



# Integrating Systematic Literature Review and Longitudinal Analysis for Employee Satisfaction Evaluation: A Hospitality Industry Case Study

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**Abstract:** The success of service quality in organizations is heavily influenced by employee satisfaction. This research proposes an integrated framework combining a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with a longitudinal analysis of Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) data at Zest Parang Raja Solo to evaluate determinants of job satisfaction over the 2022–2025 period. Following the PRISMA 2020 protocol across 35 selected studies, seven key variables were identified, with leadership emerging as the most dominant factor (74.29%) in global literature. Empirical validation through longitudinal analysis of a qualified total population (N=70 respondents over four years, adhering to strict organizational tenure SOPs) reveals a degrading satisfaction trend, decreasing from 91.99% in 2022 to 85.66% in 2025. This decline was primarily driven by a significant divergence in compensation and workplace facilities, with the "Intention to Stay" indicator dropping to a critical 68.8% in the final year. Drawing on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the empirical evidence underscores a psychological threshold: motivator factors, such as high-performing leadership (scoring 96.3%), cannot fully mitigate the decline in satisfaction if hygiene factors, specifically salary competitiveness, are not adequately addressed. The contribution of this study lies in providing a theoretical validation framework that enhances evidence-based HR analytics for strategic decision-making in the hospitality industry.

**Keywords:** Employee Satisfaction; Systematic Literature Review; PRISMA; Longitudinal Data Analysis; Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory; Hospitality Industry.

## 1. Introduction

Employee satisfaction represents a foundational pillar in modern organizational management, particularly within service-intensive industries such as hospitality, where the quality of human interaction directly determines service excellence. Employee motivation and productivity are closely tied to job satisfaction levels, while dissatisfaction has been consistently identified as a primary driver of turnover intention — a condition that may disrupt organizational stability and operational continuity (Demerouti & Bakker, 2001; Shafaei *et al.*, 2020; Gajić *et al.*, 2021; Rughoobur-Seetah, 2026). In increasingly competitive hospitality environments, service quality depends not only on standardized procedures but also on how employees perceive organizational support, recognition, and involvement. Organizational values and internal management practices play a critical role in shaping employee attitudes and satisfaction levels (Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2025). Prior studies have identified multiple determinants influencing employee satisfaction, including

leadership, teamwork, employee well-being, and both physical and non-physical work environments (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Heimerl *et al.*, 2020b; Shulga, 2021; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022; Çelik *et al.*, 2025). The growing complexity of workforce dynamics in the hospitality sector further reinforces the importance of examining employee satisfaction from a multidimensional perspective (Muskat & Reitsamer, 2020; Ann & Blum, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2020).

Despite the extensive body of literature on this subject, significant challenges remain in translating theoretical insights into practical, data-driven decision-making. Many hospitality organizations still rely on generalized management practices without accounting for specific internal dynamics or longitudinal employee data. Prior studies have shown that insufficient alignment between organizational policies and employee expectations leads to reduced performance, increased job stress, and higher turnover intention (Unguren & Arslan, 2021; Nazarian *et al.*, 2022). Existing approaches also frequently fail to connect empirical organizational data with theoretical models, which limits the real-world applicability of research findings. While various studies have identified key satisfaction determinants, they often rely on cross-sectional data and lack validation through longitudinal analysis within a single organizational context (Votto *et al.*, 2021; Jovanović *et al.*, 2022). As a result, organizations face difficulty identifying which factors are most influential and sustainable over time. Left unresolved, this gap risks producing ineffective human resource strategies — leading to persistent employee dissatisfaction, declining service quality, and rising operational costs.

Although prior research has examined employee satisfaction extensively, the literature remains dominated by broad surveys and theoretical discussions that lack contextual specificity. Many studies identify determinants of satisfaction without validating whether those factors consistently apply within specific organizational settings or across extended periods (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022; Çelik *et al.*, 2025). Most studies also employ either literature-based analysis or empirical surveys independently, rather than combining both into a unified validation framework — creating a gap between global theoretical insights and organization-specific realities. Systematic literature reviews offer conceptual depth but typically lack empirical grounding, while organizational surveys yield practical insights yet remain limited in theoretical generalization. This study addresses these limitations by proposing a data-driven validation framework that pairs Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with longitudinal Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) data. Unlike prior studies that treat theory and empirical data as separate endeavors (Votto *et al.*, 2021; Jovanović *et al.*, 2022), this research bridges both dimensions to evaluate the consistency between global research findings and real-world organizational data.

Building on these gaps, the study pursues four objectives: to analyze the characteristics and trends of recent research on employee satisfaction in the hospitality sector; to identify technical and managerial variables consistently recognized as satisfaction determinants; to determine the most frequently cited influencing factors based on literature synthesis; and to evaluate the extent to which ESS data from Zest Parang Raja Solo Hotel (2022–2025) validate or diverge from findings in the literature. The paper proceeds as follows: the literature review situates the study within existing scholarship, the methodology outlines the SLR and longitudinal procedures, the results and discussion confront theoretical expectations with empirical data, and the conclusion draws out the practical and scholarly implications.

