	--	--	--
SAR2	0.823	--	--	--
Factor 2: Leadership				
L1	--	0.867	--	--
L5	--	0.836	--	--
L4	--	0.827	--	--
L3	--	0.812	--	--
L2	--	0.808	--	--
Factor 3: Career Growth				
CG3	--	--	0.820	--
CG1	--	--	0.819	--
CG5	--	--	0.793	--
CG2	--	--	0.783	--
CG4	--	--	0.726	--
Factor 4: Workplace Environment				
WE3	--	--	--	0.877
WE4	--	--	--	0.875
WE2	--	--	--	0.870
WE1	--	--	--	0.862

Descriptive Analysis

As shown in Table 6, the descriptive analysis of job satisfaction among employees in three-star hotels in Shangrao City identifies four key influencing factors: salary and rewards, career growth, working environment, and leadership. The overall mean score of 3.31 suggests moderate satisfaction among employees. Salary and rewards received relatively high scores, indicating employees' appreciation for the equitable salary system and performance-based rewards. Leadership also garnered positive feedback, reflecting management's competence, responsibility, and supportive approach.

In contrast, career growth scored lower, with a mean of 2.95, which can be attributed to limited promotion opportunities and a lack of transparency in advancement systems. The working environment recorded the lowest satisfaction level, with a mean score below 3.00, likely resulting from unmet expectations and insufficient efforts by hotels to maintain clean, safe, and pleasant working conditions.

Overall, while salary and leadership contribute positively to job satisfaction, issues surrounding career growth and the workplace environment highlight areas in need of targeted improvements.

Table 1
Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Variable Question Items

Variable	Item	N of samples	Mean	Standard deviation
Salary and Reward	I think my salary links to my performance reasonably	380	3.58	1.18
	I think the set and distribution of my rewards is reasonable	380	3.71	1.13
	I earn the same or more people in a similar job	380	3.55	1.15
	I think the speed of my salary increase is decided in a fair manner	380	3.64	1.10
	I think rewards motivate me to perform well when working	380	3.64	1.10
	Compute Mean	-	3.63	0.96
Career Growth	I think my career growth speed is fast currently	380	3.13	1.23
	I think the probability of being promoted in my present organization is very high	380	2.95	1.20
	I think my position in current hotel is ideal compared with my previous or similar organizations	380	3.00	1.26
	I think the hotel's career development plan for me is clear	380	3.36	1.09
	I think my hotel should provide vocational training for career growth	380	3.12	1.16
	Compute Mean	-	3.11	0.94

Workplace Environment	My workplace makes me feel comfortable	380	2.38	1.15
	I think safety and security measures of my workplace are good	380	2.26	1.13
	I think the hotel's logistics areas (such as changing rooms, rest rooms, etc.) are clean and tidy	380	2.35	1.17
	I think the hotel's facilities are brand new and of good quality	380	2.35	1.15
	Compute Mean	-	2.34	1.01
Leadership	I think my leaders are competent in his/her job	380	3.57	1.21
	I think my leaders treat subordinates equally	380	3.49	1.10
	I can get support and guidance from my leaders	380	3.48	1.15
	My leaders respect and care for his subordinates	380	3.71	1.08
	My leaders are able to communicate effectively with the person when problems are identified	380	3.60	1.15
	Compute Mean	-	3.57	0.95
Job Satisfaction	I am satisfied with my totally income (including basic salary, rewards, ect.)	380	3.28	1.12
	I am satisfied with the safe and comfortable working environment provided by my hotel	380	3.20	1.13
	I am satisfied that my talents and skills are being utilized in my job	380	3.36	1.12
	I am satisfied with the insurance (such as endowment insurance, medical insurance, ect.) provided by the hotel	380	3.37	1.09
	I am satisfied that I have good communications with my leaders during working	380	3.32	1.07
	I am satisfied with the good direction from my leaders	380	3.37	1.11
	I am satisfied with the plan for my career growth offered by my hotel	380	3.25	1.13
	Compute Mean	-	3.31	0.81

Normality Test

Before conducting variability analysis, it is essential to test whether the sample data follow a normal distribution. This study uses skewness and kurtosis tests for this purpose. Skewness assesses the symmetry of the data distribution, with a value of 0 indicating perfect symmetry,

while kurtosis measures the steepness or flatness relative to a normal distribution. Generally, when the absolute values of skewness are less than 3 and kurtosis less than 10, the data can be considered to approximate a normal distribution.

