

The influence of employee productivity and service quality of front office department on job satisfaction mediated by work motivation in the hospitality sector

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on how staff productivity and service quality of the front office department affect job satisfaction, with work motivation as a mediating variable in the hospitality sector. The objectives are to determine how employee productivity affects job satisfaction, evaluate how service quality affects job satisfaction, and examine how work motivation functions as a mediating factor among productivity, service quality, and job satisfaction. Front desk staff at a number of Indonesian hotels completed a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1–5, which was used to gather data using quantitative methods. Job satisfaction, work motivation, service quality, and employee productivity were among the variables examined. Data analysis was conducted using SEM-PLS (Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares) in Smart-PLS statistical software. Validity and reliability testing were also conducted to make sure the study tool was suitable. The analysis on the 79 responses collected via google forms revealed that while job satisfaction is less significantly impacted, employee productivity and service quality have a considerable impact on work motivation. It is discovered that work motivation plays a significant part in raising job satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Productivity has become a topic of interest in various sectors, including hospitality (Lee & Way, 2010). In the hospitality industry, productivity is crucial in improving efficiency and operations, as well as providing high-quality services that directly impact guest experience. This is a critical factor in the success of a hotel, especially since guest reviews and ratings can significantly influence booking decisions (Oktavio et al., 2021; Wong & Mohamed, 2022).

One of the key aspects in hotel evaluations is the front office department, which plays a vital role in giving first and last impressions for guests (Asmara & Mohi, 2024). This department contributes to the overall hotel performance, particularly in interacting with guests to minimize complaints (Kusumawidjaya et al., 2023). Therefore, improving service quality is essential, including responding to guest complaints promptly and providing appropriate solutions (Jaya

et al., 2023). Customer satisfaction resulting from high-quality service is very important for hotel operators as it has the potential to increase customer loyalty, influence their intent to return, and maintain brand image (Oryzativa & Ernungtyas, 2020).

Service quality for hotel guests includes aspects such as how quickly the check-in and check-out processes are carried out, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and proficiency in managing reservations. Employee friendliness is also an important factor in guest interactions. Good service relies heavily on trained, experienced employees equipped with supporting tools, which are the company's main assets (Kartika et al., 2019).

Based on this and the contradictory findings from previous studies, such as study by Rampisela & Lumintang (2020) which showed that motivation has a positive but not significant effect on productivity, and research by González-González & García-Almeida (2021) which highlighted the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in encouraging employees to provide input, this study aims to further examine the impact of employee productivity and front office service quality on job satisfaction with work motivation as a mediating variable in the hospitality sector.

This study is conducted to analyze the effect and significance of service quality on work motivation, the effect of employee productivity on work motivation, work motivation on job satisfaction, service quality on job satisfaction, employee productivity on job satisfaction, and also how service quality and employee productivity affect job satisfaction with work motivation as a mediating variable in the front office department within the hospitality sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research primarily based on Goal Setting Theory (Locke, 1968) that related with employee satisfaction and engaged employees are more productive, leading to higher service quality. Secondly it is related with customer satisfaction and service quality which is satisfied employees provide better service, resulting in increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Lastly the goal setting Theory related to financial performance and growth achievement which improved service quality and customer loyalty drive financial success and long-term growth for hospitality business.

In the hospitality sector, research shows that training, job design, and technology are important factors in improving employee productivity (Kartika et al., 2019; Teja & Oktavio, 2020). Maintaining high standards at the front office requires effective staff, service recovery mechanisms, and continuous monitoring of guest feedback (Zhang & Geng, 2019).

In the hospitality field, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations such as recognition, career opportunities, and job autonomy are key factors that drive employee motivation (Putri, 2021). Factors influencing job satisfaction in this sector include intrinsic aspects such as the job

meaning and autonomy, as well as extrinsic aspects such as salary, benefits, and work-life balance (Tapfuma et al., 2021). Employee productivity is a crucial aspect for organizations that rely on the workforce; therefore, many organizations strive to improve job satisfaction to maintain stability and drive employee productivity (Nugroho et al., 2020).

The hypotheses of this research are as follows:

H1: There is a positive relationship between service quality and work motivation in the front office department in the hospitality industry.