## 2. Related Work

This section provides a systematic mapping of current literature on employee satisfaction in the hospitality sector. Rather than restating organizational theories, the focus here is on the thematic classification of the 35 primary studies selected through the PRISMA protocol — with the aim of identifying global research trends and methodological gaps.

### 2.1 Thematic Mapping of Prior Studies

Based on the synthesis of 35 international journal articles, the literature on hotel employee satisfaction can be classified into three primary dimensions: Relational, Structural, and Psychological. Table 1 summarizes the distribution of research focus across these dimensions.

Table 1. Thematic Classification of Selected Studies (n=35)

Dimension	Key Variables Covered	Representative Studies
Relational	Leadership, Teamwork, Managerial Support	Gorenak <i>et al.</i> (2020), Turkey (2025)
Structural	Compensation, Benefits, Work Facilities	Rughoobur-Seetah (2026), Nguyen <i>et al.</i> (2025)
Psychological	Well-being, Career Hope, Mental Health	Çelik <i>et al.</i> (2025), Yoon <i>et al.</i> (2026)

## 2.2 Systematic Literature Review (SLR) Methodology

The literature identification process was conducted systematically following the PRISMA 2020 protocol, with emphasis placed on studies published between 2020 and 2026 to capture post-pandemic industry dynamics. The search was performed using Scopus and ScienceDirect databases with the following Boolean string: ("Employee Satisfaction" OR "Job Satisfaction") AND "Hospitality" AND "Human Resources". To address the need for methodological transparency, each article that passed the inclusion criteria was evaluated using the JBI Critical Appraisal Tool. The assessment covered methodological validity, statistical reliability, and the alignment between the instruments used and the research objectives. Only studies scoring above 70% were retained in the final synthesis (n=35).

## 2.3 Identifying the Research Gap and Critical Insight

While the literature has identified various satisfaction determinants, the majority of prior research is cross-sectional in nature. There is a notable scarcity of studies that validate SLR findings through real-world longitudinal data within a single organizational unit. This is precisely where the present study contributes — by connecting global theoretical insights with four years of empirical validation spanning 2022–2025. From a methodological standpoint, this study contributes by pairing Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with longitudinal ESS data analysis. This hybrid approach makes three things possible: validation of global theories using real organizational data; identification of gaps between academic models and practical implementation; and detection of stable satisfaction determinants over time. Together, these capabilities strengthen both theoretical relevance and empirical applicability, offering a more complete account of employee satisfaction dynamics in hospitality organizations.

## 3. Methodology

This study adopts an integrative framework that combines the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method with longitudinal quantitative data analysis. The approach is designed to align theoretical findings from global literature with empirical evidence from the research object through the processing of survey data (Çelik *et al.*, 2025; Anshima *et al.*, 2025). Unlike conventional literature reviews, SLR relies on the systematic extraction of global variables through rigorous protocols — including the establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria, as well as standardized data extraction procedures (Votto *et al.*, 2021).

### 3.1 Information Retrieval Architecture

In the SLR phase, the literature data collection process was conducted using query string-based search techniques on reputable bibliometric databases, namely Scopus and ScienceDirect (Çelik *et al.*, 2025). Boolean operators were applied in formulating the search queries to ensure high precision and minimize data noise. The primary query applied was: ("Employee Satisfaction" OR "Job Satisfaction") AND "Hospitality" AND "Human Resources" AND "Systematic Literature Review", while the validation query used was: ("Job Satisfaction") AND ("Hotel" OR "Tourism") AND ("PRISMA").

### 3.2 Data Selection Protocol (PRISMA Framework)

The literature selection process was conducted in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 protocol, which ensures transparency, replicability, and methodological accuracy in determining the final corpus of literature. The article selection flow is illustrated in Figure 1. Following the procedural framework established by Çelik *et al.* (2025), the selection process was structured into four sequential phases, commencing from an initial retrieval of 206 articles across Scopus and ScienceDirect. In the *Identification Phase*, article metadata were extracted from both databases using predefined Boolean search string techniques, yielding 206 records in total (Scopus: n = 78; ScienceDirect: n = 128). The *Screening Phase* applied time-based inclusion criteria, resulting in the exclusion of 74 articles published prior to 2020 and retaining 132 records for subsequent evaluation. During the *Eligibility Phase*, titles and abstracts were systematically assessed for thematic relevance; 69 articles were excluded on grounds of irrelevance to employee satisfaction variables or the hospitality industry context, while the remaining 63 articles proceeded to full-text review, of which 28 were further excluded due to insufficient methodological rigor or the absence of empirical data. In the *Inclusion Phase*, 35 articles satisfied all predefined criteria and were deemed methodologically and substantively appropriate for synthesis. This final dataset constitutes the empirical foundation from which global determinant variables of employee satisfaction are identified and analyzed to address the research questions.