As shown in Table 7, the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis for age, gender, education, department, working years, and income all meet the criteria, with skewness <3 and kurtosis <10. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data for these six variables approximately follow a normal distribution, making them suitable for analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Table 2
Sample Normality Test

	N	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistics	Standard error	Statistics	Standard error
Age	380	2.0974	0.84622	-0.187	0.125	-1.58	0.25
Gender	380	1.5421	0.49888	-0.17	0.125	-1.982	0.25
Education	380	1.5605	0.55706	0.496	0.125	0.354	0.25
Department	380	2.7579	1.62738	0.964	0.125	-0.069	0.25
Working years	380	1.6474	0.67121	0.555	0.125	-0.726	0.25
Income	380	3.1737	0.99144	0.887	0.125	0.688	0.25

Correlation Analysis

As shown in Table 8, this study used Pearson's correlation coefficient to analyze the relationships between salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, leadership, and overall job satisfaction. The results revealed significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and all four factors, with correlation values of 0.313, 0.353, 0.343, and 0.355, respectively, at a significance level of $p = 0.000$. These findings confirm that salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, and leadership are all positively associated with employee job satisfaction. The significant correlations provide a solid basis for further regression analysis to determine the extent of each factor's influence on job satisfaction.

Table 8

Pearson Correlation Analysis Results

		Salary and Reward	growth	environment	Leadership	satisfaction
Salary and Reward	Pearson	1	-0.42	-0.62	-0.91	0.313**
	Sig	-	0.418	0.229	0.076	0.000
	N	380	380	380	380	380
Career Growth	Pearson	-0.042	1	0.125**	0.098	0.353**
	Sig	0.418	-	0.014	0.057	0.000
	N	380	380	380	380	380
Workplace Environment	Pearson	-0.062	0.125**	1	0.052	0.343**
	Sig	0.229	0.014	-	0.315	0.000
	N	380	380	380	380	380
Leadership	Pearson	-0.091	0.098	0.052	1	0.355**
	Sig	0.076	0.057	0.315		0.000
	N	380	380	380	380	380
Job Satisfaction	Pearson	0.313**	0.353**	0.343**	0.355**	1
	Sig	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	380	380	380	380	380

** indicates a significant correlation at the 0.01 level (two-sided).

Multivariate Regression Analysis

As shown in Table 9, the regression analysis confirmed that salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, and leadership significantly influence overall job satisfaction among employees in three-star hotels in Shangrao City. The analysis demonstrated that salary and rewards exert the most substantial positive effect on job satisfaction, with a regression coefficient of 0.316 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that an increase in salary and rewards directly enhances employee satisfaction. Leadership ranked second, with a coefficient of 0.293 ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that supportive, competent, and communicative leadership plays a critical role in boosting employee morale and satisfaction. Workplace environment and career growth followed closely, with coefficients of 0.250 and 0.254 ($p < 0.05$), respectively, signifying their importance in shaping employee perceptions of job satisfaction, albeit to a slightly lesser degree compared to salary and leadership.

Here is how to express the final regression equation:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1 * X_1 + b_2 * X_2 + b_3 * X_3 + b_4 * X_4 + e$$

The model explained 45.2% of the variance in overall job satisfaction, highlighting its robustness, with the F-test result ($F = 77.254$, $p < 0.05$) further validating its statistical significance. To ensure the reliability of the findings, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were assessed and found to be well below the threshold of 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues. Moreover, the Durbin-Watson (D-W) statistic of 2.072 confirmed the absence of autocorrelation within the model.

