

How can hospitality companies retain their hospitality talents?

A qualitative study of future hospitality leaders' criteria for intending loyalty and career development in a particular company.

Candidate: 8015

University of Stavanger

Norwegian School of Hotel Management

Master in Service Leadership in International Business

Master's thesis in Service Leadership in International Business MSERMAS-1

Supervisor: Annie Haver

June 15, 2023

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT**

MASTER'S THESIS

STUDY PROGRAM:

Master's degree in Service Leadership in
International Business

THESIS IS WRITTEN IN THE
FOLLOWING SPECIALIZATION/
SUBJECT: Strategic HRM

IS THE ASSIGNMENT CONFIDENTIAL?
No

TITLE:

How can hospitality companies retain their hospitality talents? A qualitative study of future hospitality leaders' criteria for intending loyalty and career development in a particular company.

AUTHOR

Student number:
8015

Name: Hannah Victoria Eidsvik
Johansen

SUPERVISOR:

Annie Haver

Foreword

This master thesis is written as the final part of the study Service Leadership in International Business, at the University of Stavanger, Norwegian School of Hotel Management.

During the work on the thesis, I would like to thank my supervisor, Annie Haver, for quick and specific feedback, good advice, support and positivity throughout the process.

Thank you to the respondents who have given their time to appear for interviews and who have shared their experiences with me.

Finally, a big thank you to my family who have been a great and necessary support throughout the semester. Thank you for believing in me and encouraging me!

Hannah Victoria Eidsvik Johansen

June 14, 2023

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how hospitality companies can retain their hospitality talents. Using a qualitative case study approach to examine hospitality talents' criteria for intention of loyalty and to building a career in a particular hospitality company. Using semi-structured interviews, the study investigated 10 Norwegian hospitality students or frontline employees who intended for a career in the hospitality industry.

Drawing on the framework of self-determination theory and social exchange theory, the study contributes with knowledge about how to retain hospitality talents by suggesting that the focus and process of retention strategies should reflect inherently motivating needs. Leaders should focus on designing intrinsic motivational job designs and facilitate good social relations. The study also suggests organisations to develop and nurture culture for career development and that leaders should support employees' need for development in a different manner than merely the traditional vertical career development focus.

Sammendrag

Hensikten med denne oppgaven er å undersøke hvordan gjestfrihetsbedrifter kan beholde sine gjestfrihetstalenter. Bruk av en kvalitativ casestudie tilnærming for å undersøke gjestfrihetstalenter kriterier for intensjoner om lojalitet og for å bygge en karriere i et bestemt gjestfrihetsselskap. Ved hjelp av semistrukturerte intervjuer undersøkte studien 10 norske gjestfrihetsstudenter eller frontlinjeansatte som hadde til hensikt en karriere i serveringsbransjen.

Ved å trekke på rammer som selvbestemmelsesteori og sosial utvekslingsteori, bidrar studien med kunnskap om hvordan man kan beholde gjestfrihetstalenter ved å foreslå at fokuset og prosessen med retensjonsstrategier bør reflektere iboende motiverende behov. Ledere bør fokusere på å designe iboende motiverende jobbdesign og legge til rette for gode sosiale relasjoner. Studien foreslår også organisasjoner å utvikle og pleie kultur for karriereutvikling og at ledere bør støtte ansattes behov for utvikling på en annen måte enn bare det tradisjonelle vertikale karriereutviklingsfokuset.

Table of Content

Definitions	7
The significance of the study	8
1. Introduction	8
2. Literature Review	10
2.1 Self-determination theory	10
2.1.1 Conditions creating intrinsic motivation	12
2.2 Social exchange theory	13
2.2.1 Economic and social exchange	13
2.2.2 Perceived organisational support	14
3. Method	14
3.1 Research strategy	14
3.2 Philosophical assumptions	15
3.3 Sample and sampling	16
3.4 Data collection	17
3.4.1 Semistructured interviews	18
3.4.1 interview style	19
3.5 Data analysis	20
Phase 2: Generating codes	22
Phase 3: Searching for themes	23
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	25
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	26
4. Assessment of the study's quality	26
4.1 Ethical considerations	27
4.2 Validity and reliability	27
5. Results	28
4.1 Development	28
4.2 Perception of appreciation	31
4.2.1 Fair pay and equitable benefits	33
4.2.2 balancing work and free time	35
4.3 "the good" work environment	36
5. Discussion	39
5.1 Motivating and demotivating factors for working in hospitality	39
5.2 Development and work environment most important	41
5.2.1 "Loyalty should pay off"	42
5.2.2 The importance of intrinsic motivation	43
5.3 New focus on development	45
5.4 What can be done	47
6. Conclusion	48
7. Limitations of the study	49
References	50