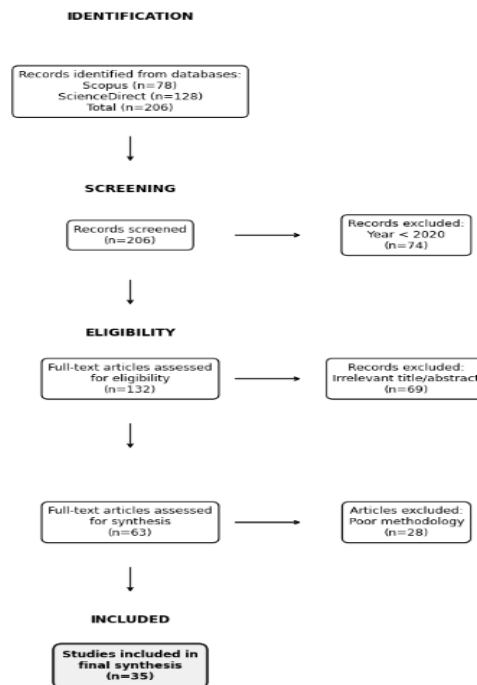


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the article selection process

The selection flow in Figure 1 was generated using the Matplotlib library in Python to ensure data accuracy and high-resolution scalability (300 DPI), consistent with scientific journal publication standards.

### 3.3 Participants and Research Subject Criteria

The empirical data for this study were drawn from the annual Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) at Zest Parang Raja Solo, a property under Swiss-Belhotel International. To ensure data integrity and methodological rigor, respondents were selected based on specific internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The inclusion criteria required a minimum tenure of six months under a specific employment contract (*Perjanjian Kerja Waktu Tertentu — PKWT*). Respondent counts across the longitudinal period were as follows: 2022 (N=22), 2023 (N=18), 2024 (N=15), and 2025 (N=15). Although the sample size is modest, it represents the entire qualified population of employees who met the eligibility criteria during each survey period. This total-population sampling approach ensures that the longitudinal trends captured — from 91.99% to 85.66% — accurately reflect the collective sentiment of the qualified workforce within the organization.

Table 2. Profile of ESS Longitudinal Survey Respondents (2022–2025)

Year	Number of Respondents (N)	Response Rate	Qualification Criteria
2022	22	100%	Tenure > 6 Months, PKWT Contract, Qualified per Swiss-Belhotel SOP
2023	18	100%	Tenure > 6 Months, PKWT Contract, Qualified per Swiss-Belhotel SOP
2024	15	100%	Tenure > 6 Months, PKWT Contract, Qualified per Swiss-Belhotel SOP
2025	15	100%	Tenure > 6 Months, PKWT Contract, Qualified per Swiss-Belhotel SOP
<b>Total</b>	<b>70 Records</b>	<b>Avg. 100%</b>	<b>Total Qualified Population</b>

Source: Processed internal Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) data, Zest Parang Raja Solo (2022–2025).

As shown in Table 2, the respondent counts represent the total qualified population for each period. The inclusion criteria strictly followed the organizational SOP, requiring a minimum of six months of tenure to ensure that participants possessed adequate experience and familiarity with the internal work environment.

### 3.4 Longitudinal ESS Data Processing

To empirically validate the findings of the systematic review, this study uses secondary data from employee satisfaction surveys collected internally by the organization. These data constitute a longitudinal record of employee satisfaction measured across 2022–2025. The survey instrument consists of approximately

30 to 34 specific indicators measured on a Likert scale, capturing employees' subjective perceptions across various job dimensions (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Min & Hong, 2021; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022). Computational data processing was carried out through three stages of descriptive statistical analysis. *Data Normalization*: Likert scale scores (1–5) were transformed into percentage values using an aggregation-based scoring algorithm to standardize comparisons across years. The normalization process is expressed in Equation (1):

$$Index = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i}{n \times R_{max}} \times 100\%$$

Where  $x_i$  represents the respondent's score,  $n$  denotes the number of indicators, and  $R_{max}$  is the maximum scale value (5). Descriptive statistical techniques were employed to identify longitudinal patterns of satisfaction change, with the overall satisfaction index declining from 91.96% in 2022 to 85.66% in 2025, reflecting a cumulative reduction of 6.30 percentage points over the four-year observation period. To establish a coherent linkage between the SLR findings and the empirical survey data, the 34 survey indicators (Q1–Q34) were systematically mapped onto five key thematic variables synthesized from the SLR phase, namely: Leadership, Teamwork, Compensation and Benefits, Employee Well-being, and Safety, Health, and Environment. This mapping was executed through a qualitative coding procedure, wherein each survey item was categorized according to thematic definitions and conceptual boundaries established in the literature review, ensuring construct validity between the theoretical framework and the empirical measurement instrument.

### 3.5 Comparative Analysis and Systematic Validation

The final phase of this methodology involves synchronizing the results of the Systematic Literature Review (theoretical variables) with the findings from the Employee Satisfaction Survey (empirical data). Cross-validation was conducted using a Gap Analysis approach to contrast globally identified theoretical factors with actual organizational performance in practice. In this process, the relative importance (urgency weights) of each variable identified in the literature was compared against the index scores derived from the hotel's internal data. The aim is to identify discrepancies between global industry standards and the organization's operational reality, thereby generating evidence-based recommendations for management (Viseu *et al.*, 2020; Heimerl *et al.*, 2020).

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Result

This section presents the dual findings of the study, encompassing the global determinant variables of employee satisfaction identified through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and the empirical longitudinal trends derived from four years of Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) data collected at Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo between 2022 and 2025.

