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## Extraversion and its Importance in the Hospitality Workplace : Analyzing the Selected Job Outcomes

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**EXTRAVERSION AND ITS IMPORTANCE  
IN THE HOSPITALITY WORKPLACE.  
ANALYSING THE SELECTED JOB OUTCOMES**

**Abstract**

The aim of this study is to investigate both the importance of personality traits of employees working in hotel contact positions and their potential relations with employees' attitudes towards work. The research problem is to approach the following question: is there any relationship between extraversion and employees' job satisfaction, particularly in terms of hotel customers. To achieve the study aim, literature review, including empirical findings of recent studies, and empirical research based on a survey method have been used. The main results of the study have confirmed that hotel employees with higher extraversion experience have a higher level of job satisfaction, also when it refers to customers. Although the study results cannot be generalized, they nevertheless shed light on the importance of the good person-job fit. Therefore, a better understanding of the role of personality in the context of hotel posts may be useful in the hiring decisions, especially in the customer contact positions in hotels. In this study the implications for managers are demonstrated, and directions for future research formulated.

**Keywords:** hospitality, contact employees, extraversion, job satisfaction

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## Introduction

Hospitality is strongly dependent on its human resources<sup>1</sup> and especially on employees who are directly involved in service interactions with their customers. Thus, one of the conditions of the effectiveness of hospitality firms is the quality of their employees seen both as the key resource strongly engaged in the service process<sup>2</sup> and a source of service differentiation.<sup>3</sup>

Taking into account the constant customer contact<sup>4</sup> and a high degree of interactions between hotel employees and guests<sup>5</sup>, employees having direct contact with customers are perceived as a face of hospitality companies<sup>6</sup>, playing a significant role in creating satisfactory service experience for hotel guests.

However, continuous operations and direct (face-to-face) service contacts with guests may be strongly demanding and exhausting for employees. They have to deal with many stressful situations being required to fulfill guests' different needs and expectations and performing various forms of emotional work.<sup>7</sup> Thus, in the face of challenging service encounters, hotel employees' right personality may greatly enhance their ability to better cope with demanding service encounters and built satisfactory relationships with hotel guests.

Given that hotel services are delivered through many social interactions with hotel guests, employees low in social skills may find their work difficult or unpleasant. Thus, extraversion is one of the personality traits that deserves

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<sup>1</sup> J. Hwang, J. Lee, S. Park, H. Chang, S.S. Kim, *The Impact of Occupational Stress on Employee's Turnover Intention in the Luxury Hotel Segment*, "International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration" 2014, No. 15 (1), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> A. Rapacz, *Zasoby ludzkie w działalności przedsiębiorstwa turystycznego*, in: *Przedsiębiorstwo turystyczne*, ed. A. Rapacz, Centrum Doradztwa i Informacji Difin, Warszawa 2014, pp. 103–120.

<sup>3</sup> S.-H. Tsaur, W.-H. Tang, *The burden of esthetic labor on front-line employees in hospitality industry*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2013, No. 35, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job burnout: The role of personality characteristics*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2007, No. 26 (2), p. 421.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, B.R., McCann, P., *Service failure and recovery: evidence from the hotel industry*, "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management" 16 (1), 2004, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> H. Araslı, M. Daşkın, S. Saydam, *Polychronicity and Intrinsic Motivation as Dispositional Determinants on Hotel Frontline Employees' Job Satisfaction: Do Control Variables Make a Difference?*, "Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences" 2014, No. 109, p. 1396.

<sup>7</sup> H.J. Kim, *Hotel service providers' emotional labor: The antecedents and effects on burn-out*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2008, No. 27 (2), p. 151.

special empirical attention. However, although the role of personality traits in the hospitality setting seems to be critical for both employees themselves and the organization's effectiveness, the paucity of empirical research on this subject is observed, particularly in the hotel setting in Poland.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate both the importance of hotel employees' personality characteristics and their potential relations with employees' attitudes towards work. Hence the research problem is to approach the following question: is there any relationship between extraversion and employees' job satisfaction, particularly in terms of hotel customers. Additionally, extraversion in the context of socio-demographic variables has also been extensively analyzed. To achieve the study aim, literature review, including empirical findings of recent studies, and empirical research based on a survey method have been used.

The current study opens the door for a better understanding of the pivotal role of employees' personality in the customer-service oriented hospitality industry and sheds light on extraversion as one of the critical characteristics of service providers which may influence hotel business effectiveness.

