

Aleksandra Grobelna^{}, Marta Sidorkiewicz^{**},
Anna Tokarz-Kocik^{**}*

**JOB SATISFACTION AMONG HOTEL EMPLOYEES:
ANALYZING SELECTED ANTECEDENTS
AND JOB OUTCOMES. A CASE STUDY FROM POLAND**

This study examines selected antecedents of hotel employees' job satisfaction and its critical consequences which are crucial for both individuals and hotel organizations as a whole. Specifically this study investigates the effects of individual and job characteristics on employees' job satisfaction and the effect of job satisfaction on employees' affective organizational commitment and intention to leave. Therefore, a survey instrument was used to collect information from 11 hotels in northern Poland. A total of 356 hotel employees agreed to participate in the study. The results of structural equation modelling proved that intrinsic motivation, supervisor support, role conflict and role ambiguity are all significant predictors of hotel employees' job satisfaction. Job satisfaction, in turn, has been found to be directly and positively associated with affective organization commitment and negatively with turnover intention, however its direct impact on affective commitment was strongest. Research discussion, implications of the results and directions for future studies are also provided.

Keywords: hospitality industry, hotel employees, job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, intention to leave

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's global and strict competitive environment service organizations have to make a great effort to create and retain a pool of loyal and profitable customers. Service providers in fact, have a great ability to satisfy their customers (Lin and Mattila, 2010), the more so that the functional aspects of services play pivotal role in guests' quality perception (Grobelna and Marciszewska, 2013). However, to accomplish this aim, the satisfaction and retention of frontline employees is of great importance, especially in the hotel industry which implies working with people (Petrović and Marković, 2012), and involves a high degree of interaction between service providers and consumers (Lewis and McCann, 2004; Wan, Wong

* Gdynia Maritime University

** University of Szczecin

and Kong, 2014). Therefore, hospitality as a customer-service oriented business, mostly depends on its employees having direct contact with their customers (AlBattat and Som, 2013). Taking into account that customers' satisfaction is a consequence of perceived service quality (Dabholkar and Abston, 2008), it may be said that the existence of satisfied employees can be one of the conditions to satisfy customers (Petrović and Marković, 2012).

There is no doubt that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are likely to provide good customer service (Chi and Gursoy, 2009; Dabholkar and Abston, 2008), stay in their jobs for longer and treat their customers better (Lee and Way, 2010). Therefore the retention of motivated, satisfied and committed frontline employees who are delivering high quality service is of great importance for the satisfaction and retention of customers (Yavas, Babakus, and Karatepe, 2008).

Taking the above into consideration, the focus on understanding the hotel employees' job satisfaction still remains interesting and crucial for business effectiveness. Although many empirical studies have been undertaken in the area related to job satisfaction, there are still many questions – particularly towards the nature of the employees' job satisfaction (Yang, 2010). Therefore the question: "What makes hotel employees motivated and satisfied with their jobs?" still requires an answer (Chiang and Jang 2008, p. 313), notably in these days when poor working conditions may cause employees to perceive their work as not satisfying, leading them to think about alternative employment (Poulston, 2009). Employee turnover especially troubles the hotel industry (Chiang and Jang, 2008; Choi, 2006; Hwang, Lee, Park, Chang and Kim, 2014; Mohsin, Lengler and Kumar, 2013). Thus there is a great need to seek effective ways to measure factors affecting the job satisfaction of hotel employees (Lee and Way, 2010), the more so that they are numerous and complex in relation to each other (Lee, Huang and Zhao, 2012).

Therefore the purpose of this study is to explore:

1. the effect of individual and job characteristics on hotel employees' job satisfaction,
 2. the relationships between job satisfaction and both affective organizational commitment and employee turnover intention,
- taking the case of hotel employees in Poland, where to the best of the authors' knowledge, only a few empirical studies have been conducted over this issue in a hotel setting.

The value of this research results from two major facts. First, that it has been the only attempt in Poland to measure relationships among proposed study constructs, simultaneously by using the item-scales which have

already been applied in hotel research in other countries. This gives a unique opportunity to investigate job satisfaction as an international issue, to compare the study findings and to discover potential differences (if any exists) related to the cultural and social context. Second, the use of structural equation modelling (SEM) in exploratory research seems to be still limited (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012), therefore this study tries to fill this gap in the context of hospitality research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched phenomena in the organizational behaviour literature (Snipes, Oswald, LaTour and Armenakis, 2005), being perceived as a positive outcome for both employees and the organization they work for (Lambert and Hogan, 2009). Job satisfaction is an indicator of employee emotional well-being and psychological health, leading to behaviours that may influence organizational functioning (Bokti and Talib, 2009). Employees' job satisfaction associates positively with service recovery performance (Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe and Avci, 2003), organizational commitment (Low, Cravens, Grant and Moncrief, 2001), both affective (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007; Yang, 2010), and continuance commitment (Yang, 2010), it also increases customer satisfaction (Chi and Gursoy, 2009; Ugboro and Obeng, 2000; Yee, Yeung and Cheng, 2008), and decreases turnover intentions (Alniaçik, Alniaçik, Erat and Akçin, 2013; Jou, Kuo and Tang, 2013; Low et al., 2001). On the other hand, when employees are unhappy with their work they can experience stress and absenteeism, which eventually exacerbates staff turnover and other workplace problems contributing to profits (Poulston, 2009). It is suggested that without job satisfaction performance at work can be seriously impacted (Lambert and Hogan, 2009). Dissatisfied employees are more likely to display unpleasant emotions, reducing the level of customer satisfaction through emotional contagion (Yee et al., 2008).