#### 4.1.1 General Overview of the Selected Studies (RQ1)

Through a structured selection procedure, the initial literature search yielded 206 articles from Scopus and ScienceDirect. Following multiple screening stages, 35 studies met the inclusion criteria. These selected studies collectively address RQ1, which focuses on the characteristics and research trends related to employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry. The summary of identification results is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Characteristics and Research Trends of Selected Studies (n = 35)

Aspect	Category	Details	Frequency (n=35)	Percentage (%)
Publication Period	Time Range	2020–2026	35	100
Research Method	Quantitative	SEM, PLS-SEM, Regression, Path Analysis	28	80
	Qualitative / Mixed	Interviews, Case Study, Mixed Methods	7	20
Main Focus	HR Management	HRM Practices / GHRM Employee Satisfaction	20	57.14
	Psychological Factors	Well-being, Motivation, Burnout, AI Anxiety	15	42.86
Geographical Context	Asia	Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, etc.	18	51.43

	Europe	Serbia, Slovenia, Poland, Portugal, etc.	8	22.86
	Others / Global	USA, Egypt, Australia, & Global Studies	9	25.71
Type of Study	Empirical	Cross-sectional / Field Data	32	91.43
	Conceptual	Literature-based Review / Theoretical Models	3	8.57

From a methodological perspective, quantitative research dominates the literature at 80%, with commonly applied methods including Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), PLS-SEM, regression analysis, and path analysis. This dominance reflects researchers' tendency to rely on data-driven approaches in empirically testing relationships among variables (Leung & Lin, 2022; Jovanović *et al.*, 2022; Pongphai *et al.*, 2025). The relatively small proportion of qualitative and mixed-method studies (20%) suggests that in-depth investigations into organizational contexts remain limited. In terms of research focus, the majority of studies (57.14%) emphasize human resource management (HRM) practices — including HRD and green HRM — as primary determinants of employee satisfaction, consistent with prior literature highlighting the role of organizational policies and HR practices in shaping employee perceptions (Shafaei *et al.*, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022). The remaining 42.86% focus on psychological dimensions such as well-being, motivation, job stress, and burnout (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Min & Hong, 2021; Bi *et al.*, 2021). Geographically, Asia constitutes the dominant research context (51.43%), followed by Europe (22.86%) and other/global regions (25.71%), reflecting the rapid growth of the hospitality industry in Asia and its increasing academic attention (Viseu *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2025). Regarding study design, 91.43% are empirical studies utilizing cross-sectional field data, indicating that most existing research examines variable relationships within a single time frame. Conceptual studies account for only 8.57%, suggesting that theoretical model development remains secondary to empirical approaches (Çelik *et al.*, 2025). This dominance of cross-sectional designs further underscores the methodological contribution of the present study, which employs a four-year longitudinal approach (2022–2025) to address a gap that remains underexplored in the current literature.

#### 4.1.2 Main Factors Influencing Employee Satisfaction (RQ2)

The synthesis of selected studies identified seven key variables that consistently emerge as the pillars of employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry: workplace satisfaction, teamwork, people development, leadership, wellness, compensation and benefits, and safety, health, and environment. These variables represent the answer to RQ2, which seeks to identify the determinants of employee satisfaction most consistently recognized in the global literature. Rather than rigid categories, they constitute the core dimensions through which employees perceive organizational support and career prospects (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Ann & Blum, 2020; Heimerl *et al.*, 2020). Although all seven factors are considered essential, their relative emphasis varies significantly across studies — reinforcing the notion that employee satisfaction is a multidimensional construct (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Bi *et al.*, 2021). The findings are shaped simultaneously by subtle psychological dimensions such as leadership quality and by tangible structural factors such as compensation levels and workplace conditions (Ann & Blum, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022). This duality signals that a holistic approach is far more effective than focusing on any single dimension in isolation (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Çelik *et al.*, 2025).

Table 4. Key Variables Identified from the Literature Review and ESS Mapping

No.	Variable	ESS Indicators	Supporting References
1	Workplace Satisfaction	Q1–Q5	Shafaei <i>et al.</i> (2020); Viseu <i>et al.</i> (2020); Gorenak <i>et al.</i> (2020)
2	Teamwork	Q6–Q10	Shulga (2021); Gajić <i>et al.</i> (2021)
3	People Development	Q11–Q15	Heimerl <i>et al.</i> (2020); Farmaki <i>et al.</i> (2022)
4	Leadership	Q16–Q20	Shulga (2021); Gajić <i>et al.</i> (2021); Yoon <i>et al.</i> (2026)
5	Wellness	Q21–Q24	Bi <i>et al.</i> (2021); Herzberg (1968)
6	Compensation & Benefits	Q25–Q30	Ann & Blum (2020); Gorenak <i>et al.</i> (2020)
7	Safety, Health & Environment	Q31–Q34	Demerouti <i>et al.</i> (2001); Farmaki <i>et al.</i> (2022)

Table 4 serves as a bridge connecting major theoretical perspectives from the global literature with the practical ESS instrument implemented in the field. By mapping each variable to specific survey indicators (Q1–Q34), this study ensures that every empirical dataset is grounded in a strong theoretical foundation. The

mapping further demonstrates that the ESS instrument applied within the property is sufficiently comprehensive to capture multiple dimensions of employee satisfaction holistically (Viseu *et al.*, 2020; Heimerl *et al.*, 2020). The digitalized mapping process also enables the transformation of raw survey data into measurable organizational performance metrics, facilitating early detection of satisfaction fluctuations across each dimension.