Service quality and work motivation of frontline employees play a role in creating customer Value Co-Creation (VCC), with employee motivation driven by recognition, career opportunities, and professional identity (Amin et al., 2024). High-quality service influences motivation, which ultimately increases workplace productivity (Iskandar et al., 2024).

H2: Employee productivity is positively related to work motivation in the front office department.

Intrinsic motivation (personal satisfaction) and extrinsic motivation (external incentives) are key drivers in improving employee productivity and inputs. A work environment that supports innovation results in quality inputs (González-González & García-Almeida, 2021).

H3: There is a positive relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction among employees in the hospitality sector.

Studies in international hotel chains in China showed a significant relationship between autonomous motivation and job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2019). COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a decline in job satisfaction related to salary, security, and working conditions, and subsequently affects personal life, responsibilities, and recognition (Vulturius et al., 2024).

H4: High front office service quality positively affects employee job satisfaction

Research showed that training contributes to customer service quality through training transfer and job satisfaction (Shen & Tang, 2018), which has a positive impact on customer satisfaction (Shen & Tang, 2018). A satisfying work environment enhances employee satisfaction and service quality (Ji & Han, 2012).

H5: Employee productivity positively impacts job satisfaction in the front office.

Studies on job performance showed that employee job satisfaction affects various aspects of work and productivity (Egemen, 2024). Salary affects productivity and work motivation, which plays an important role in job satisfaction (Tapfuma et al., 2021).

H6: Front office service quality positively influences job satisfaction, mediated by work motivation.

Research conducted in Sri Lanka showed that good HR enhances job satisfaction and service performance through employee empowerment, although job autonomy needs to be improved

(Hewagama et al., 2019). Research in Jordan also showed that service quality and organizational excellence are related to job satisfaction (Jawabreh et al., 2024).

H7: Employee productivity influences front office job satisfaction through work motivation as a mediator.

Key motivational factors include work relationships and employee achievements, while rewards and job characteristics play a secondary role in enhancing employee satisfaction and performance, especially with the frequency of employee interactions with hotel guests (Kitsios & Kamariotou, 2021; Lan et al., 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research population includes front office employees from various hotels in the Central Java region, specifically in Yogyakarta and Semarang. As of 2024, there are approximately 12 five-stars hotels in Yogyakarta and 6 five-stars hotels in Semarang.

The determination of the sample size according to Hair et al. (2014) depends on the number of indicators (5-10). Based on the formula, this study requires a minimum of 70 respondents. Data processing is performed using SEM-PLS (Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares)." According to Nizl (2016), this system has advantages in testing complex models, allowing the use of multiple independent and dependent variables in a single model, and supporting latent variables that cannot be directly observed. SEM can also account for measurement errors and allows testing of mediation and/or moderation relationships simultaneously within a single model.

This research used the descriptive-survey method of research in quantitative method with a population of 150, resulting in 79 respondents, of which 76 met the criteria by identifying and targeting a specific population (front office employees), the front office employees who had been working 1 year until 35 years. Data was collected through a questionnaire distributed to front office employees using online surveys, adopted the google form to reach the population in different area who conveniently available to answer (Hair et al., 2023). The data had been collected were measured on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1(Strongly Disagree) until 5 (Strongly Agree) that yielded acceptable result on cronbach alpha analysis. Cronbach alpha's results for all variable and result range from 0.682 to 0.832, indicating internal consistency for reliability testing. The research variables consist of employee productivity and service quality as an independent variable, work motivation as a mediating variable, and employee job satisfaction as a dependent variable which produce 15 questions.

Two analysis model with SEM-PLS tools which are inner and outer model being used for this research. Inner models by utilizing bootstrapping and blindfolding procedures in the Smart PLS application. In addition to R-square, the inner model test can statistically display

the P-value by comparing the obtained P-value with the alpha value in a study at 0.05, with the following conditions: If the $P\text{-value} \leq \alpha$ value, the decision is to reject the hypothesis, and if the $P\text{-value} \geq \alpha$ value, the decision is to accept the hypothesis. Outer model is conducted using the PLS algorithm, validity and reliability testing, as well as evaluating reflective and formative models (Hair et al., 2023). Reliability is measured using cronbach's alpha, with a minimum required value of 0.7 (ideally 0.8-0.9), as well as composite reliability, which can be considered similar to cronbach's alpha. The instrument validity can be categorized as follows: very high ($0.80 < r_{xy} \leq 1.00$), high ($0.60 < r_{xy} \leq 0.80$), moderate ($0.40 < r_{xy} \leq 0.60$), low ($0.20 < r_{xy} \leq 0.40$), very low ($0.00 < r_{xy} \leq 0.20$), and invalid if $r_{xy} \leq 0.00$.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted by collecting and analyzing data through an online questionnaire distributed over a month, from August-September 2024. The authors will present the research results by explaining respondent's characteristics, conducting descriptive statistical analysis, and analyzing the data through structural model (inner model) and measurement model (outer model), including hypothesis testing.