Job satisfaction results from the assessment made by employees about their job in terms of meeting wants, desires or needs (Lambert and Hogan, 2009). It can be considered in a variety of ways and in many various studies it has been defined differently (Lam, Zhang, and Baum, 2001). Locke (1969) defined job satisfaction as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (p. 316). Rostkowski (2004) indicates that job satisfaction is perceived as a positive attitude to the company, co-workers and the job

performed. It is also suggested that job satisfaction reflects the feelings of employees toward their work (Babakus et al., 2003; Eliyana, Yusuf and Prabowo, 2012). Similarly Spector (1997) indicated that job satisfaction is reflected in how people feel about their work.

The literature underlines that customer satisfaction, perceived service quality and loyalty are essentially influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of contact employees who significantly contribute to service excellence (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997). However, in spite of the great importance of operational staff performance for guests' satisfaction (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997), hotel employees are often facing stressful situations due to the specific nature of their work (Hwang et al., 2014). Work-related stress is of growing concern in the hospitality industry, but in spite of its critical influence on individual and organizational outcomes, this issue seems to be overlooked in the hospitality literature (Kim, Murrmann and Lee, 2009).

Among many different stressors, the role stress deserves special attention as hotel employees are often facing many situations without clear standards and have to perform in very dynamic circumstances of service encounters, dealing with a variety of customers (Kim et al., 2009). The nature of the transaction in hospitality work may contribute to the lack of control and the enhanced uncertainty and ambiguity within many work situations (Jogaratnam and Buchanan, 2004) influencing job satisfaction, which is regarded as "one of the most subsequent job outcomes affected by role stress" (Kim et al., 2009, p. 612).

It is emphasized that hotel employees, especially those in frontline positions, are prone to heightened role stress (Karatepe and Uludag, 2008), both the role conflict and role ambiguity are two major components of it (Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006). Role theory states that if expected behaviours imposed on an individual are not consistent, then the person may become dissatisfied, experience stress and perform not so effectively than in situations when these expected behaviours would not be in conflict (Rizzo, House and Lirtzman, 1970). Therefore the issue of both the role conflict and role ambiguity, as job demands (Kim, Shin and Umbreit, 2007), are under the research attention of this study.

On the other hand the study concentrates also on the intrinsic motivation and supervisor support as potential and influential predictors of job satisfaction. According to the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), intrinsic motivation is one of the personal resources that may support the individuals' resistance to stress (Karatepe and Uludag 2007, Koziol, 2002), whereas the potential or actual loss of resources may lead to many

negative outcomes among which job dissatisfaction is indicated (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007). Simultaneously, social support, as one of the job resources (Kim et al., 2007), which are functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands and stimulate personal growth and development (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), may also influence job satisfaction.

Summarizing, the phenomenon of employees' job satisfaction will be still a critical issue for academics and hospitality practitioners, as it plays a crucial role in creating the positive emotional experiences of hotel guests who are actively involved in service interactions. Without job satisfaction, organizational performance can be seriously disrupted as the reinforcement of employee job satisfaction "constitutes a crucial component of maintaining a high level of customer service" (Yang, 2010, p. 617). Thus, among many aspects influencing the prosperity of hospitality industry, the employment of motivated and committed employees who are satisfied with their jobs is of great importance.

3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Based on broad literature review and previous empirical findings, this study develops and tests a research model (figure 1) that investigates the impact of individual and job characteristics on hotel employees' job satisfaction, which in turn has beneficial consequences resulting in high affective commitment and low intention to leave.

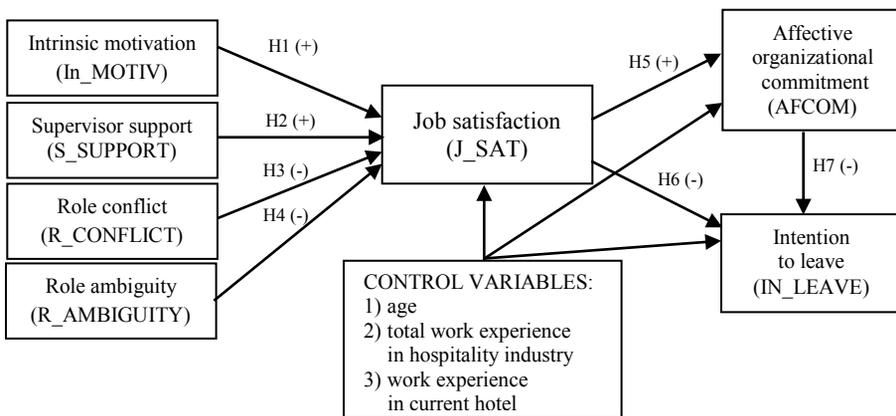


Figure 1. Research model

Source: own work

Additionally, the relationship between affective organizational commitment and turnover intention is investigated.

3.1. Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation involves individuals doing an activity because they think it is very interesting and deriving spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself (Gagne and Deci, 2005). In other words, passion, interest and internal desire to do something are what intrinsic motivation is (Amabile, 1998), which may explain why intrinsically motivated employees experience a higher level of job satisfaction than others.

In previous hospitality studies, it was also found that intrinsic motivation has a significantly positive effect on the job satisfaction of frontline employees who were working in Northern Cyprus hotels (Karatepe and Uludag, 2007), and has been negatively related to emotional exhaustion (Karatepe and Aleshinloye, 2009; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007) and emotional dissonance (Karatepe and Aleshinloye, 2009).

Thus, based on the above discussion and the rational empirical findings, it can be assumed that also in a Polish context the potential relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction of hotel employees may exist. Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed: **H1**. Intrinsic motivation is positively related to hotel employees' job satisfaction.

3.2. Supervisor support

Supervisor support is a critical component of the work environment, important for most workers because it demonstrates the degree of value a supervisor places on a person (Lambert and Hogan, 2009). When hotel employees perceive that their supervisors pay individualized attention to their problems, providing adequate support for these problems' resolution, they may be more satisfied with their jobs than others (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007). It is empirically proved that supervisory support is important in maintaining and increasing employees' job satisfaction (Babin and Boles, 1996; Lambert and Hogan, 2009). Karatepe and Kilic (2007) in their research conducted among frontline employees in Northern Cyprus, found that supervisor support is positively related to hotel employees' job satisfaction. It could be interesting to investigate this relationship also in the case study from Poland. Thus, **H2**. Supervisor support has a positive effect on job satisfaction among hotel employees.