#### 4.1.3 Frequency of Variables in the Literature (RQ3)

To address RQ3 regarding which factors appear most dominantly in previous findings, a frequency analysis was conducted on variables identified across the 35 selected studies. The results reveal a highly contrasting dominance pattern: leadership (26 studies, 74.29%) and workplace environment (24 studies, 68.57%) have established themselves as the most extensively explored themes. Other factors — including compensation and benefits (22 studies), teamwork (20 studies), employee well-being (18 studies), career development (17 studies), and safety and health (15 studies) — also contribute significantly to the overall research landscape, as summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Frequency of Employee Satisfaction Variables Identified in the Literature

Rank	Variable	Frequency (n = 35)	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
1	Leadership	26	74.29	The most dominant factor influencing employee satisfaction
2	Workplace Environment	24	68.57	Strong impact on employee comfort and performance
3	Compensation & Benefits	22	62.86	Key determinant of retention and motivation
4	Teamwork	20	57.14	Important for collaboration and service delivery
5	Employee Well-being	18	51.43	Increasingly relevant in modern workplaces
6	Career Development	17	48.57	Supports long-term employee growth
7	Safety & Health	15	42.86	Essential but relatively less explored factor

The high frequency of leadership and workplace environment reinforces the scholarly consensus that managerial practices and organizational atmosphere represent the primary determinants of employee attitudes and job satisfaction (Shulga, 2021; Gajić *et al.*, 2021; Nazarian *et al.*, 2022). However, a notable paradox emerges: despite growing urgency in modern workplaces, well-being and occupational safety appear less frequently in the literature, suggesting these dimensions are still perceived as secondary or remain insufficiently explored within hospitality research (Bi *et al.*, 2021; Çelik *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, the gradual emergence of contemporary issues such as digital stress and AI anxiety — though not yet among the top seven variables — signals a forthcoming shift in the research landscape toward the psychological consequences of digital transformation and technology-driven work environments (Votto *et al.*, 2021; Elshaer *et al.*, 2025).



Figure 2. Frequency of Employee Satisfaction Variables in the Literature

Referring to Figure 2, the frequency distribution further confirms that although well-being and safety & health remain lower-ranked, the literature trajectory is gradually shifting toward a more holistic concern for employees' psychological needs and workplace protection.

#### 4.1.4 Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) Results (RQ4)

At this stage, the findings from the literature review were confronted with real-world ESS data collected at Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo during the 2022–2025 period. The dataset consisted of 30–34 indicators grouped into seven key variables. In general, employee satisfaction remained relatively positive, with most variable scores exceeding 80%. However, a concerning finding emerged: a cumulative downward trend in overall satisfaction, declining from 91.99% in 2022 to 85.66% in 2025. This finding simultaneously addresses RQ4 by demonstrating the extent to which ESS data from the research object validates the factors identified in the literature (Shulga, 2021; Gajić *et al.*, 2021; Yoon *et al.*, 2026).

Table 6. Employee Satisfaction Survey Results (2022–2025)

Variable	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)	2025 (%)	Trend	Interpretation
Workplace Satisfaction	93.46	89.20	89.17	82.50	↓	Declining employee attachment and retention intention
Teamwork	96.05	90.20	92.21	89.38	↓	Strong but slightly decreasing collaboration
People Development	88.21	88.51	92.50	87.50	↔	Relatively stable with minor fluctuation
Leadership	89.04	88.60	93.86	90.83	↑	Consistently strong leadership perception
Wellness	95.79	89.14	90.83	85.31	↓	Declining work-life balance and well-being support
Compensation & Benefits	91.41	88.57	87.97	81.87	↓↓	Significant decline — a major concern area
Safety, Health & Environment	93.16	91.43	92.50	84.69	↓	Decreasing perception of safety and environment
Overall Satisfaction	91.99	89.53	91.18	85.66	↓	Overall declining trend in employee satisfaction

Source: Internal data of Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo (processed by the authors, 2026).

A deeper analysis reveals that the leadership variable demonstrated consistently strong performance, functioning as the most resilient pillar within the organization — reflecting employees' strong trust in top management and representing a positive anomaly amidst the broader declining trend. The teamwork variable similarly remained relatively stable, indicating that interdepartmental collaboration has been well maintained. In contrast, a critical issue was identified within the compensation and benefits variable, which experienced the sharpest decline — particularly in 2025 — signaling that salary competitiveness has become a serious concern (Ann & Blum, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2022). Aspects related to wellness and workplace resource availability also demonstrated a gradual downward trajectory over the four-year period (Min & Hong, 2021; Bi *et al.*, 2021). The overall declining trend may therefore be interpreted as an early warning signal regarding potential employee retention risk if not followed by timely managerial intervention. In this context, ESS data function not merely as an evaluation tool, but as a strategic indicator for identifying priority areas in human resource management.