With reference to the study results, the Author attempts to provide implications for human resources management, both theory and practice, especially in terms of building competitive advantage through people, taking into account the compatibility of individuals and their jobs in the hospitality industry. The limitations and directions for future research are also demonstrated.

## **1. Extraversion of hotel employees as a critical personality trait – implications for the service process**

It is suggested that “individuals possess a stable set of characteristics which predispose them to react in certain ways in a variety of encounters”<sup>8</sup>, which also frequently take place in the hospitality industry. Therefore, among many individual traits influencing the employee's performance, extraversion is particularly expected in the hotel setting, where numerous social skills are strongly required.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> D. Lee-Ross, *The quintessential relationship: service predispositions and quality assurance*, in: *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality industry*, ed. S. Kusluvan, Nova Publishers, New York 2007, p. 267.

<sup>9</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 424.

The literature on the subject demonstrates that extroverts are individuals described as sociable, gregarious, assertive, talkative and active.<sup>10</sup> Individuals high in extraversion seek out and also enjoy social interactions with others,<sup>11</sup> display higher intensity and frequency of personal interactions, express positive emotions, and show a higher need for stimulation.<sup>12</sup> They are also primarily concerned with the external environment.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the importance of extraversion in hospitality work results from at least three following arguments:

1. As the literature on the subject indicates, guests, especially those from hotels of higher category, meet approximately 15 employees during they stay.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, they still require and favor direct personal attention of employees.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, given the specific nature of the hotel services and the high degree of interaction with hotel guests, communication with them seems to be essential.<sup>16</sup> It proves that interaction skills, interpersonal and communication competence are of great importance for employees operating in the hospitality industry.

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<sup>10</sup> J.W. O'Neill, Q. Xiao, *Effects of organizational/occupational characteristics and personality traits on hotel manager emotional exhaustion*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2010, No. 29 (4), p. 654; H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 424; M. Armstrong, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi*, Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2001, p. 358.

<sup>11</sup> H.J. Kim, J. Agrusa, *Hospitality service employees' coping styles: The role of emotional intelligence, two basic personality traits, and socio-demographic factors*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2007, No. 30 (3), p. 590.

<sup>12</sup> Ch-H. Cheng, *A study of critical factors of the job involvement for hotel employees – Taking hotels in Taiwan as an example*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2011, No. 30 (4), p. 991.

<sup>13</sup> E. Mitura, E. Koniuszewska, *Ekonomika i organizacja pracy w hotelarstwie*, Difin, Warszawa 2006, p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> M. Sidorkiewicz, A. Pawlicz, *Propedeutyka hotelarstwa. Ujęcie ekonomiczne*, Difin, Warszawa 2015, p. 121; C. Witkowski, M. Kachniewska, *Hotelarstwo Vol. III: Hotelarstwo w gospodarce turystycznej*, Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczna, Warszawa 2005, p. 128.

<sup>15</sup> M. Casado, *Theory of the effect of Compensation on turnover in hospitality companies*, "Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education" 2001, No. 13 (3/4), p. 29; H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 431.

<sup>16</sup> J. Piasta, *Marketing w hotelarstwie*, Jacek Piasta – Doradztwo, Warszawa 2007, p. 331; M. Kachniewska, *Zarządzanie jakością usług turystycznych*, Difin, Warszawa 2002, p. 45.

2. Interpersonal interactions in tourism take place between members of different nationalities and cultures<sup>17</sup>, particularly in the hotel setting, where a great variety of hotel guests from different backgrounds, both social and cultural, may potentially increase communication problems and other misunderstandings.<sup>18</sup> In this context, extroverts, who, like other people, seek their company and enjoy excitement<sup>19</sup>, may not perceive such situations as difficult or stressful. Their openness to others and communication skills may help them recognize customers' needs and expectations.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, employees high in extraversion may be more likely to contact and interact with different guests and may be better able to serve them successfully.
3. One of the employees' duties is delivering hospitality to hotel guests.<sup>21</sup> However, "guests evaluate hospitality experiences primarily in emotional terms."<sup>22</sup> The literature on the subject shows that service roles frequently demand displaying expected emotions, thus "there is more pressure for the service provider to identify personally with the role."<sup>23</sup> Hence hotel staff, apart from their formal qualifications, skills and knowledge, are strongly required to possess certain personality traits<sup>24</sup> including extraversion<sup>25</sup> which should help people to become much better at recognizing and managing someone's emotions.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> I. Luka, S. Vaidesvarans, D. Vinklere, *Educating Tourism Students for Work in a Multicultural Environment*, "Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism" 2013, No. 13, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> B. Faulkner, A. Patiar, *Workplace induced stress among operational staff in the hotel industry*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 1997, No. 16 (1), p. 111.