Definitions

- Hospitality talents — Hospitality students or recent graduates, or frontline employees without this particular academical background, all who intend for careers in the hospitality industry.
- Job crafting — daily proactive behaviour that employees operate when experiencing that changes in their jobs are necessary, and to ensure a match between individual needs and work environment (Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012)
- Self-development — “the extent to which an employee proactively sets development goals, engages in developmental activities and acquires information and knowledge about how to sustain and improve progress in the long-term” (London et al., 1999).

The Significance of the Study

This study is inspired by several papers addressing the challenge of talent labour shortage in the hospitality and tourism industry, and which call for further research. Kwok (2022) emphasises the importance of recruiting and retaining hospitality talents post pandemic. Liu-Lastres and colleagues (2022) address that employers need to emphasise offering a career path rather than creating positions to merely fill a demand. Bagheri and colleagues (2020) call for investment in nurturing and managing hospitality talent (Bagheri et al., 2020; Kwok, 2022; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). Recognising the changing nature of hospitality work and, more importantly, the workforce, this thesis aims to contribute concerning practices and strategies to how hospitality companies can retain their talents (hospitality employees who intends for a career in the hospitality industry). By using an abductive explorative approach, the study seeks an understanding of why hospitality talents choose to join the industry and reasons to why they intend to stay or leave a company.

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that COVID-19 gave the hospitality and tourism industry unpredicted tough years, placing non-essential business activities on hold, leading to layoffs and furloughs for reducing costs, it is still a key economic driver in the global economy (World travel and tourism, 2022). In Norway, it is estimated that the hospitality industry's value creation towards 2030 will rise by around 50 per cent compared to 2019-levels, and will generate around 17,000 new jobs (Lund et al, 2022). Meanwhile, the hospitality industry has been facing extended issues with labor shortage mainly because of high turnover rates, and the major major challenge of employee (read: talent) retention is one of the biggest industry problems (Baum et al., 2007; Ghani et al., 2022; Styvén et al., 2022). Low pay and compensation, insufficient conditions of development and self-realisation, management style, poor working conditions and lack of free time are reported reasons for resignation (Ghani et al., 2022; Vetrakova et al., 2019). Employers have also found recruitment challenging largely as a consequence of a negative industry image and concerns of low pay and

long working hours (Lin et al., 2018). Even after decades of hospitality research, little improvement has been made to ease such negative industry perceptions and concerns (Park & Min, 2020). In fact, recent studies that have investigated hospitality students' attitudes towards working in the hospitality industry reported concerns of low pay, long working hours, stressful jobs, potential health and safety issues, attitude of management, unqualified managers, discrimination, emotional labor and being away from family and friends as barriers (Goh & Lee, 2018; Mqwebedu et al., 2022).

Although turnover and talent shortage not are new industry challenges, research assess the pandemic amplified the situation (Baum, 2020). Many temporary lay-offs became permanent decisions to leave the hospitality profession and created hesitations of hospitality careers for many hospitality students (Birtch et al., 2021; Demitriva, 2021). Hospitality employers do not only compete with industry peers, however with other industry competitors in attracting prospective talent (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). Concurrently, the pandemic seems to have amplified important changes in present work expectations towards better work-life balance, more flexible work arrangements, awareness of mental health, more people seek meaningful work, and opportunities for individual growth and skill development, which are not readily apparent in a hospitality career (Aggarwal et al., 2020; Fratricová & Kirchmayer, 2018; Jiang & Wen, 2020; Popaitoon, 2021). As such challenges seem to reside at industry level, and not solely at the organisational level where most recent hospitality literature is focused (e.g., Aggarwal et al., 2020; Popaitoon, 2021), it is desirable to get a better understanding of what future hospitality talents expect and want in a hospitality career. Also, considering that unfulfilled expectations (whether it is the content of position, salary development, competence building, career or working environment) often result in dissatisfaction, enhancing intentions of resignation (e.g., Richardson, 2009), recognising a changing workplace and workforce post-pandemic marks a crucial step towards improvements, of which little research exist.