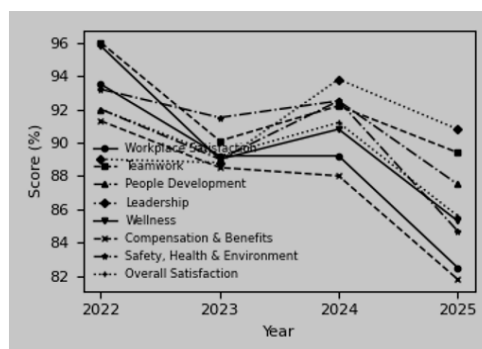


Figure 3. Trend of Employee Satisfaction Variable (2022-2025)

As illustrated in Figure 3, the visualization further confirms that most variables experienced a declining trend with limited fluctuation. The leadership variable remained stable, whereas compensation and benefits showed the sharpest decline, followed by workplace satisfaction and wellness — reinforcing the view that financial factors and working conditions are becoming increasingly dominant concerns for employees.

#### 4.1.5 Analysis of the Highest and Lowest Indicators (Top–Bottom) in 2025

The analysis of 2025 ESS data reveals a striking contrast between strengths in managerial dimensions and weaknesses in financial and workplace facility dimensions, providing a granular understanding of specific indicators that represent both organizational strengths and areas requiring improvement.

Table 7. Top Employee Satisfaction Indicators (2025)

Rank	Indicator	Variable	Score (%)	Insight
1	The top leader possesses good leadership qualities	Leadership	96.3	Strong trust in top management
2	The company provides flexibility	Wellness	93.8	Good work-life balance policy
3	Direct supervisor leadership	Leadership	92.5	Strong middle management
4	Employees are considered assets	Leadership	92.5	Positive organizational culture
5	Proud to be part of the company	Workplace Satisfaction	91.3	High emotional attachment

*Source: Internal data of Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo (processed by the authors, 2026).*

As shown in Table 7, leadership quality emerges as the absolute organizational strength. The indicator for top leadership quality achieved the highest score at 96.3%, followed by workplace flexibility and employees' perception of being regarded as valuable organizational assets. These findings reflect a highly positive psychological condition in which employees maintain strong emotional attachment and organizational pride. Trust in middle management also appears solid, creating a robust foundation for organizational culture and workplace harmony (Shulga, 2021; Gajić *et al.*, 2021; Yoon *et al.*, 2026). The high score for organizational pride further suggests that employees continue to perceive the company positively despite the declining trend observed in several other variables — indicating that relational and emotional dimensions remain relatively resilient amidst growing structural concerns.

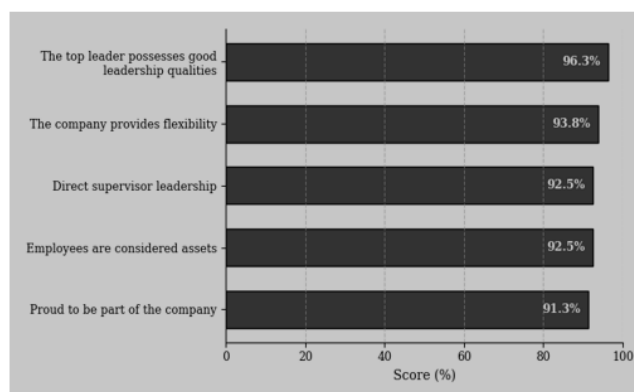


Figure 4. Top 5 Employee Satisfaction Indicators at Zest Parang Raja Zolo (2025)

As illustrated in Figure 4, leadership-related indicators dominate the top positions, confirming a strong level of employee trust toward the vision and integrity of top management.

Table 8. Bottom Employee Satisfaction Indicators (2025)

Rank	Indicator	Variable	Score (%)	Issue
1	Salary competitiveness	Compensation & Benefits	68.8	Major dissatisfaction
2	Intention to stay	Workplace Satisfaction	68.8	Retention risk
3	Work resources (tools, equipment)	Workplace Satisfaction	77.5	Operational limitation

4	Well-being facilities	Wellness	80.0	Lack of support programs
5	Environmental & social concern	SHE	81.3	Weak organizational image

Source: Internal data of Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo (processed by the authors, 2026).

As shown in Table 8, the harmony between employees and management is overshadowed by less favorable realities in the lower-scoring indicators. A substantial gap emerges between employees' psychological pride and the fulfillment of their material needs. The indicators for salary competitiveness and intention to stay both declined to 68.8% — significantly lower than other indicators and constituting a serious retention warning for management. Beyond financial concerns, employees have also expressed dissatisfaction regarding limited workplace support facilities and the absence of tangible well-being programs (Ann & Blum, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2022). This condition indicates that although emotional attachment to the organization remains strong, practical concerns related to compensation, workplace resources, and long-term career security are increasingly shaping employee satisfaction and retention intentions. From a managerial perspective, these findings reveal a potentially dangerous imbalance: the organization has succeeded in building emotional engagement and leadership trust, yet has not fully supported these achievements with adequate structural and financial rewards. If left unaddressed, this imbalance may gradually weaken employee commitment and elevate turnover risk.