3.3. Role conflict and role ambiguity

Front office staff, as an interface between hotel and guests (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997), and “the face” of the hotel (Mohsin et al., 2013), are placed in a position where employees simply must, in some way, reconcile incompatibilities between these demands and hotel management policy (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997). No wonder that faced with competing and often conflicting demands from different sources (e.g. managers, co-workers or customers), hotel employees experience elevated levels of role conflict. Role conflict is defined as being given different orders (Lambert and Hogan, 2009), and takes place when employees receive incompatible demands from different sources (Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006) which means that they have to play multiple roles being often in conflict (Kim et al. 2009).

Faulkner and Patiar’s (1997) study proved also that among many sources of stress experienced by hotel front-office staff, the employees indicated “dealing with ambiguous situations”. Service operations are characterized by uncertainty due to high demand fluctuation and the variety of customers’ needs which are changing dynamically. Having no clear standards of performance meant that employees do not know for sure how to perform their job in a dynamic environment, and experience as a result, an elevated level of role ambiguity. Role ambiguity is defined as being given unclear directions and orders (Lambert and Hogan, 2009), and takes place when employees do not have adequate information on how to perform job-related tasks and how their work will be evaluated (Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006).

The negative relationships between role conflict and/or role ambiguity and job satisfaction have been proved in many empirical studies in different service settings (e.g. Karatepe, Yavas, Babakus and Avci, 2006b; Low, Cravens, Grant and Moncrief, 2001; Walsh, 2011). They were also investigated in the hotel industry in different cultural backgrounds. The negative effect of role conflict and role ambiguity on job satisfaction was proved among hotel employees in Turkey (Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006); in the Republic of Korea (Kim et al., 2009) and among hotel employees in Taiwan, where the negative impact of role conflict was supported (Yang, 2010). Therefore, both role conflict and/or role ambiguity may influence employees’ well-being in the hotel organization and decrease their job satisfaction. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3. Role conflict of hotel employees is negatively related to job satisfaction.

H4. Role ambiguity of hotel employees is negatively related to job satisfaction.

3.4. Affective organizational commitment

Affective organizational commitment is defined as the bond between the organization and the employees that is formed because of an affective and cognitive desire of employees for the organization to be successful (Lambert and Hogan, 2009). This refers to the employees' emotional attachment to the organization (Alniaçik, Alniaçik, Akçin and Erat, 2012). Although three types of organizational commitment (affective, normative and continuance commitment) captured its multidimensional nature, affective commitment is considered as the more effective measurement of organizational commitment (Alniaçik et al., 2012) and indeed the most commonly measured in empirical studies (Lambert and Hogan, 2009).

Employees are likely to perceive an organization more favourably and will be moreover tied to it when they feel satisfied. Empirical studies (e.g. Low et al., 2001), also in the hospitality industry (Choi, 2006; Lee et al., 2012), discovered that job satisfaction has a positive influence on hotel employees' organizational commitment, particularly on the affective one, which was empirically proved within the hotel context (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007; Yang, 2010). Thus, **H5**. Job satisfaction relates positively with affective organizational commitment.

3.5. Intention to leave

The problem of high turnover seems to characterize the hospitality industry worldwide, being a critical issue for both practitioners and researchers (AlBattat and Som, 2013; Chiang and Jang, 2008; Jang and George, 2012; Yang, 2010). The problem of staff retention in the hospitality industry is well documented (Poulston, 2009). Especially in the hotel industry, the specific nature of the work, low pay and long working hours may contribute to the turnover problem (Chiang and Jang, 2008).

Turnover intention is the antecedent of the actual turnover that is highly expensive (Lambert and Hogan, 2009), especially for hospitality organizations (Trojanowska, 2012). It is associated with increases in employee behaviour such as lower productivity, reduced performance level, absenteeism, work disruption and other misconduct (see Jang and George, 2012; Randhawa, 2007; Redman and Mathews, 1998). Factors that affect employee turnover have become increasingly complex today (Lee et al., 2012); therefore the question of what makes an employee leave is the key question, especially in the labour intensive hotel industry (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997), where the staff turnover problem is particularly significant.

Among various factors influencing an intention to leave, job satisfaction has been indicated to be most influential (Randhawa, 2007). The turnover model (Mobley, 1977) clearly explains the process of how job dissatisfaction leads to the intention to quit and, ultimately, employee turnover (AlBattat and Som, 2013; Randhawa, 2007). Therefore many researchers have made the effort to demonstrate that job satisfaction will lead to retaining the employees whereas job dissatisfaction forces turnover intention (AlBattat and Som, 2013).

The negative relationship between hotel employees' job satisfaction and intention to leave is well empirically evidenced in many examples of previous research conducted among others, in hotels owned or managed by a North American branded hotel management company (Park and Gursoy, 2012) and in other studies made in different worldwide destinations such as South Korea (Choi, 2006), Northern Cyprus (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Karatepe and Uludag 2007; Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic and Baddar, 2006a), Taiwan (Yang, 2010), Turkey (Karatepe & Sokmen, 2006), and the southwestern United States (Jang and George, 2012).

Therefore, based on the literature review and the previous empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed: **H6**. Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intention.