Respondents Characteristic

This study was conducted by distributing online questionnaires to front office department employees at five-star hotels. The questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms and shared through WhatsApp, both individually and in groups. Of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 103 respondents completed the questionnaire. However, only 100 respondents met the established criteria, so 3 data sets were deemed unsuitable for further analysis. The data from the 100 valid respondents were then processed using Smart PLS 4.0 application, with the respondents' characteristics presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents Profile

Description	Criteria	Percentage
Age	20-29 years old	34
	30-39 years old	42
	40-49 years old	18
	>50 years old	6
Length of service	1-3 years	35
	4-5 years	21
	>5 years	44
Respondents Total (N)		100

Based on the respondent's profile, it is known that the highest percentage of respondents are aged 30-39 years, making up 42% of the total respondents, and 44% have been working for more than one year. This indicates that most Front Office employees are in

their productive age and have high loyalty to the company, as evidenced by the highest percentage of employees with more than 5 years of service.

Descriptive Analysis

This analysis aims to provide an overview of the responses given by front office employees in the hospitality sector through the questionnaire. The respondents analyzed are employees with more than one year of service. The goal of this analysis is to gain an understanding of all the variables in the study; independent variables such as employee productivity and service quality in the front office department, the mediating variable being motivation, and the dependent variable being employee job satisfaction. The results of the questionnaire include a description of the data from respondents regarding all the questions asked.

Table 2. Responses

Indicator	Employee Productivity					TOTAL
	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	
X1.1	0%	0.6%	4.5%	43.5%	51.4%	100%
X1.2	0.3%	0.6%	7.4%	42.1%	49.5%	100%
X1.3	0%	2.6%	15.8%	42.1%	39.5%	100%
X1.4	0%	0%	0.8%	17.7%	81.5%	100%
X1.5	0.3%	0%	2.6%	27.7%	69.4%	100%
Mean	0.1%	0.8%	6.2%	34.6%	58.2%	
Indicator	Service Quality					TOTAL
	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	
x2.1	0%	0%	3.6%	49.4%	47.0%	100%
x2.2	0%	0%	7.5%	57.9%	34.6%	100%
x2.3	0%	0%	6.2%	53.4%	40.4%	100%
Mean	0%	0%	5.8%	53.6%	40.6%	
Indicator	Work Motivation					TOTAL
	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	
z1.1	0%	0%	5.0%	34.3%	60.7%	100%
z1.2	0%	0.6%	7.2%	34.9%	57.2%	100%
z1.3	0%	0.6%	6.3%	38.7%	54.4%	100%
Mean	0%	0.4%	6.2%	36.0%	57.4%	
Indicator	Job Satisfaction					TOTAL
	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	
y1.2	0%	0%	4.5%	40.5%	55.1%	100%
y1.3	0.3%	2%	11.8%	48.4%	37.6%	100%
y1.4	0.3%	2%	12.7%	44.3%	40.7%	100%
y1.5	0.3%	2%	10.7%	49.5%	37.5%	100%
Mean	0.3%	2%	11.7%	47.4%	38.6%	

Source: Primary Data

Employee Productivity

Employee productivity is often associated with individuals' performance within an organization. Table 2 presents the responses from the hospitality sector front office department employees on indicators that describe employee productivity. Based on Table 2, most employees in the front office department responded with "Strongly Agree" at 58.2%, followed by 34.6% who expressed "Agree." The opinions expressed regarding productivity have a positive impact on the company. In particular, for indicator X1.4, 81.5% of respondents stated that the actions of front office employees have a significant impact on guest satisfaction. This is followed by indicator X1.5, where 69.4% of respondents stated that front office employees are always on time and have good commitment.