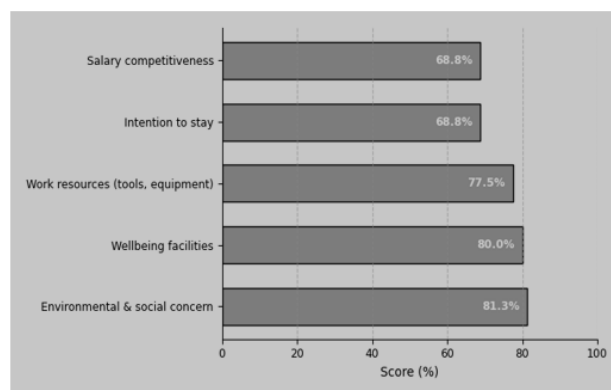


Figure 5. Bottom 5 Employee Satisfaction Indicators at Zest Parang Raja Solo (2025)

As highlighted in Figure 5, the overall top–bottom analysis confirms that employee satisfaction is governed by a combination of psychological and structural factors that must be managed in a balanced and integrated manner (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022).

#### 4.1.6 Synthesis: Theoretical Confrontation vs. Empirical Reality

The integration between SLR findings and ESS empirical data reveals a discrepancy between global literature priorities and operational realities. This comparison is summarized in Table 9 to identify strategic gaps.

Table 9. Integrative Synthesis Matrix: Validating Global Theory (SLR) against Empirical Reality (ESS)

Comparative Aspect	Global Theoretical Findings (SLR)	Local Empirical Reality (ESS 2022–2025)	Validation Status	Gap Analysis & Implications
Dominant Pillar	Leadership (74.29%) — primary driver of satisfaction	Leadership (Score: 90.83%) — strongest stable pillar	Strongly Validated	Theory and practice align; Leadership is the core foundation of organizational resilience
Critical Factor	Psychological focus (Well-being & Burnout) — high academic interest	Structural/financial focus (Compensation) — drastic decline (91% → 68%)	Divergent (Gap)	Field reality is more material-driven than theory suggests; financial security outweighs psychological support
Strategic Priority	Organizational Culture & Green HRM	Workplace Facilities & Resource Availability	Gap Identified	Theoretical focus on "values" is challenged by the practical need for "tools and resources"

Loyalty & Retention	Affective Commitment (emotional bond)	Intention to Stay (Score: 68.8%) — reaching critical saturation	Critical Warning	Emotional loyalty is insufficient to sustain retention when tangible hygiene factors are neglected
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Source: Internal data of Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo (processed by the authors, 2026).

Based on Table 9, the leadership and teamwork variables were proven to remain consistently stable, reinforcing the literature position that managerial aspects constitute the primary foundation of employee satisfaction (Shulga, 2021; Gajić *et al.*, 2021; Yoon *et al.*, 2026). However, the empirical findings reveal a critical paradox: strong leadership performance alone was insufficient to prevent declining satisfaction caused by weakening tangible factors. The sharp decline in compensation and benefits (81.87%) and wellness (85.31%) in 2025 indicates that, within this organizational context, material needs and physical support systems exert a more urgent influence than cultural factors alone (Ann & Blum, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2022). The low intention-to-stay score (68.8%) further signals that employees' emotional loyalty is beginning to reach a saturation point due to financial disparities. This synthesis confirms that organizational sustainability depends on maintaining a simultaneous balance between psychological support and the fulfillment of structural needs (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Farmaki *et al.*, 2022).

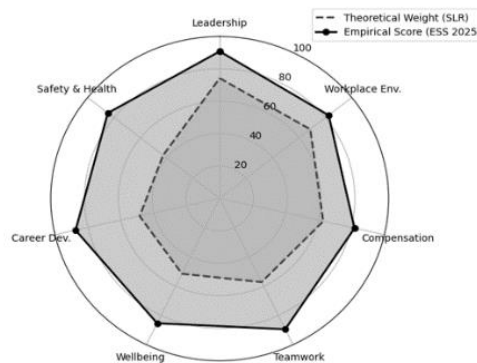


Figure 6. Synthesis of Theoretical Emphasis (SLR) Vs Empirical Performance (ESS)

As illustrated in Figure 6, the radar chart visualization reinforces that although the organization demonstrates a strong leadership profile, it is not symmetrically matched by the fulfillment of financial and physical factors — ultimately suppressing the overall satisfaction index.

## 4.2 Discussion

The dynamics observed in the hospitality industry can be conceptually explained through the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, which emphasizes that job satisfaction results from the balance between job demands and available resources (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001). In this context, leadership and teamwork function as powerful job resources. However, to understand why even high-performing leadership is unable to fully mitigate dissatisfaction, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides deeper analytical insight — distinguishing job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as two independent dimensions, where leadership acts as an intrinsic motivator and compensation represents a hygiene factor that primarily prevents dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1968).

The SLR findings confirm that hospitality research is heavily inclined toward psychological and relational factors, with leadership appearing in 74.29% of the reviewed literature (Heimerl *et al.*, 2020; Shulga, 2021). This dominance is logically consistent with the human-interaction-driven nature of the hospitality industry (Norbu & Wetprasisit, 2021). However, it also reveals a critical gap: structural factors such as salary and physical working conditions are frequently treated as secondary or taken for granted. According to Herzberg, hygiene factors — including salary and working conditions — are not primary sources of motivation, but their absence directly triggers dissatisfaction. In other words, while adequate compensation may not automatically elevate performance, its inadequacy can rapidly generate employee dissatisfaction regardless of how strong the organizational culture may be.