It is stated that job satisfaction and organizational commitment generally predict turnover (Øgaard, 2006). Many empirical findings, also in the hospitality setting, proved the negative relationship between affective organizational commitment and turnover intention using a sample of hotel employees in various destinations (e.g. Karatepe and Uludag 2007; Yang, 2010; Zopiatis, Constanti and, 2014). Employees with high affective commitment strongly identify and involve with the organization, they continue employment in that company because they want to do so (Alniaçik et al., 2012). Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed: **H7**. Affective organizational commitment negatively affects the employee turnover intention.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection procedure

The hypotheses were tested among all contact employees working in selected 3, 4 and 5-star hotels located in northern Poland that provide a comprehensive range of services (restaurants, banquets, fitness/SPA and

conference facilities, etc.). Finally, the managers of 11 hotels (five 5-star hotels, three 4-star hotels and three 3-star hotels) from major tourist destinations of northern Poland gave permission to participate in the study. The ownership structures of the hotels ranged from independently owned/operated hotels to international chain hotels. According to the information received from human resources or general managers of the participating hotels, the total number of contact employees who have frequent and extensive contact with customers and spend most of their working time dealing with them was 513. A detailed explanation of the study and its questionnaire was provided to hotel managers, who were also instructed to distribute the survey questionnaires to a broad range of contact employees in their hotels. All questionnaires included information about the assurance of confidentiality and were distributed in a pack to all the participating hotels. Each pack included a covering letter explaining the aim of the study, the appropriate number of questionnaires for each hotel and return envelopes. The employees voluntarily filled in the anonymous questionnaires during working time, (e.g. during scheduled staff meetings). The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaires in a self-administrated manner. Of the 513 survey questionnaires distributed, a total of 356 usable responses were returned which represents a response rate of 69.4%.

4.2. Measurement

The study constructs were operationalized adapted items from the previous empirical studies in the relevant literature. All the applied measures were well-validated in previous works.

Intrinsic motivation (IN_MOTIV) was measured using four (4) items in line with Karatepe and Uludag (2007) and Karatepe and Aleshinloye (2009), based on Low et al. (2001), and used this scale to measure frontline hotel employees' intrinsic motivation.

The measure developed by Rizzo et al. (1970), was applied to role conflict (R_CONFLICT) (8 items) and role ambiguity (R_AMBIGUITY) (6 items reverse coded). Items from Rizzo et al. (1970) were also used to measure role stress (role conflict and role ambiguity) in studies in a hotel setting (e.g. Karatepe and Uludag 2008; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006; Kim et al. 2009; Yang, 2010).

Supervisor support (S_SUPPORT) was measured by employing a four-item (4) scale in line with Karatepe and Olugbade (2009), based on Behr,

King and King (1990), and used such scale items in their research among frontline employees of the five- and four-star hotels of Abuja (the capital city of Nigeria).

Job satisfaction (J_SAT) was measured by a three-item scale (3) adapted from Rich (1997), based on a measure developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh (1983). A multi-item scale can help to overcome the limitations of the single-item job satisfaction measures, which are suggested to be low in reliability (Walsh, 2011). Moreover, the items applied in this study measure global satisfaction rather than facet-oriented job satisfaction. In spite of some criticism, allowing respondents to assess their overall job satisfaction is recommended and has some advantages (Camp, 1994). This approach allows respondents to mentally assess what the individual feels are relevant dimensions in formulating a response to the job satisfaction issue, without asking and restricting them to think about specific aspects of the job. There are many researchers who rely upon the judgment of individuals and give them an overall assessment of job satisfaction (Camp, 1994).

Two items of the job-satisfaction scale were positively worded; one was negatively worded and reverse coded.

Affective organizational commitment (AFCOM) was measured using five (5) items from Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979), adopted in line with Karatepe and Uludag (2007), who used this five-item scale to measure affective organizational commitment among hotel employees in Northern Cyprus.

Intention to leave (IN_LEAVE) was measured with a three-item (3) scale in line with Karatepe et al. 2006a, based on Boshoff and Allen (2000), and adapted these items to operationalize the intention to leave of frontline hotel employees in their research. This measure was also used in many other studies in a hotel setting (e.g. Yavas et al., 2008; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007).

All the items were measured on a five-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

In the current study, some demographic variables were statistically controlled; these are age and work experience (both total work experience in the hotel industry and work experience in the current hotel). These variables were believed to have potential relationship with the study variables (job satisfaction, affective commitment and intention to leave) and were frequently analyzed in many recent studies (e.g. Karatepe et al., 2006a; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007; Kim et al., 2009; Lam et al., 2001). For example, Lam et al.

(2001) examined the relationship between the demographic characteristics of hotel employees and job satisfaction, and proved that among others, age and length of employment played a significant role. In Karatepe and Uludag (2007), the significant relationship between organizational tenure and job satisfaction was proved, whereas in the study of Karatepe et al.(2006a), significant relationships between age, organizational tenure and job satisfaction were demonstrated. In Randhawa's (2007) study, the findings indicated an increase in job satisfaction with age and work experience.

Other demographic variables were also collected to describe the profile of respondents.

Age was measured using a 6-point scale. The choice of such a scale was based on the literature review and authors' consultation with hospitality management and marketing academics. Education – 4-point scale, work experience in the current hotel and total work experience in the industry were measured using a 7-point scale. Gender was coded as a binary variable.

Special attention was put on the clear and understandable language of the survey instrument. The questionnaire was translated from English to Polish via the back-translation method to assure equivalent meaning for all items. In addition, before collecting data the survey instrument was administrated to a pilot sample of hotel employees for its verification. Feedback from a pilot-test indicated that employees had no difficulty in understanding the items, so no changes were made to the instrument as a result of its pretest.

To verify the appropriateness of the structural model, structural equation modelling was used. The software chosen to analyze the structural equations model was the R version 3.0.2., package lavaan 0.5-15 (Rosseel, 2012). Scale reliability was assessed by Cronbach's alpha and Jöreskog's rho; the measures were subjected through IBM SPSS Statistics 21 and Microsoft Excel, respectively.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Characteristics of the respondents

The majority of respondents were female (61.5%); 49.2% of the respondents were aged 21-30 years, 25.6% aged 31-40 years, the rest were older than 40 years (22.1%) or younger than 21 years (3.1%). As regards the educational level of respondents, 45.3% of them had a secondary school education and 40.4% of respondents had a university degree. The rest of the investigated group declared primary (2.8%) or vocational education (11.5%).