2. Literature Review

This study integrates social exchange and self-determination theories to account for the previously demonstrated influence of needs satisfaction and trust on intention of retention. The literature review first review research illuminating the importance of intrinsic motivation and self-development. Then, social exchange theory and literature will highlight the importance of mutual trust in the employee-organisation-relationship.

2.1 Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) has been central to examine employee motivation for decades, while at the same time as it is a broad theoretical framework of organisational behaviour, management style and work context support leading to commitment and employee retention (e.g., Kuvaas et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000; White et al., 2020). Self-determination theory holds that individuals have an inherent desire to grow and develop, as well as a propensity to find the necessary nutriments. These nutriments are defined in terms of three basic psychological needs which self-determination theory consider as universal necessities of psychological well-being, integrity, growth and social development (Ryan & Deci, 2000). As such, self-determination if a framework to answer how an employees can reach his full potential through fulfilment of competence, relatedness and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In work context, the need of competence regards the feeling of being skilful, effective and able to master ideal challenges and achieve desired results. Relatedness regards feeling of being in mutual social connections and belonging to a community. Autonomy regards the feeling of being in control and a desire to make own choices and actions and freely express own opinions. Previous research has placed autonomy as the most crucial of these needs (Humphrey et al., 2007; Kuvaas et al., 2017; Pimenta de Devotto et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000). When employees find their jobs autonomous, their perceptions of self-determining increase and the willingness to engage in development activities thus enhance (Ryan & Deci, 2009).

Central to self-determination theory is the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which is mainly caused by two reasons. First, the two extremes are negative related to each other. Second, when people are intrinsic motivated the correlates and consequences are more positive regarding the quality of their behaviours in addition to their well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Kuvaas et al., 2020). Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may at times coexist for some individuals, one of the motivations will most likely dominate (Kuvaas et al., 2020). When a job is inherently satisfying (it relates to personal interest, excitement and satisfaction) and its incentives are indirectly tied to performance (e.g., competitive base pay), intrinsic motivation will likely dominate. When a job is less satisfying and its incentives are directly tied to results or performance (e.g., bonus or commission), employees are more likely to see the money as the main reason to work and extrinsic motivation will most likely dominate (Kuvaas et al., 2017; Kuvaas et al., 2020).

The literature is fairly unequivocal in favour of intrinsic motivation as the best source of positive organizational outcomes. Research shows that intrinsic motivation represents a significant predictor of what companies want more of (e.g., job satisfaction and affective commitment) and a negative predictor of what companies want less of (e.g., stress, burnout, turnover) (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Kuvaas et al., 2017; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006), while extrinsic motivation is found to be negative related or not related to such positive outcomes (Kuvaas et al, 2017). Vansteenkiste and colleagues (2007) found extrinsically motivated employees to experience higher emotional exhaustion, more short-lived satisfaction from achieved goals, less satisfaction in work and life, and higher turnover intention than those who are intrinsically motivated (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007). It is also found to represent to fully mediate autonomy and self-development (Zhou et al., 2019). Hence, no matter how much autonomy an employee has, it is the level of intrinsic motivation that determines the extent to which the employee take advantage of opportunities.

2.1.1 Conditions Creating Intrinsic Motivation

The job characteristics model, developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976) holds that intrinsic motivation appears as a result of the three basic psychological needs: meaningfulness, responsibility for work outcomes and job results, and knowledge of the consequences of own contributions (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Specifically, five core job characteristics are suggested as sources of the particular experiences: skill variation (extent to which one must use different skills in a job), task significance (extent to which ones job impact others), task identity (extent to which an employee can complete a whole piece of work), task feedback (extent to which a job imparts information about ones performance) and autonomy (the freedom one has in carrying out work) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Humphrey et al., 2007).

Humphrey and colleagues (2007) conducted a meta-analytic summary and extension on job design theory and provided several new results. In addition to providing robust support for the original model, it also showed the more experienced job autonomy, the more satisfaction with the job, the management, colleagues, pay and opportunities for growth and development, along with increased affective commitment and intrinsic motivation. Also, the higher experience of job autonomy, the less stress, anxiety, burnout and conflicts (Humphrey et al., 2007). That fulfilling the need for autonomy is the most important is supported by other studies. For example, it appears as a necessary condition for competence experience to be related to intrinsic motivation, and as key mediator between competence and relatedness and job crafting (Dysvik et al., 2013; Pimenta de Devotto et al., 2022).