Service Quality

Service quality towards guests is one of the standards in the hospitality industry and it is one responsibility for the individuals of the front office department to meet the established service standards. Based on Table 2, the majority is in the "Agree" category, at 53.6%. With more than 50% of respondents agreeing, this indicates that the service quality is at a sufficient level and has improved. Quality of service provided by employees should be a point of attention for management. In the long term, if employee service quality declines, it could lead to slow responses to guest requests, a decrease in resolving guest issues, and feedback from guests that may include negative comments.

Work Motivation

Work motivation is what drives a person to take action based on their own desire and willingness to work (Indriyani et al., 2025). This motivation is one of the factors that encourages employees to become more productive. Based on Table 2, the majority responded with "Strongly Agree", at 57.4%, with all three indicators showing high values above 50%. This indicates that employees are engaged and motivated in their work, feel satisfied with the tasks they perform, and that internal promotions also contribute to increasing motivation, with a percentage of 54.4%.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the positive value employees have toward their work. It reflects an attitude of contentment and happiness with their job. Based on Table 2, the highest response is in the "Agree" category, at 47.4%. Job satisfaction levels need to be a focus for management so that the current rating of "Satisfactory" can be improved, ultimately reaching the "Strongly Agree" category. The "Strongly Agree" response is still below "Agree," at 38.6%. Although

indicator y1.2 shows the highest score, indicating that employees feel satisfied working in the front office department, other indicators have not yet shown optimal results. Other indicators, such as job performance evaluation (y1.2), satisfaction with training and development (y1.3), and recognition and reward programs (y1.4), still need improvement to achieve optimal scores. Additionally, responses in the "Satisfactory" to "Strongly Disagree" categories need to be further examined so that the company can make better improvements.

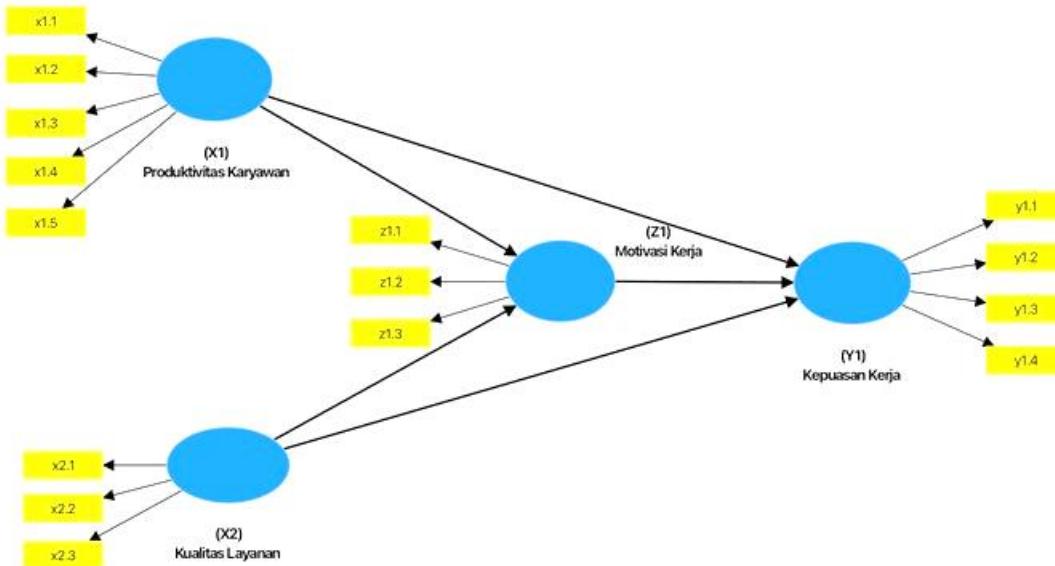


Figure 1. Research Model - Outer Model

Source: SEM-PLS Data Processing

Outer Model Analysis Result

This study applies two types of SEM-PLS analysis: measurement model analysis (outer model) and structural model analysis (inner model), using the SEM-PLS 4.0 application for data processing. The data processed is inputted in a tabular format with CSV (Comma Separated Values). For the outer model, there are three measurement criteria used: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite validity (Hair et al., 2023).

Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity

Convergent Validity uses factor loading and AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values by showing a high correlation between the latent variable being measured and the different indicators. From the data processing results by SEM-PLS, it can be concluded that all indicators are valid, with factor loadings > 0.5 . The AVE graph shows that all four variables have values above 0.5, which means these indicators have good convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity can be determined by comparing the factor loading values, which should be higher than the cross-loading values. The results can be seen that Employee Productivity has a higher loading factor than its cross-loading value.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

	Employee Productivity	Service Quality	Job Satisfaction	Work Motivation
Employee Productivity	0.769			
Service Quality	0.508	0.816		
Job Satisfaction	0.522	0.599	0.853	
Work Motivation	0.664	0.681	0.7	0.925

Source: SEM-PLS Data Processing

Each construct has a higher value than the correlation between constructs, as seen in Table 3. This suggests that AVE of each construct is higher than the correlation between constructs. Thus, it can be concluded that all constructs in the estimated model fulfilled the discriminant validity criteria.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is the final stage in testing the outer model. This test aims to evaluate the reliability of constructs through two main indicators: internal consistency and cronbach's alpha, which is used to provide an estimate of the lower bound of reliability, while composite reliability offers a more accurate estimate with more precise parameter assumptions (Hair et al., 2023). In SEM-PLS data analysis, composite reliability functions similarly to cronbach's alpha.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha, rho_a, rho_c, AVE

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Employee Productivity	0.682	0.761	0.812	0.592
Service Quality	0.749	0.75	0.856	0.665
Job Satisfaction	0.876	0.883	0.914	0.728
Work Motivation	0.832	0.834	0.923	0.856

Source: SEM-PLS Data Processing

Based on Table 4, this study is considered less reliable because there is one variable with composite reliability and cronbach's alpha values below 0.7. The conclusion is that, of the four variables, some have met the composite reliability test criteria, while there are indicators that have not met the requirement.

Structural Model (Inner Model) Analysis Result

The results of the structural model analysis confirm that the structural model is strong and accurate.

R-Square

The values, which range between 0 and 1, are recorded in the R-Square model, indicating the extent to which the combination of independent variables affects the dependent variable. The R-square value has three categories: R-square value of 0.75 indicates a strong influence; an R-square value of 0.5 indicates a moderate influence; and an R-square value of 0.25 indicates a weak influence (Hair et al., 2023).

Table 5. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.521	0.501
Work Motivation	0.6	0.589

Source: SEM-PLS Data Processing

Based on Table 5, the results of this study fall into the moderate category, as the obtained value ranges from 0.5 to 0.6. (Y1) Job Satisfaction has an R-Square of 0.521, meaning that 52.1% of the variability in job satisfaction can be explained by the independent variables in the model. The adjusted R-square of 0.501 indicates that, after adjustment, around 50.1% of the variability in job satisfaction can still be explained.

Next, the R-square value for the (Z1) work motivation variable is 0.600, meaning that 60% of the variability in work motivation can be explained by the independent variables. Meanwhile, the adjusted R-square value of 0.589 shows that, after adjustment, the model can still explain about 58.9% of the variability in work motivation.

Hypothesis Testing Discussion

This study addresses the hypotheses formulated, providing scientific reasoning. This analysis will answer the 7 hypotheses that have been formulated by using SEM-PLS bootstrapping data processing – path coefficient and total indirect effect.

Service Quality towards Work Motivation

The coefficient in figure with a value of 0.464 shows a positive relationship between service quality and work motivation. T-statistic test result of 4.570 indicates significance, as the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value ($4.570 > 1.96$), thus the hypothesis is

accepted. The p-value, which is smaller than or equal to the α value, i.e., $0.000 \leq 0.05$, further strengthens the positive relationship between the two variables.

This study is in accordance with research by Amin et al. (2024), which studied front liner employee's (FLEs) in the context of customer co-creation; they found that employee motivation, including recognition, career opportunities, and professional identity, are important factors in shaping attitudes towards customer value co-creation (VCC). These findings also support the view of Jawabreh et al. (2024), who stated that quality service impacts the improvement of work motivation.

Employee Productivity towards Work Motivation

The coefficient figure with a value of 0.428 shows a positive relationship between employee productivity and work motivation. The t-statistic test result of 4.571 indicates significance, as the t-statistic is greater than the t-table value ($4.571 > 1.96$), so the hypothesis is accepted. The p-value, which is less than or equal to the α value, i.e., $0.000 \leq 0.05$, also indicates a low error level between the two variables.