<sup>19</sup> N.R. Zaidi, R.A. Wajid, F.B. Zaidi, G.B. Zaidi, M.T. Zaidi, *The big five personality traits and their relationship with work engagement among public sector university teachers of Lahore*, "African Journal of Business Management" 2012, Vol. 7 (15), p. 1346.

<sup>20</sup> J. Piasta, *Marketing...*, p. 331.

<sup>21</sup> M. Sidorkiewicz, A. Pawlicz, *Propedeutyka hotelarstwa...*, p. 120.

<sup>22</sup> C. Lashley, *Studying Hospitality: Insights from Social Sciences*, "Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism" 2008, No. 8 (1), p. 78.

<sup>23</sup> R.F. Hurley, *Customer service behavior in retail settings: A study of the effect of service provider personality*, "Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science" 1998, No. 26 (2), p. 115.

<sup>24</sup> Z. Rapacz, *Zasoby ludzkie...*, p. 104.

<sup>25</sup> H. Górską-Warsewicz, E. Świstak, *Funkcjonowanie przedsiębiorstwa hotelarskiego*, SGGW, Warszawa 2009, p. 179.

<sup>26</sup> H.J. Kim, J. Agrusa, *Hospitality service employees' coping styles...*, p. 590.

To recapitulate the above discussion, extroversion, which is regarded as “a primary source of positive affectivity”,<sup>27</sup> may strongly influence employees’ ability to provide truly hospitable service leading to guests’ unique service experience.

## **2. Extraversion and its impact on selected work outcomes. Implications for individuals and organizations**

All changes that currently take place in tourism both in terms of economy and marketplace confirm the importance of employees’ personality traits<sup>28</sup> which may influence appropriate customer service behaviors, customer service skills, service orientation and performance of service providers.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, particularly in services, the compatibility of personality and the role should be perceived as critical, since the personality of service providers may influence organizational performance via its impact on employees’ performance.<sup>30</sup> By contrast, personality-role incongruence may negatively influence employee’s productivity and morale<sup>31</sup>, which may decrease the quality of service, an important factor determining customer loyalty in the service industry.<sup>32</sup> To sum up, matching employees properly with their front-line jobs may prevent many potential problems related to labor turnover, absenteeism, and it may increase service quality leading to productivity improvement.<sup>33</sup>

Personality traits may differentiate the way in which individuals deal with service situations and enjoy their work. Given the stressful nature of the hotel

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<sup>27</sup> J.W. O’Neill, Q. Xiao, *Effects of organizational/occupational characteristics...*, p. 654.

<sup>28</sup> A. Rapacz, *Zasoby ludzkie...*, p. 110.

<sup>29</sup> S. Kusluvan, *Employee attitudes and behaviors and their roles for tourism and hospitality business*, in: *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality industry*, ed. S. Kusluvan, Nova Publishers, New York 2003, p. 38.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, p. 39.

<sup>31</sup> R.F. Hurley, *Customer service behavior...*, p. 116.

<sup>32</sup> H.S. Jung, H.H. Yoon, *Do employees’ satisfied customers respond with an satisfactory relationship? The effects of employees’ satisfaction on customers’ satisfaction and loyalty in a family restaurant*, “International Journal of Hospitality Management” 2013, No. 34, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> D. Lee-Ross, *The quintessential relationship...*, p. 264.

work,<sup>34</sup> success or failure of hospitality companies may strongly depend on their employees who will be capable of performing under stress.<sup>35</sup> However, according to the literature on the subject, “what is stressful for one may not be stressful for another”;<sup>36</sup> it may strongly depend on employees’ individual predispositions. Therefore, instead of perceiving some situations as stressful, one may enjoy them and treat as a challenge. In this context, extraversion indeed may help employees to cope well with many difficulties which arise from working with people and social interactions with them. Extroverts, who are described as optimistic<sup>37</sup> and who believe that things will work out,<sup>38</sup> may be less prone to work stress and likely to perceive service difficulties from different, namely optimistic, perspectives.