Finally, the meta-analysis (Humphrey et al., 2007) examined a number of social factors, such as social support from colleagues or leaders and interconnection with others, which found to better represent explanations concerning intentions of resignation than the original set of job characteristics. The set of job characteristics was better suited to explain intrinsic motivation (Humphrey et al., 2007). This meta-analysis helps to understand why organisations need both a

good job design (the original job characteristics) and good social relations to facilitate employee intrinsic and prosocial motivation.

2.2 Social Exchange Theory

Grounded in social exchange theory, this part of the paper presents literature to highlight the importance of social exchange relations and perceived organisational support. While the main source of intrinsic motivation is the job itself and characteristics of it, prosocial motivation stems from relationships with other people and institutions, and reflects dispositions toward empathy and helpfulness (Grant, 2008, 49). However, certain levels of intrinsic motivation appear to be a condition for prosocial motivation to generate beneficial outcomes (Grant, 2008). Much of the research on prosocial motivation is based on social exchange and reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), which at the simplest hold that employees exchange labor for social and economic benefits, and series of such exchanges affect the employee-organisations relationship. Social exchange theory holds that employment is seen as trading effort and loyalty for tangible benefits and social resources. Common is the idea that when employees experience that the organisation treat them well, they respond with loyalty, positive attitudes and productive behaviour (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2006).

2.2.1 Economic and Social Exchange

Empirical findings submit that economic and social exchanges are distinct and relate differently to antecedents such as perceived support and investment, leadership style and organisational culture, and outcomes such as commitment and performance, as well as perceptions of future opportunities in the organisation (Hom et al., 2009; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Lai et al., 2009). A social exchange relationship is characterised as long-term and persistent and based on open and unspecific exchange relations. Personal trust and continuous investments in the relationship are essential. An economic exchange relationship applies to more limited transactions with emphasis on

financial exchange and typically co-occurs with anticipation of short-term employment (Lai et al., 2009; Shore et al., 2006). The transaction is short-term, not ongoing and impersonal, and accordingly does not entail personal trust or investment (Shore et al., 2006). Literature has suggested strong correlations between social exchange mechanisms for establishing organisational commitment, hence intentions of resignation decreases. In contrast, economic exchange shows to have positive effects on such intentions (Shore et al., 2006).

2.2.2 Perceived Organisational Support

Perceived organisational support is a central source of explanation for important attitudes and behaviours in organisations, such as job satisfaction, intention of retention, affective commitment and social exchange. Kurtessis and colleagues (2017) describe perceived organisational support as “*the degree to which employees’ experience the organisation is concerned with their contribution and that it cares about their well-being*” (p.1855). Perceived justice, various types of inspirational and supportive leadership (e.g., transformational leadership), perceived development opportunities, enriching job characteristics and autonomy is characterised as the greatest antecedents of perceived organisational support (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

3. Method

This part explains the study’s research methods and theoretical positions. The chapter first reviews the research strategy, and then the theoretical assumption of which the analysis is based on. Data selection and data collection will then be presented before the review of how the data was analysed.

3.1 Research Strategy

As the problem is characterised by an open question, calling for an exploratory type of research, an abductive approach was appropriate (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). An abductive approach is based on openness about which theories are best suited to illuminate the empirical material (Blaikie,

2018; Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Charmaz, 2006). Accordingly, emphasis lies on the interplay of induction and deduction, and researchers need to enter the field with the deepest and broadest theoretical base possible and develop theoretical repertoires throughout the research process (Blaikie, 2018).

The abductive logic is oriented towards understanding social life on the basis of the respondents' opinions, meanings and interpretations (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). Accordingly, the research fundamentally needs to discover how respondents view and understand the phenomena of interest such as motivation, retention and loyalty, and discover the meanings they give to the particular phenomena (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). The data of the respondents becomes the argument of the study. An abductive analysis then involves an alternating process between analysis of the data and theory until theoretical complication which illuminates the research question and the data in an appropriate way (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012).