This study contradicts the findings of Rampisela & Lumintang (2020) at PT Dayanan Cipta, who concluded that there is a positive effect on motivation but no significant effect on work productivity. On the other hand, research by González-González & García-Almeida (2021) showed that intrinsic (personal motivation) and extrinsic (external motivation) motivation are crucial in encouraging employees to provide suggestions and feedback.

Work Motivation towards Job Satisfaction

The coefficient figure which is 0.496, shows a positive relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. The t-statistic value of 3.665 indicates a significant result, as it is greater than the t-table value ($3.665 > 1.96$), thus the hypothesis is accepted. Furthermore, the P-Value, which is smaller than or equal to the α value ($0.000 \leq 0.05$), indicates a low error rate between the variables.

This research aligns with study by Zhang et al. (2019), which found a significant relationship between autonomous motivation and job satisfaction in international hotel networks in China. The study by Vulturius et al. (2024) also added that compensation, benefits, and employee support packages are relevant not only for airlines but also for other sectors of transportation and the economy.

Service Quality towards Job Satisfaction

Service quality and employee satisfaction have a positive effect, as shown by the coefficient of 0.219. However, the hypothesis is rejected because the t-statistic value of 1.96

is equal to the t-table value ($1.96 > 1.96$). Furthermore, the p-value being equal to or greater than α ($0.05 \geq 0.05$) indicates a high error rate between the two variables. This research aligns with findings of Ji & Han (2012), who stated that service quality requires support from a conducive work environment so that employees feel satisfied with their work and tasks.

Employee Productivity towards Job Satisfaction

The coefficient a value of 0.081, shows a positive relationship between employee productivity and job satisfaction, but this effect is not significant as the t-statistic result of 0.573 is smaller than the t-table value ($0.573 < 1.96$), thus the hypothesis is rejected. In addition, the p-value, which is equal to or greater than α ($0.0567 \geq 0.05$), shows a high error rate between the two variables.

This research is consistent with the findings of Keltu (2024), who, through SEM analysis, found that factors such as job satisfaction, training, development, and teamwork have a positive effect on academic staff performance but have a negative impact on academic career development and counseling.

Service Quality towards Job Satisfaction with Work Motivation as Mediator

The coefficient with a value of 0.230, shows a positive effect of service quality on job satisfaction, mediated by work motivation. The t-statistic result of 2.557 is greater than the t-table value ($2.557 > 1.96$), thus, the hypothesis is accepted. Furthermore, the p-value is smaller than or equal to α ($0.011 \leq 0.05$), indicating a low error rate between the two variables.

The final results of this study are consistent with the findings of Kitsios & Kamariotou (2021), who stated that the main motivation for employees is their relationship with colleagues and the achievements they attain, while rewards and job description play a secondary role.

Employee Productivity towards Job Satisfaction with Work Motivation as Mediator

The coefficient with a value of 0.212, shows a positive effect of employee productivity on job satisfaction mediated by work motivation. The t-statistic value of 3.230 is greater than the t-table value ($3.230 > 1.96$), so the hypothesis is accepted. Additionally, the p-value is smaller than or equal to α ($0.001 \leq 0.05$), indicating a low error rate between the two variables.

Previous research conducted in the Wadi Rum Protected Area, Jordan, showed a significant positive relationship between service quality, organizational excellence, and employee job satisfaction (Jawabreh et al., 2024). Furthermore, a study by Susilowati & Fadli (2023) also found that salary has a significant impact on employee work motivation, which in turn has a significant effect on job satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis it can be concluded that in the hospitality sector, as service quality and work productivity increase, work motivation improves as well. However, improvements in service quality and work productivity do not always guarantee employee satisfaction, although they can encourage an increase in work motivation. With work motivation as a mediator, high service quality and productivity will enhance job satisfaction for employees in the hospitality sector.

The limitations of this study lie in the high reluctance of respondents to provide answers, as employee satisfaction is considered confidential. Additionally, the variables used are limited to factors such as productivity, service quality, work motivation, and job satisfaction.

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct retesting by adding other variables such as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, organizational culture, leadership models, and the work environment. For the hospitality industry, it is recommended to be more flexible and open, particularly in involving employees as research respondents. The results of this study can serve as insights to improve productivity, service quality, motivation, and job satisfaction to achieve more optimal outcomes.

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