The results of previous empirical studies demonstrate that extraversion should be perceived as a particularly important personality trait in the workplace. One of the results of Hurley’s study indicated that personality (including a significant role of extraversion) influences customer service behaviors.<sup>39</sup> In the study of Zaidi et al.,<sup>40</sup> extraversion is positively related to work engagement, whereas Dargah and Estalkhbijari<sup>41</sup> find a negative correlation between extraversion and job burnout. Recent research in the hospitality industry has confirmed that extraversion significantly and negatively relates to the emotional exhaustion in the hotel work setting.<sup>42</sup>

The above discussion and empirical findings can also be considered in the context of the Person-Job fit theory referring to the person’s compatibility

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<sup>34</sup> J. Hwang, J. Lee, S. Park, H. Chang, S.S. Kim, *The Impact of Occupational Stress...*, p. 62.

<sup>35</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 422.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> P.T. Costa, R.R. McCrae, *Inwentarz osobowości NEO FFI*, Adapted into Polish by: B. Zawadzki, J. Strelau, P. Szczepaniak, M. Śliwińska, Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych Polskiego Towarzystwa Psychologicznego, Warszawa 1998, p. 15.

<sup>38</sup> J.W. O’Neill, Q. Xiao, *Effects of organizational/occupational characteristics...*, p. 654.

<sup>39</sup> R.F. Hurley, *Customer service behavior...*, p. 115–127.

<sup>40</sup> N.R. Zaidi, R.A. Wajid, F.B. Zaidi, G.B. Zaidi, M.T. Zaidi, *The big five personality traits and their relationship with work engagement...*, p. 1348.

<sup>41</sup> H.G. Dargah, Z.P. Estalkhbijari, *The relationship between the big five personality factors and job burnout*, “International Journal of Asian Social Science” 2012, No. 2 (11), p. 1846.

<sup>42</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 429; J.W. O’Neill, Q. Xiao, *Effects of organizational/occupational characteristics...*, p. 659.

with the job requirements.<sup>43</sup> It is indicated that P–J fit increases employees' satisfaction, commitment and decreases turnover, thus influencing the company's effectiveness.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, by matching the right personality with the right job, employees may feel more comfortable in their workplace and serve better in their contact positions; a result which influences their job satisfaction and finally business effectiveness. As the service profit chain theory states, customers' satisfaction and business profits can be gained only by the quality service performed by satisfied employees.<sup>45</sup> However, this seems likely to happen if the personality-job compatibility is good.

### 3. Method

To approach the question of the relation between employees' extraversion and their job satisfaction, empirical research based on the survey method has been conducted. The research has been realized within a larger project on employees' attitudes and workplace behaviors in hotel organizations. 50 contact employees from two hotels located in the Pomeranian Province participated in it.<sup>46</sup>

Contact employees having a direct relation with hotel guests<sup>47</sup> have been selected, for they are perceived as a "medium" through which organizations interact with their customers<sup>48</sup> as well as because they critically contribute to

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<sup>43</sup> J. Jang, R.T. George, *Understanding the influence of polychronicity on job satisfaction and turnover intention: A study of non-supervisory hotel employees*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2012, No. 31 (2), p. 593; A.L. Kristof-Brown, R.D. Zimmerman, E.C. Johnson, *Consequences of individuals' fit at work: a meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit*, "Personnel Psychology" 2005, No. 58 (2), p. 284.

<sup>44</sup> Ch.-Y. Chen, Ch.-H. Yen, F.C. Tsai, *Job crafting and job engagement: The mediating role of person-job fit.*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2014, No. 37, p. 22.

<sup>45</sup> F.C. Pan, *Practical application of importance – performance analysis in determining critical job satisfaction factors of a tourist hotel*, "Tourism Management" 2015, No. 46, p. 84.

<sup>46</sup> A. Grobelna, *Współczesne problemy zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi w hotelarstwie, „Fluktuacja kadr”*, Manuscript in publication, 2015; A. Grobelna, *Role ambiguity: a problem or a challenge facing contemporary hospitality industry. The critical role of employees' creativity*, Manuscript in publication, 2015.

<sup>47</sup> M. Kachniewska, *Zarządzanie jakością usług...*, p. 31.

<sup>48</sup> S.-H. Tsaur, W.-H. Tang, *The burden of esthetic labor on front-line employees in hospitality industry*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2013, No. 35, p. 19.

successful hotel operations.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, they play an important role in linking hotels with their customers and are the most important in the organization from customers' perspective.<sup>50</sup> Thus their predispositions to working with people are of great importance as they may influence employees' ability to perform adequately during numerous social interactions with hotel guests.