The ESS findings at Hotel Zest reveal strong alignment with global trends in leadership (90.83%) and teamwork (89.38%), reflecting a real-world manifestation of trust and healthy collaboration within the organization (Mendrofa *et al.*, 2021; Votto *et al.*, 2021). Yet the study simultaneously captures a sharp paradox: employees feel supported managerially, yet financially exhausted. The compensation score (81.87%), representing the lowest-performing variable, serves as a critical warning signal. This confirms

Herzberg's argument that company policies, administrative systems, and salary structures are major sources of dissatisfaction — and that supportive leadership, while functioning as an internal motivator, has limited effectiveness in compensating for deficiencies in hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1968; Mahmoud *et al.*, 2022). Contemporary employee loyalty can no longer be sustained through motivational narratives alone; it requires tangible fulfillment of welfare and workplace conditions. As illustrated in the radar visualization (Figure 6), the imbalance between managerial strength and material fulfillment highlights an urgent need for human resource strategy transformation.

Based on the observed imbalance identified in Figure 6, four strategic managerial implications are formulated as follows.

- 1) **Maintaining Leadership Quality**  
The organization should sustain leadership excellence through strengthened communication, transparency, and consistent recognition systems.
- 2) **Revising Compensation Structure**  
Compensation must remain competitive and aligned with market standards, as it directly influences employee retention (Ann & Blum, 2020; Gorenak *et al.*, 2020). Management must recognize that short-term financial incentives alone are insufficient for sustainable motivation; long-term motivation requires job enrichment that supports psychological growth after hygiene needs are fulfilled (Herzberg, 1968).
- 3) **Revitalizing Wellness Programs**  
Greater emphasis should be placed on mental health support and work flexibility to strengthen work-life balance in response to modern workforce expectations (Bi *et al.*, 2021; Min & Hong, 2021).
- 4) **Modernizing Work Facilities**  
Ensuring adequate operational resources is essential to maintain service effectiveness and employee efficiency across all departments.

This study advances the existing body of knowledge through three distinct contributions arising from its methodological and theoretical integration of SLR and four-year longitudinal ESS data. From a methodological standpoint, this study departs from the predominance of cross-sectional designs in the extant literature by adopting a longitudinal approach that captures dynamic shifts in employee perceptions over time, thereby enabling the detection of satisfaction degradation trends that would otherwise remain concealed within single-period analyses. In terms of theoretical contribution, the study extends the application of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory by empirically demonstrating that psychological job resources — most notably leadership quality — exhibit limited effectiveness in sustaining employee satisfaction when not adequately supported by extrinsic resources, including equitable compensation structures and conducive physical workplace conditions. With respect to practical contribution, the ESS indicator mapping framework (Q1–Q34) developed in this study offers hospitality organizations an operational Early Warning System (EWS) that enables management to proactively monitor employee retention risks and intervene before dissatisfaction escalates into voluntary turnover. Collectively, these contributions establish a foundation for future inquiries to examine causal relationships among the identified variables through more advanced analytical methods, such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or time-series analysis, applied across broader and more diverse organizational.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study successfully examined the key determinants of employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry by integrating a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with real-world Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) data from Hotel Zest Parang Raja Solo. Through the PRISMA 2020 protocol, the study confirmed that employee satisfaction is underpinned by seven fundamental pillars: leadership, workplace environment, teamwork, people development, compensation and benefits, well-being, and safety and health. The longitudinal ESS data (2022–2025) demonstrate a strong alignment with global literature, where leadership emerged as the highest-scoring variable (90.83%), providing clear evidence that the managerial foundation and collaborative culture within the property are well established. Nevertheless, the study simultaneously reveals a critical vulnerability: compensation and benefits recorded the lowest scores across the entire observed period, exposing a significant gap between psychological satisfaction — reflected in leadership trust and collaborative culture — and material fulfillment in the form of financial rewards and tangible workplace support.

The central conclusion of this study is unambiguous: organizational harmony cannot be sustained in the long term if employees' fundamental material needs continue to be overlooked. Emotional attachment and strong leadership, while essential, are insufficient to maintain sustainable employee satisfaction without equitable compensation and adequate workplace support. This finding extends the application of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the JD-R framework by empirically demonstrating that intrinsic motivators lose their

effectiveness when hygiene factors remain unaddressed. From a practical standpoint, management is advised to move beyond a singular reliance on organizational culture and to seriously restructure the compensation system in order to retain high-performing talent and mitigate turnover risk.

This study contributes to hospitality management literature by bridging the gap between theory and practice through a four-year longitudinal analysis. The proposed ESS indicator mapping framework (Q1–Q34) functions not only as a conceptual model but also as an operational Early Warning System (EWS) that can be applied to monitor satisfaction dynamics and detect retention risks proactively. While the findings are inherently bounded by the focus on a single organizational case, they provide a solid foundation for future research. Subsequent studies are encouraged to expand the sample across multiple hospitality organizations and to apply more advanced analytical techniques — such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or time-series analysis — to comprehensively examine causal relationships between job satisfaction dimensions and broader organizational performance outcomes.

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