Over half of the respondents (58.1%) had been with their hotel (present employer) between 1 and 5 years; for 42.4% of the surveyed the total work experience in the hospitality industry was between 1 and 5 years; 22.2 % declared the length of work experience in the industry from 6 to 10 years. Only 6.5 % of the respondents declared industry work experience below 1 year, whereas 29% (28.9%) of the employees surveyed had a total work experience in the hospitality industry of over 10 years.

5.2. Model assessment

In our study, structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied. To be precise, the one-step approach was used which means that the estimation of measurement model and relationships assumed in research hypotheses was carried out at the same time (Sagan, 2003).

Substantive use of structural equation modelling has been seen in the social sciences (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). It is suggested that SEM has become a standard tool to investigate the plausibility of a theoretical model that can explain the interrelations in a set of variables (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Among many benefits offered by using SEM, it is indicated that it helps researchers to be more precise in their specification of hypotheses and the operationalization of constructs, often suggests novel hypotheses and opens up new paths for research, finally it is very useful in survey research, etc. (Bogozzi and Yi, 2012).

A structural equation model represents a series of hypotheses about how the variables in the analysis are generated and related, therefore the application of the SEM technique starts with the specification of a model to be estimated; assessment of goodness of fit and the estimation of parameters of the hypothesized model are the main goals (Hu and Bentler, 1999). It is indicated that the most popular ways of evaluating model fit are those that involve the χ^2 goodness-of-fit statistics (Hu and Bentler, 1999). To supplement the χ^2 test, a number of other measures of fit statistics are also recommended (Bogozzi and Yi, 2012; Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen, 2008). Following the literature recommendation, the fit indices evaluated in this study were as follows: the normed *chi*-square (χ^2 / degree of freedom); GFI (Goodness of Fit Index); AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index); NFI (Normed Fit Index); NNFI (Non-normed Fit Index); CFI (Comparative Fit Index); RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation); RMR (Root Mean Square Residual).

Table 1
Standardized loadings and reliabilities

Measurement items	Standardized loadings	t-Values	Alpha
<i>Supervisor support (S SUPPORT)</i>			0.86
My supervisor is willing to listen to my personal problems.	0.767	16.447	
My supervisor is easy to talk to.	0.872	19.852	
I can depend on my supervisor for help when things get tough at work.	0.856	19.310	
My supervisor is willing to change my work schedule when I need it.	0.660	13.424	
<i>Intrinsic motivation (IN MOTIV)</i>			0.86
When I do work well, it gives me feeling of accomplishment.	0.764	16.247	
I feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when I do my job well.	0.848	18.930	
When I perform my job well, it contributes to my personal growth and development.	0.777	16.667	
My job increases my feeling of self-esteem.	0.774	16.554	
<i>Role conflict (R CONFLICT)</i>			0.86
I have to do things that should be done differently.	0.579	11.300	
I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it.	0.535	10.287	
I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out an assignment.	0.656	13.222	
I have to work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.	0.512	9.766	
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people	0.717	14.879	
I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	0.753	15.906	
I receive an assignment without adequate resources and material to execute it.	0.758	16.057	
I work on unnecessary things.	0.731	15.279	
<i>Role ambiguity (R AMBIGUITY)</i>			0.87
I feel certain about how much authority I have. [R]	0.680	13.974	
I have clear, planned goals and objectives for my job [R]	0.706	14.696	
I know that I have divided my time properly. [R]	0.684	14.092	
I know what my responsibilities are. [R]	0.781	16.923	
I know exactly what is expected of me. [R]	0.834	18.664	
I receive clear explanations of what has to be done. [R]	0.758	16.212	
<i>Job satisfaction (J SAT)</i>			0.77
In general I like working in my hotel.	0.836	15.336	
All in all I am satisfied with my job.	0.887	15.973	
In general I do not like my job. [R]	0.532	9.666	
<i>Affective organizational commitment (AFCOM)</i>			0.85
My values and those of the hotel are similar.	0.563	10.439	
I really care about the future of this hotel.	0.783	15.068	
I am proud to tell others that I work for this hotel.	0.843	16.329	
I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the hotel to be successful.	0.776	14.927	
For me, this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.	0.695	13.177	
<i>Intention to leave (IN LEAVE)</i>			0.92
I often think about leaving this hotel.	0.918	19.663	
It would not take much to make me leave this hotel.	0.876	18.586	
I will probably be looking for another job soon.	0.897	19.150	

Note: [R] reverse coded. All loadings are significant at the level < 0.001 .

Source: own work

One-step model fit statistics indicate that the proposed model fits the data relatively reasonably and the fit indices are as follows: $\chi^2 = 1199.822$, $df = 572$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.09$; GFI = 0.84; AGFI = 0.81; NFI = 0.84; NNFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.056; RMR = 0.073.

As indicated in Table 1, the the standardized loadings ranged from 0.512 to 0.918 and all t -values were significant. In the light of the results, the observable variables load significantly on their respective latent variables with loadings exceeding 0.5 for the constructs to which they were assigned. The overwhelming majority of the standardized loadings was above 0.7, showing good-quality items.

Additionally, all the measures showed high reliability, with alpha coefficients above the cut-off value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) which constitutes an appropriate level of internal consistency reliability. Jöreskog's rho was also computed for each factor. The results are as follows: S_SUPPORT ($\rho = 0.870$); IN_MOTIV ($\rho = 0.870$); R_AMBIGUITY ($\rho = 0.880$); R_CONFLICT ($\rho = 0.859$); J_SAT ($\rho = 0.805$), AFCOM ($\rho = 0.855$), IN_LEAVE ($\rho = 0.925$). Acceptable scores for the Jöreskog's rho should be higher than 0.70 (Demo, Neiva, Nunes and Rozzett, 2012).