In terms of the profile of study respondents, most of them are female (84%) and aged between 21–40 (72%). Over half of them (52%) has a secondary school diploma, whereas 40% of the subjects declare university education. 44% of employees have been working in the hospitality industry up to 10 years, the remaining respondents (56%) declare longer working experience in the industry, namely over ten years. At the time of the study over half of the subject (52%) worked in the current hotel between 1 and 10 years, and 30% of respondents – less than 1 year. The remaining ones declare their working experience in the current organization for over 10 years.

Based on the broad literature review, job satisfaction is assessed via 8 items from Hartline and Ferrell<sup>51</sup> adapted in line with Karatepe and Uludag<sup>52</sup> who have used this scale to measure job satisfaction of hotel employees in Northern Cyprus. Job satisfaction is evaluated in terms of the overall job, co-workers, supervisor/s, hotel's policies, support provided by hotel, pay, opportunities for advancement, and hotel's customers. The latter item is of particular interest to this study.

Extraversion is operationalized via 10 items from *International Personality Item Pool* (<http://ipip.ori.org>).<sup>53</sup> The items – stated negatively from extraversion – are reverse-coded prior to data analysis. The responses to the items are presented on a five-point scale ranging from (1) extremely dissatisfied to (5) extremely

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<sup>49</sup> C.A. Enz, J.A. Siguaw, *Best Practices in Human Resources*, "Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly" 2000, No. 41 (1), p. 50.

<sup>50</sup> M. Kachniewska, *Zarządzanie jakością usług...*, p. 43.

<sup>51</sup> M.D. Hartline, O.C. Ferrell, *The management of customer-contact service employees: an empirical investigation*, "Journal of Marketing" 1996, No. 60 (4), pp. 52–70.

<sup>52</sup> O.M. Karatepe, O. Uludag, *Conflict, exhaustion and motivation: a study of frontline employees in Northern Cyprus hotels*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2007, No. 26 (3), p. 653.

<sup>53</sup> *International Personality Item Pool: A Scientific Collaboratory for the Development of Advanced Measures of Personality Traits and Other Individual Differences* (<http://ipip.ori.org>); L.R. Goldberg, J.A. Johnson, H.W. Eber, R. Hogan, M.C. Ashton, C.R. Cloninger, H.C. Gough, *The International Personality Item Pool and the future of public-domain personality measures*, "Journal of Research in Personality" 2006, No. 40, p. 84–96.

satisfied in the case of job satisfaction, and from (1) very inaccurate to (5) very accurate in the case of extraversion. The questionnaire has been originally prepared in English and then translated into Polish through back translation to ensure the equivalent meaning for all items. The scales' reliability is assessed by Cronbach's alpha whose values are as follows: 0.85 (job satisfaction); 0.87 (extraversion). The measures in this study show high reliability as the alpha coefficients are above the cut-off value of 0.70.

#### 4. Results

The overall result for extraversion in this study is 3.66; however, women (3.67), well-educated employees (3.82) and younger workers (up to 20 (4.03) and between 21–30 (3.87) describe themselves as rather higher in extraversion than those from other groups. A closer look at extraversion in the light of socio-demographic characteristics has revealed very interesting results.

Generally, the more educated an employee, the higher is the result for extraversion (Figure 1). In other words, as respondents' education increases, they appeared to be higher in extraversion.

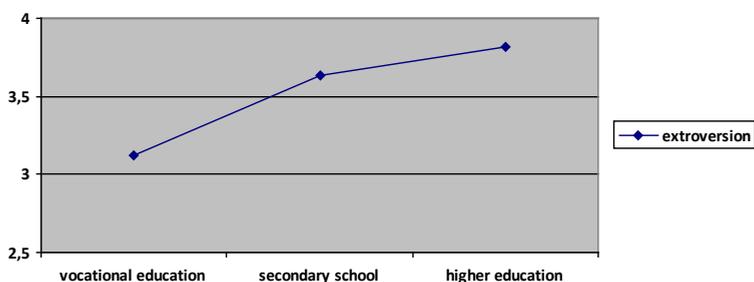


Fig. 1. Extraversion in the context of the educational level

Source: based on own study.

Higher results in extraversion are also observed in the case of hotel employees who declare relatively short working experience (WE), both in the hospitality industry in general and in the current organization. It means that the highest extraversion result is observed in the group of hotel employees who declare their

WE in industry is between 1 to 5 years (4.11) and among respondents whose working experience (WE) in a current hotel does not exceed one year (3.99). However, as work experience increases, results in extraversion decrease in most cases (Figure 2).