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions

As the study seeks to investigate empirical relationships and argue for underlying mechanisms, the research occurs in the field of critical realism, mainly in that there is an assumption that research can produce empirical evidence that can say something about a reality, although it is difficult to claim an objective truth (Bhaskar, 2015; Fletcher, 2016). Critical realism regards to both positivism and constructivism however the study is drawn more towards the constructionist framework than the positivistic. The study implies that theories of knowledge mediate our understandings of the world. Thereby the research also holds that reality is continuously shaped by experiences and situations people are exposed to (Bhaskar, 2015; Schwandt, 2000).

Epistemologically, the study has drawn inspiration from phenomenology with the interest of understanding social phenomena from the perspectives of respondents, while at the same time as achieving an understanding of a deeper meaning in individual experiences (Schutz, 1967). Thereby, the researcher has an interpretive role. The study has also drawn inspiration from social

constructivism, mostly in the understanding that identity and personality is context dependent, and that people do not construct interpretations in isolation (Schwandt, 2000, p.197). That is, respondents is not be considered simply as an individual, however as an individual in the particular social context. Thereby, the researcher also is a co-creator of knowledge, and the research result is a consequence of the relationship between the researcher and respondents, and the researcher and data (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Charmaz, 2017; Schwandt, 2000). The researcher must therefore be reflexive to avoid forcing preconceived ideas on the data, but still acknowledge to hold prior ideas (e.g., Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz, 2017). The study result emerges from the researcher's interaction with the data and not from discovering the data as for an unbiased researcher (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Charmaz, 2017).

3.3 Sample and Sampling

The sample consisted of 10 hospitality students/ recent graduates with the intention of a career in the hospitality industry, or frontline employees without this particular academical background, however who intend for a career in the hospitality industry. Specifically, the sample consisted of eight hospitality students/ recent graduates, one human resource and psychology student, and one with no higher education. Additionally, one respondent had a second bachelors degree (social science), one had a masters degree (international service leadership), and three had a vocational certificate (chef or receptionist). All respondents had intentions of careers in the hospitality industry of which all, except one, intended for leader positions. All respondents work in the industry at this particular moment. The respondents had between one and a half year and ten years of work experience in the industry. The respondents were located in Bergen, Stavanger and Oslo.

The sampling method reflected a snowball tactic where the researcher accessed respondents through contact provided by other respondents (Curtis et al., 2000; Noy, 2008). Despite its disadvantage of not guaranteeing representativeness of the sample, it was however an effective tool

of reaching respondents the researcher would not initially have been able to reach. In this way, the study did achieve an acceptable sample variety. The respondents represented a variety of academical backgrounds. The respondents were also located in different cities and represented a variety of organisations (both independent hotels and large chain hotels such as Nordic Choice, Thon Hotels and Radisson), in addition to represent male (40 percent) and female (60 percent), aged between 21 and 27. The mean age was 24.

A pilot study was conducted to test and organise the interview. The pilot study respondent (age 27) had eight years of work experience from the industry. This respondent had a bachelors degree in human resource management.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted as a case study, using personal interviews as tool to gain insight into the particular issue. A case study enabled for in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity of retention and loyalty (Simons, 2014).

The interviews took place from March 24th to April 15th. They were conducted either face-to-face, when allowed for, or over FaceTime. The respondents who did the face-to-face interviews decided where the interviews were to take place, of which three interviews were held at their workplaces and two took place in cafes. The interviews that could not be conducted in such a way, that was, five interviews, due to the respondents being in other cities, were conducted over FaceTime. Using FaceTime still made it possible to see the respondents and notice information in terms of body language and facial expressions (Brinkmann, 2020). Efforts were made to ensure all respondents felt comfortable. Creating an atmosphere of trust, caution and interest was highly emphasised, and it was prioritised to make some time for small talk in the beginning of each interview. The interviews took approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes, and all were recorded with the Diktafon Mobile App ensuring immediately encrypted recordings. After each interview, main

impressions of the interview situation were noted, including how the interview situation may have influenced the data.