Data of this study were collected through self-report questionnaires, therefore the Common Method Bias (CMB) may influence the study results (Chen et al., 2014). To determine empirically whether or not CMB threatened the interpretation of study results, the Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986; Podsakoff et al., 2003) was employed. Principal component analysis was used in the test with all variables in the model. Both with the varimax rotation and without it, the share of variance explained by one factor amounted to 33%, and showed no evidence of the common method bias.

All correlations among study variables were significant, and ranged from -0.267 (intrinsic motivation and role conflict) to -0.664 (job satisfaction and intention to leave). The correlations, means and standard deviations are presented in Table 2.

The control variables of this study also had a significant correlation with the study variable. Age, total work experience in the industry, and work experience in the current organization, all had a positive correlation with affective commitment (respectively $r = 0.155$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.133$, $p < 0.05$ and $r = 0.110$, $p < 0.05$ respectively). These results demonstrate that older

Table 2
Correlations, means and standard deviations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. S_SUPPORT	1.000									
2. IN_MOTIV	0.288**	1.000								
3. R_CONFLICT	-0.418**	-0.267**	1.000							
4. R_AMBIGUITY	-0.508**	-0.481**	0.508**	1.000						
5. J_SAT	0.533**	0.641**	-0.546**	-0.610**	1.000					
6. AFKOM	0.359**	0.432**	-0.368**	-0.412**	0.657**	1.000				
7. IN_LEAVE	-0.363**	-0.436**	0.371**	0.416**	-0.664**	-0.577**	1.000			
8. AGE	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.055	0.155**	-0.084	1.000		
9. W_EXP IN HOSPITALITY	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.013	0.133*	-0.079	0.712**	1.000	
10. W_EXP IN CURRENT HOTEL	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.023	0.110*	-0.037	0.702**	0.841**	1.000
MEAN	4.00	4.15	2.53	1.91	4.19	3.81	2.35	2.80	3.12	2.57
ST. DEV.	0.87	0.74	0.80	0.61	0.77	0.72	1.10	1.10	1.63	1.60

Note: Supervisor support (S_SUPPORT); Intrinsic motivation (IN_MOTIV); Role ambiguity (R_AMBIGUITY); Role conflict (R_CONFLICT); Job satisfaction (J_SAT); Affective organizational commitment (AFKOM); Intention to leave (IN_LEAVE); Work experience in hospitality industry (W_EXP IN HOSPITALITY); Work experience in current hotel (W_EXP IN CURRENT HOTEL). * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Source: own work

employees with longer work experience both in the hospitality industry and in their current hotel, reported higher affective organizational commitment to the hotel where they were working now.

5.3. Test of hypotheses

The results of the structural model tested (Table 3) indicated that intrinsic motivation, supervisory support, role conflict and role ambiguity were significantly related to job satisfaction. Role conflict (R_CONFLICT) and role ambiguity (R_AMBIGUITY) both exerted significant and negative effect on job satisfaction (J_SAT). On the other hand, intrinsic motivation (IN_MOTIV) and supervisor support (S_SUPPORT) are both significant and positive predictors of job satisfaction (J_SAT). Therefore, hypotheses 1–4 (H1–H4) were supported.

IN_MOTIV, S_SUPPORT, R_CONFLICT and R_AMBIGUITY jointly explain 63% of the variance in J_SAT. Control variables improve the explained variance of J_SAT by 1%. Additionally, both age and work experience (in current hotel) exert a significant effect on job satisfaction. Older employees reported a lower level of job satisfaction. Respondents with

Table 3
Results of the structural model

Control variables and hypothesized relationships	Standardized coefficients	t-Values	Hypothesis result
Age			
J_SAT	-0.127	-2.162*	
AFCOM	0.220	3.192***	
IN_LEAVE	-0.125	-1.921	
Work experience in the hospitality industry			
J_SAT	-0.057	-0.740	
AFCOM	0.122	1.366	
IN_LEAVE	-0.143	-1.715	
Work experience in the current hotel			
J_SAT	0.160	2.096*	
AFCOM	-0.162	-1.834	
IN_LEAVE	0.206	2.476*	
H1: IN_MOTIV → J_SAT	0.432	7.388***	<i>supported</i>
H2: S_SUPPORT → J_SAT	0.219	4.140***	<i>supported</i>
H3: R_CONFLICT → J_SAT	-0.257	-4.709***	<i>supported</i>
H4: R_AMBIGUITY → J_SAT	-0.161	-2.674**	<i>supported</i>
H5: J_SAT → AFCOM	0.675	9.411***	<i>supported</i>
H6: J_SAT → IN_LEAVE	-0.543	-6.843***	<i>supported</i>
H7: AFCOM → IN_LEAVE	-0.204	-2.906**	<i>supported</i>

Note: Supervisory support (S_SUPPORT); Intrinsic motivation (IN_MOTIV); Role ambiguity (R_AMBIGUITY); Role conflict (R_CONFLICT); Job satisfaction (J_SAT); Affective organizational commitment (AFCOM); Intention to leave (IN_LEAVE); * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Source: own work

longer work experience in their current hotel, experienced a significantly higher level of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction emerged as a statistically significant predictor of affective commitment and intention to leave. The results demonstrated that job satisfaction (J_SAT) had a significant and positive effect on hotel employees' affective commitment (AFCOM). Therefore hypothesis 5 (H5) is supported.

It was also found that job satisfaction (J_SAT) had a significant negative relationship with turnover intention (IN_LEAVE), thus accepting hypothesis 6 (H6).

Job satisfaction explained 44% of the variance in AFCOM. With the addition of control variables, the proportion of explained variance increased

to 48%. With the exception of age, the rest of control variables did not demonstrate any statistically significant impact on affective commitment. As indicated in Table 3, older employees reported higher affective commitment to the hotel organization.