Table 9

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	B	SE	Beta	t	p	VIF	R	R ²	F
Constant	-0.261	0.209		-1.250	0.212				
Salary and Reward	0.316	0.032	0.376	9.781	0.000	1.012	0.672	0.452	77.254
Career Growth	0.254	0.033	0.296	7.654	0.000	1.025			
Workplace Environment	0.250	0.031	0.312	8.072	0.000	1.021			
Leadership	0.293	0.033	0.344	8.917	0.000	1.019			

Dependent variable: Job satisfaction

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing employee job satisfaction in the context of three-star hotels in Shangrao City, employing robust statistical methodologies such as correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The findings reveal that salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, and leadership significantly contribute to employee job satisfaction, offering both theoretical and practical implications for organizational management.

Among the identified factors, salary and rewards demonstrated the strongest positive impact on job satisfaction. This underscores the pivotal role of equitable compensation systems in motivating employees, meeting their material and psychological needs, and enhancing their sense of recognition and achievement. Leadership, ranking second in influence, highlights the importance of supportive, fair, and communicative leaders who foster trust and positive emotional connections with employees, thereby enhancing satisfaction levels.

The workplace environment was also shown to significantly impact satisfaction, emphasizing the necessity for organizations to provide clean, safe, and well-equipped working conditions that align with employee expectations. Lastly, career growth was identified as a key factor, albeit with a relatively lower influence, indicating the importance of providing structured career development opportunities that enable employees to realize their professional potential and aspirations.

The study contributes to the existing literature by reaffirming and extending theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Resource Preservation Theory, which explain the interplay between material incentives, leadership support, and workplace satisfaction. Additionally, this research aligns with previous empirical findings, further validating the strong relationships between compensation, leadership, career advancement, and workplace conditions with employee satisfaction.

From a practical perspective, the results offer actionable insights for managers and policymakers in the hospitality industry. To enhance job satisfaction, organizations should prioritize the implementation of competitive compensation packages, cultivate effective leadership practices, invest in a conducive work environment, and create clear pathways for

career development. Addressing these factors holistically can lead to improved employee satisfaction, greater retention rates, enhanced productivity, and long-term organizational success.

Future research may explore the role of additional variables, such as job autonomy, work-life balance, and cultural differences, in influencing job satisfaction across different contexts. Furthermore, longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the causal relationships between these factors and job satisfaction over time.

Implication

The results of this study provide important implications for hotel managers and policymakers. First, the identified key factors influencing job satisfaction—salary and rewards, career growth, workplace environment, and leadership—highlight areas that hotel management must address to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational success. Hotel managers can benefit from this research by recognizing the direct impact that these factors have on employee engagement, retention, and overall productivity.

Salary and rewards emerge as the most significant factors influencing employee satisfaction. This underscores the importance of maintaining competitive compensation packages that not only meet industry standards but also reward individual performance. Hotel managers should consider investing in performance-based incentives to reinforce positive behaviors and improve job satisfaction.

Career growth opportunities also play a crucial role in shaping employees' perceptions of their job satisfaction. Hotels that provide clear pathways for advancement, professional development, and skill enhancement are more likely to retain talented employees. Therefore, hotel management should prioritize career development programs and create a supportive environment for continuous learning and growth.

The workplace environment, which encompasses both physical and psychological factors, significantly impacts employee satisfaction. Hotels should focus on providing a safe, clean, and conducive working environment, along with fostering a culture that promotes collaboration and employee well-being. A positive work environment enhances job satisfaction and contributes to higher levels of customer service.

Finally, leadership quality is a key determinant of job satisfaction. Hotel managers should invest in leadership training programs to develop management skills that foster trust, respect, and open communication between employees and their superiors. Effective leadership can directly improve employee morale and reduce turnover, leading to a more stable and productive workforce.

By focusing on these factors, hotel managers can build a more satisfied and loyal workforce, which is crucial for improving service quality, customer satisfaction, and organizational performance. The study emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to human resource management, where these factors are carefully integrated into daily operations and strategic planning.

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