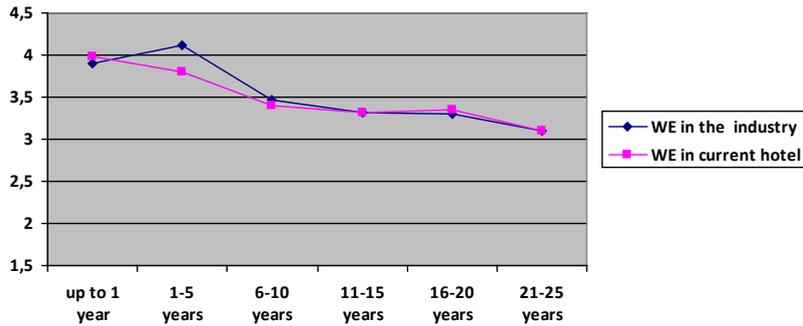


Fig. 2. Extraversion in the context of work experience

Source: based on own study.

Similar results are observed when the respondents' age is analyzed (Figure 3). In this study younger employees appear to be higher in extraversion than the older ones.

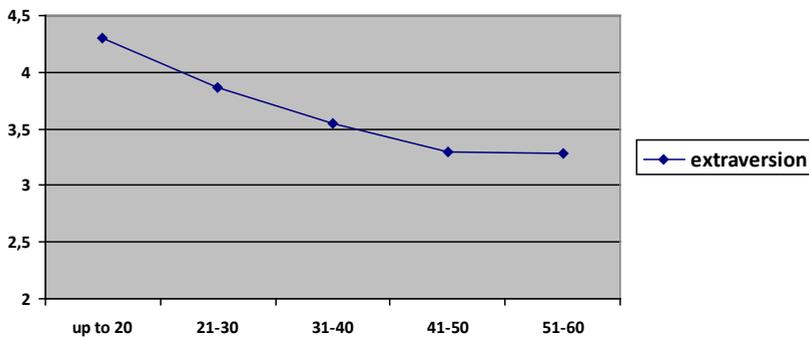


Fig. 3. Extraversion in the context of age

Source: based on own study.

To verify the relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction, Pearson's correlation has been applied. The study results demonstrate that there is both a significant and positive correlation between both study variables ( $r = 0.337$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 1). It means that the higher a person describes himself/herself in extraversion, the higher satisfaction s/he experiences from the job.

Table 1

Relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction in general

|              |                       | Job Satisfaction |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Extraversion | Pearson's Correlation | .337*            |
|              | p-value               | .017             |
|              | N                     | 50               |

Source: based on own study.

Specifically, for the purpose of this study, the relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction but with customers only is of particular interest. Therefore, this relationship has been empirically verified. The results of Pearson's coefficient correlation (Table 2) has showed a fairly strong positive relationship between both extraversion and job satisfaction with customers ( $r = 0.368$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It suggests that the higher the result in employee's extraversion, the higher the respondent's satisfaction is with regard to hotel's customers.

Table 2

Relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction in terms of hotel's customers

|              |                       | Job satisfaction with hotel's customers |
|--------------|-----------------------|---|
| Extraversion | Pearson's Correlation | .368**                                  |
|              | p-value               | .009                                    |
|              | N                     | 50                                      |

Source: based on own study.

Due to the case-study nature of the research, the results cannot be generalized; however, they may serve as a fine base for a deeper discussion on the issue of employee's personality and its meaning for job satisfaction and research assumptions for further empirical studies in the hospitality setting.

## 5. Discussion and implication

This study pays attention to personal characteristics that may determine employee's job satisfaction, especially in terms of hotel customers. This issue seems to be critical in the service sector where inseparability of production and consumption takes place and the organization's success strongly depends on its employees behaving in a service-oriented manner.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, beside employees' formal qualifications and skills also their predispositions to cope well with numerous social interactions with hotel guests seem to be one of the critical factors in the people-oriented hotel industry.<sup>55</sup>

Extraversion has been especially scrutinized in this study, as extroverts are those employees who are cheerful, optimistic, enthusiastic and sociable. Therefore, individuals who are high in these traits can feel better in their contact positions in hotels and successfully operate when numerous interpersonal relations with different customers take place.