The results in Table 3 showed also that affective organizational commitment (AFCOM) is negatively related to intention to leave (IN_LEAVE). Thus Hypothesis 7 (H7) was accepted. Job satisfaction and affective commitment jointly explained 48% of the variance in intention to leave. With the addition of control variables the proportion of explained variance increased to 49%. With the exception of work experience in the current hotel, none of the control variables demonstrated a statistically significant impact on intention to leave. Interestingly, hotel employees with a longer time of employment in their hotel reported a significantly higher intention to leave.

Additionally, as a post-hoc analysis, the Sobel test was used to test the significance of the indirect effects of intrinsic motivation, supervisory support, role conflict and role ambiguity on affective commitment and turnover intention via job satisfaction (Sobel 1982; Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Table 4
Results of Sobel's test

	Mediator		Z
IN_MOTIV	J_SAT	AFCOM	5,16*
IN_MOTIV	J_SAT	IN_LEAVE	-6,34*
S_SUPPORT	J_SAT	AFCOM	6,51*
S_SUPPORT	J_SAT	IN_LEAVE	-6,52*
R_CONFLICT	J_SAT	AFCOM	-6,16*
R_CONFLICT	J_SAT	IN_LEAVE	5,78*
R_AMBIGUITY	J_SAT	AFCOM	-6,08*
R_AMBIGUITY	J_SAT	IN_LEAVE	6,29*

Note: Supervisory support (S_SUPPORT); Intrinsic motivation (IN_MOTIV); Role ambiguity (R_AMBIGUITY); Role conflict (R_CONFLICT); Job satisfaction (J_SAT); Affective organizational commitment (AFCOM); Intention to leave (IN_LEAVE); *p<0.001

Source: own work

As presented in Table 4, all the results provide support for the mediating role of job satisfaction. It suggests that the indirect effect of both supervisor support and employees' intrinsic motivation on affective commitment via

job satisfaction was significant and positive; whereas their indirect effect on turnover intention was significant and negative. Whereas, role conflict and role ambiguity, as job demands indirectly, via decreasing job satisfaction increases employees' intention to leave and significantly reduces their affective commitment to hotel organization.

The abovementioned study results confirm that job satisfaction functions as a full mediator of the effects of supervisory support and intrinsic motivation as job resources, and role conflict and ambiguity as job demands on critical job outcomes such as employees' affective commitment and their leaving intention. Finally, it is worth noting that affective commitment also played a significant mediating role between job satisfaction and employees' turnover intention in this study. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on intention to leave, via affective commitment, was significant and negative (Sobel test: $z = -4,396$; $p < 0.001$).

6. DISCUSSION

The present study developed and tested a research model that investigated the impact of individual and job characteristics on hotel employees' job satisfaction that in turn can have beneficial consequences in higher affective commitment and lower intention to leave. The choice of constructs for the purpose of this study was based on the extensive literature review and the previous research conducted among hotel employees (e.g. Karatepe and Uludag 2008; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006; Karatepe and Olugbade (2009), Karatepe and Uludag 2007).

This study used data drawn from 356 contact employees of 11 hotels in northern Poland who agreed to participate in this research. The hypothesized seven-factor model was tested and confirmed. All the hypothesized relationships were supported by the empirical data.

Several useful and noteworthy results emerged from the empirical investigation that contribute to the theory of both organization and management in the hospitality literature and need further discussion.

The findings of the study indicated that job satisfaction is a powerful contributor to the affective commitment and turnover intention of hotel employees in the case study of the Polish context. Job satisfaction influences turnover intention directly and indirectly through affective commitment. Similar findings were obtained in the research of Yang (2010) among hotel employees in Taiwan, and by Karatepe and Uludag (2007) in their research of Northern Cyprus hotels. The result of the negative relationship between

job satisfaction and affective commitment is also congruent with the study of Karatepe and Kilic (2007), similarly the negative impact of job satisfaction on intention to leave. The latter was also confirmed in other previous studies in the hotel industry conducted in different cultural backgrounds (e.g. Choi, 2006; Jang and George, 2012; Karatepe et al. 2006a, 2007; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006; Park and Gursoy, 2012). The negative relationship between affective organizational commitment and turnover intention was also consonant with the study results of Zopiatis et al. 2014, conducted among hotel employees in Cyprus. Low job satisfaction and lack of affective organizational commitment may be significant reasons for hotel employee turnover intentions in the case of the study's respondents. This result deserves special attention as turnover intention strongly determine employee actual turnover (Mahdi, Zin, Nor, Sakat and Naim, 2012), which is critical in the labour intensive hospitality industry.

With all assumptions taken into consideration in this research, the results showed that intrinsic motivation exerts the strongest positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, playing a critical role as a job satisfaction predictor. Intrinsically motivated people are those who find the work very interesting, exacting, personally challenging, etc. (Amabile, 1997), therefore employees highly intrinsically motivated may experience higher levels of job satisfaction than those who probably feel obliged to do work that is outside their interests and passions. Our results are similar with Karatepe and Uludag (2007), who proved that intrinsic motivation had a significantly positive effect on frontline employees' job satisfaction.

As the hypothesized role conflict and role ambiguity exerted both a significant and negative impact on hotel employees' job satisfaction, which supports the findings of Karatepe and Sokmen (2006) and Kim et al.(2009), and partly the study findings of Yang (2010), where the negative impact of role conflict was confirmed, while role ambiguity was not. This study results seem to confirm that regardless of the social and cultural background, job satisfaction in particular is one of the job outcomes that is strongly affected by role stress (Kim et al., 2009), especially by role conflict as supported by the study findings.