The study results have proved that the respondents with higher extraversion are more satisfied, both with their jobs in general and when it refers to customers. This, in turn, may make hotel guests more satisfied as the link between employees' satisfaction and customers' satisfaction is well empirically proved.<sup>56</sup>

The analysis of extraversion relating to socio-demographic characteristics has also revealed that employees with shorter working experience both in the industry and current organization as well as well-educated and younger employees described themselves as higher in extraversion. The plausible explanations of these results may be as follows:

1. It is stated that employees who recently entered the industry may have chosen their career in a more informed way; because entry employees today are more knowledgeable and aware of the labor market and desirable workplace.<sup>57</sup> Thus, they may well know what kind of personality traits are

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<sup>54</sup> S.M. Carraher, J. Mendoza, Ch.E. Carraher, L. Schoenfeldt, *The First Step to Service Excellence in the Global Tourism and Hospitality Environments: Selecting Service-Oriented Personnel*, in: *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality industry*, ed. S. Kusluvan, Nova Publishers, New York 2003, p. 278.

<sup>55</sup> Ch-Y. Chen, Ch-H. Yen, F.C. Tsai, *Job crafting and job engagement...*, p. 22.

<sup>56</sup> E.g. H.S. Jung, H.H. Yoon, *Do employees' satisfied customers...*, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> D. Trojanowska, *Polityka personalna w hotelu*, Raport: ABC Inwestycji Hotelowych, „Hotelarz” 2013/2014, p. 40.

strongly needed to be successful in desired hotel jobs and whether their individual profile is suited to work in the hospitality setting.

2. Well-educated employees may have been provided with well-developed career support programs and well-organized internship during their study time, therefore, they might have had an opportunity to test their individual traits, social skills and abilities to decide finally whether a direct contact with customers is congenial to them. The more that the study results of Teng<sup>58</sup> have proved that extroversion shows significantly positive prediction regarding students' attitudes towards hospitality jobs and their intention to work in the industry. It is suggested that students with extroverted personality trait are more likely to have "personality-hospitality jobs fits"; therefore, they will tend to desire to work in highly interactive hospitality sector, in contrast to those without such a trait<sup>59</sup>. Hence well-educated employees in this study may have made a better thought out decision about their careers and so they appeared to be more suited to their jobs when analyzing the extraversion trait.
3. Tourism and hospitality industries have been confronted today with the critical problems of attracting and retaining quality employees.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, to ensure appropriate hotel workers, a more selective recruitment process might have been applied by hoteliers in order to select those whose personality profile is more successful when it comes to catering to guests. This may potentially explain why the respondents who have recently been recruited by hotel firms (with low working experience) describe themselves as extroverts.

Apart from the above plausible explanations, further empirical attention is badly needed to identify other antecedents of these relationships.

The results of the study indicate that understanding the role of employees'

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<sup>58</sup> C.-C. Teng, *The effect of personality traits and attitudes on student uptake in hospitality employment*, "International Journal of Hospitality Management" 2008, No. 27, p. 83.

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>60</sup> Y.K.P. Wan, I.A. Wong, W.H. Kong, *Student career prospect and industry commitment: the roles of industry attitude, perceived social status, and salary expectations*, "Tourism Management" 2014, No. 40, p. 1; R. Lucas, K. Johnson, *Managing students as a flexible labour resource in hospitality and tourism in Central and Eastern Europe and the U.K.*, in: *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality industry*, ed. S. Kusluvan, Nova Publishers, New York 2005, p. 152.

personality seems to be very important, the more so that the present expectations of tourism industry employees have been moving far beyond the previous requirements<sup>61</sup>, and employees' personality is becoming an increasingly important issue nowadays. The study findings indicate that managers should take a closer look at the extraversion trait as it may have an impact on employees' satisfaction in the workplace, particularly their satisfaction with hotel's customers. To reach the "optimum fit" between service job and employees who perform it, the recruitment process, as stated above, should be more selective to ensure candidates with proper characteristics towards successful working in the hotel setting. The selection should be based on the degree to which employees have personality traits helping them perform well in customer contact positions. Therefore, psychological tests to measure candidates' individual traits<sup>62</sup> as well as service orientation tests and detailed interviews must be brought to managerial attention. This is even more important in view of the fact that in the tourism sector mostly informal methods of employee recruitment have been applied and the use of psychological tests has also been limited.<sup>63</sup> However, managers also ought to be aware of some problems with implementations of psychological tests such as temporary indisposition of candidates, stress, some problems connected with tests' interpretation, etc.<sup>64</sup>

To be successful in their chosen jobs, entry employees should also be informed what kind of personality traits are required from candidates to meet specific job demands and characteristics helping them make an informed career decision.<sup>65</sup>

Finally, it is worth noting that individuals with a proper personality profile will be more successful in their workplace when the work environment is well managed. Thus, as Kim et al.<sup>66</sup> demonstrate, after the recruitment of employees with proper personality traits, the appropriate employment practices such as job autonomy, training, or rewards are strongly needed. In other words, employees must be selected very carefully and then managed in a way which helps make the best use of their personality potential thus contributing to their job satis-

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<sup>61</sup> A. Rapacz, *Zasoby ludzkie...*, p. 110.

<sup>62</sup> A. Tokarz, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi w sektorze turystycznym*, Difin, Warszawa 2008, p. 77.

<sup>63</sup> M. Sidorkiewicz, A. Pawlicz, *Propedeutyka hotelarstwa...*, p. 190.

<sup>64</sup> A. Tokarz, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi...*, p. 77.

<sup>65</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 432.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*.

faction and other critical job outcomes, pivotal for the hotel's competitiveness on the contemporary market.

## Summary

Having employees with adequate traits to serve others may greatly enhance a hotel's ability to provide truly hospitable service towards their guests. With this realization, hotel managers need to pay particular attention to personality traits when hiring employees, especially those in contact positions. It is likely that employees with an adequate personality profile compatible with their job expectations can also find their job more satisfying than those who are low in the desired personality traits.

Therefore, this study has focused on the extraversion trait as an important determinant of the employee's job satisfaction in the hospitality setting. The study results have shown that employees' extraversion appears to be vital for respondents' job satisfaction.

However, because the data has the case study nature, the possibilities to generalize the study results are limited. Thus, to validate the value of the study findings future research, both with larger samples and in different hospitality sectors, is strongly recommended.

Taking into account that employees are frequently faced with demanding and difficult customers and still expected to be polite and smile at guests<sup>67</sup>, it is suggested that future studies should take into consideration the potential link between other personality traits (e.g. agreeableness) and employees' job satisfaction. The more so that agreeableness, so far, has not received adequate attention from industry psychologists.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, the influence of service provider's personality on the service quality should be an area of future empirical investigation, especially that this issue seems to be an underexplored area<sup>69</sup> also in the hotel setting.

Summing up, the fit between personality and the job is critical in services<sup>70</sup>,

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<sup>67</sup> H.J. Kim, *Hotel service providers' emotional labor...*, p. 151.

<sup>68</sup> H.J. Kim, K.H. Shin, W.T. Umbreit, *Hotel job...*, p. 424.

<sup>69</sup> R.F. Hurley, *Customer service behavior...*, p. 115.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*.

particularly in the boundary spanning positions such as contact positions in hotels, where employees provide services by themselves<sup>71</sup>, and the success of the organization strongly depends on effective customer relations. Therefore, when competitive advantage is attained through people (employees), their appropriate personality is vital to be satisfied with their job and to successfully provide guests with outstanding service experience.

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<sup>71</sup> Ch-Y. Chen, Ch-H. Yen, F.C. Tsai, *Job crafting and job engagement...*, p. 22.

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## EKSTRAWERSJA I JEJ ZNACZENIE W HOTELARSTWIE. ANALIZOWANIE WYBRANYCH WYNIKÓW PRACY

### Streszczenie

Celem pracy było ukazanie znaczenie cech osobowości pracowników kontaktowych hoteli i ich potencjalnego wpływu na ich postawy wobec pracy. Problemem badawczy było więc poszukiwanie odpowiedzi na pytanie, czy jest związek między ekstrawersją a satysfakcją z wykonywanej pracy, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem satysfakcji w odniesieniu do klientów. Jako metody badawcze w niniejszej pracy zastosowano krytyczny przegląd literatury przedmiotu, w tym raportów i badań przeprowadzonych w podjętej problematyce oraz badania ankietowe. Główne rezultaty badań potwierdziły istnienie istotnej i pozytywnej korelacji pomiędzy ekstrawersją a satysfakcją z pracy, w tym satysfakcją w odniesieniu do postrzegania relacji z klientami. Badania mają charakter studium przypadku, stąd ich wyników nie należy generalizować, jednakże stanowią one podstawę do merytorycznej dyskusji nad znaczeniem i koniecznością umiejętnego dopasowywania osobowości pracownika do wymagań pracy w hotelarstwie oraz mogą one stanowić założenia badacze dla szerszego kontekstu badań. Stąd w pracy przedstawiono zarówno implikacje dla kadry menedżerskiej jak i sformułowano proponowane kierunki przyszłych badań empirycznych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** hotelarstwo, pracownicy kontaktowi, ekstrawersja, satysfakcja z pracy