Supervisor support was found to be positively and significantly associated with the job satisfaction of hotel employees. This finding is consonant with results of other empirical studies of Karatepe and Kilic (2007), and Babin and Boles (1996). To be strongly customer-oriented, hotel employees must be given much more attention, especially in the context of satisfactory working experience, where relationships with superiors play a

significant role. It is proved that a truly supportive supervisor can lead to higher employee job satisfaction resulting in their stronger commitment to the organization and lower intention to leave. Thus, human resources (among other company resources) should be effectively and efficiently managed to achieve organizational goals, but on the other hand it should be recognized that these resources are significantly different than others, therefore employees should be perceived and treated as individuals with their own feelings, priorities in life, personal goals, etc. (Gursoy, Maier and Chi, 2008), with supportive understanding from their immediate supervisors.

The model results also demonstrate that age and work experience in their current hotel significantly influence job satisfaction, affective commitment and intention to leave. Older respondents showed lower job satisfaction, whereas employees with longer work experience in the current company reported higher job satisfaction. These results are similar to other empirical findings where the negative impact of age (Karatepe et al., 2006a), and the positive impact of organizational tenure (Karatepe et al., 2006a; Karatepe and Uludag, 2007) on hotel employees' job satisfaction were found. This may result from the fact that hotel employees with a longer tenure are expected to deal more effectively with many job-related tasks (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007). Moreover, they obtain more information about the job content and may better cope with conflicting demands in the workplace (Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006), which may potentially influence their well-being in the organization and ultimately their job satisfaction. On the other hand, hotel employees are still faced with a number of problems connected with the demanding character of their work, such as long (unsocial) working hours, inflexible, irregular work schedules, limited time off (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007), moreover, constant customer contact (Kim et al., 2007), perceived often as stressful, can make the work particularly physically and psychologically demanding, which may potentially explain why older hotel employees, working in contact positions, may feel less satisfied with their work than others.

The empirical findings of this study proved that in the case of the hotel sector, also in the context of the hotels in northern Poland, investigating job satisfaction should pay off in both lower turnover intention and stronger affective commitment to the hotel organization. The paper shows that some predictors and obstacles relate to hotel employees' job satisfaction in a very similar manner regardless of the cultural and social background. Hence, the study results, when compared with previous research findings, indicate that the issue of antecedents and the consequences of job satisfaction may be perceived in a very similar way from the international perspective within the hotel context.

7. IMPLICATIONS

Employee satisfaction needs crucial managerial attention to increase service quality and customer satisfaction (Yee et al., 2008). There is a well evidenced link between employment practices and employee and customer satisfaction (Lashley, 2008). Thus hotel managers can also benefit from the results of this study, which provides several useful guidelines on improving employee's satisfaction.

Hotel employees are strongly exposed to role stress. Some elements during service process just cannot be anticipated and standardized, thus employees have to decide themselves how to keep an optimal balance between customers' expectations and organizational constraints (Raub, 2008). The study findings indicated that job satisfaction can be destroyed if only role conflict and role ambiguity are not managed well. It is suggested that the problems of role conflict and ambiguity may be partially resolved through some degree of empowerment. Empowered employees can more easily resolve customers' problems when first reported by them (Kim et al., 2009). It is recommended that employees should be adequately trained to handle their increased autonomy and to reduce the feelings of uncertainty connected with additional job responsibilities (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997). They should be also encouraged by their supervisors and given the opportunity to exercise their work autonomy with confidence, having also sufficient resources delivered to them.

Contact employees should also keep sufficient communication with their supervisors, who should be open to subordinates' problems giving them regular performance feedback. Employees should feel they have enough information how to fulfil work-related tasks. If employees perceive that important information concerning their performance is limited or not distributed widely enough, they are more likely to experience role ambiguity (Babin and Boles, 1996).

The above mentioned recommendations can also greatly influence intrinsic motivation, for which feelings of autonomy and competence are of great importance (Lipka, Król, Waszczak and Winnicka-Wejs, 2010). It is underlined that employees will be more intrinsically motivated in work environment that "minimize attribution of their behaviour to 'controlling' external factors" (Ambrose and Kulik, 1999, p. 254). Therefore the competence feedback, verbal praise, opportunities for advancement and development, training programs, and other managerial practices to make the work more interesting and challenging should be taken into consideration.

Additionally hotel managers should rethink the recruitment process to employ people who have not only the necessary skills but are also intrinsically motivated (Wong and Pang, 2003), who derive satisfaction from the work itself that is truly fulfilling and enjoyable for them. The more so that the service employees who are intrinsically motivated by their jobs, are also looking for better ways to serve their customers (Snipes et. al., 2005).

Summarizing, by enhancing employees' intrinsic motivation, increasing supervisor support and alleviating role conflict and ambiguity, hotel organizations operating in the global market may effectively reinforce their employees job satisfaction, which can result in many positive job outcomes such as reducing turnover intention and enhancing workers' attachment to the organization. Both of these outcomes are of great importance in the face of employee turnover and high levels of labour mobility in the hospitality industry (Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh and Callan, 2014).

8. LIMITATION AND DIRECTIONS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

As with most research the current study has also shortcomings which simultaneously open up the opportunities for future studies.

The results may not be generalized because the data were collected only from limited segments of middle and upper level hotels from northern Poland that agreed to participate in this study. For the issue of generalizing, future studies should use a sample of contact employees from different hospitality settings, the replication of this study in other regions of Poland is also recommended. Moreover, the questionnaires were distributed by hotel managers to their employees which may have a potential influence on employees' responses, thus in the future study direct contact of employees only with the research team should be provided.

Hospitality organizations still need more information on what factors satisfy their employees, therefore other individual and job characteristics should be incorporated into the study model and empirically tested.

It is also suggested that intrinsic motivation as the most influential and positive contributor to the job satisfaction in this study, should be broadly analyzed in future studies, especially because intrinsic motivation, as a personal resource and personality variable, has not received much empirical attention in the literature of both management and marketing in the hotel industry (Karatepe and Aleshinloye, 2009).

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