3.4.1 Semistructured Interviews

The interviews were guided by semistructured interview guides, ensuring flexibility to explore existing literature and allowing new topics to emerge (Simons, 2014). Initial theory formed the interview guide framework and consisted of open-ended and wide-ranging questions. That is, although the interview sought to investigate different topics such as motivation, personal attitudes, beliefs and job satisfaction, it sought for wide-ranging stories, examples and reflections, rather than concrete questions emerging under each topic. Accordingly, the interviews gave respondents the opportunity to highlight what was important for them. By using such narratives, the interviewer was able to look for details and underlying assumptions, i.e., assumptions which might be unconscious or taken for granted by the respondents (Simons, 2014). The interviews started “simple” with questions calling for descriptions: “What made you choose (an education and) a career in hospitality and tourism?” and “Would you like to tell a little about your ambitions for your own career?”. The aim of such questions was to make the respondents more comfortable for generally speaking and provide insight that the interviewer was interested in them and their opinions (Simons, 2014). It also worked well to get to know the respondents and their situations a little better, and provided spontaneous and quite rich descriptions.

Another example of questions regarded when the respondent thought to have a successful career and the meanings he or she attached to the term. Although such sequences called for descriptions they also illustrated the doubt which can emerge concerning the meaning of such ambiguous concepts (Brinkmann, 2020). Some respondents provided immediate understandings and descriptions, while others became uncertain of the meaning of “successful career” and “career” and the interviewer needed to make clear that the respondent was the expert concerning such personal

expertise. This example also illustrates how silence was used as a tool to give the respondents time to think and reflect (Brinkmann, 2020). Another note from this example includes the asymmetrical distribution of the conversations: some respondents were simply less talkative than others and needed more inputs from the interviewer which made the semistructured interview particularly useful. Finally, the semi-structured interview allowed to follow up any potential important knowledge, including ambiguity, or even contradictions, as well as allowing the interviewer being visible as co-creator of knowledge (Brinkmann, 2020, pp. 286-288).

3.4.1 Interview Style

Variation, informality and the interviewer being active were emphasised — mostly without investigating the legitimacy of what were said (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). However, the interviewer was, at times, inspired by the more confrontational role of a Socratic practice (Plato, 1987, pp. 65-66). Investigating the legitimacy of narratives was at times necessary to gain the most valuable knowledge, aiming not just to map the respondents' understandings, however to understand how they justified their understandings (Roulston, 2010, p. 26). The excerpt below illustrates an example of a conversation about the topic *justice*.

“If a person has been there for half a year and get a position, while someone who has been there for three years does not, that's not right. The person who has been there the longest has done the most and should get that job” (the respondent said). “What if a person who has worked there for less years does a better job, shows up more, and are indeed more suitable for a promotion?” (the interviewer said). “If an employee does not meet the required standard, then I would question it, but I don't always know. If that person is still more qualified, then that person deserves it. It is qualifications that matter” (he said).

Here, the answer is questioned by the interviewer, not because the respondent was not allowed to have the opinion he first argued, however because (particular to this situation) the researcher perceived that the respondent did not quite know what to answer and did more or less force an answer he thought the interviewer was looking for or an answer he though would best

answer the question. Also, if this interpretation by the interviewer was not the “reality” of the situation, it would be interesting to know why the respondent thought this. However the situation became an illustration of how interviews can co-create knowledge and not only chart an opinion (Brinkmann, 2007). The example illustrates how the respondent “takes in” the input by the interviewer more or less as if it was what he had always opinionated and then the interview continued as if no exchange had happened. In the extension of this, social constructionism came to light ultimately in some interviews as the particular respondents clarified that the interview had, indeed, helped, or guided them towards a specific meaning of which they either initially did not know they had or that they did not quite know what they actually meant.

In order to test whether things were understood correctly, the interviewer gave a brief interpretation or summarisation of, e.g., a story, along with a question such as “is this what you are telling me?”, or “do I understand this correct?”. Sometimes it was also perceived necessary to comment such as “remember, you can correct me”. It is not uncommon that participants want to be “good interviewees”, wanting to provide the research value (which paradoxically can obstruct the production of interesting descriptions). It was therefore important to make clear several times during some interviews that there were no right or wrong answers and that the research was interested in anything the participant came up with (Brinkmann, 2020). Most respondents spoke freely and unprompted. Many gave quite descriptions of the social contexts and relations in which they were in (which helped to better understand their points of view) and many provided numerous of stories, examples and reflections, while a couple of respondents needed more follow-up questions.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study used thematic analysis method to identify important themes. Despite thematic analysis being “a useful method for highlighting similarities and differences, examining perspectives and generating unanticipated insights” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97), the process of

data analysis was both difficult and very long as the interviews resulted in an overwhelming amount of information. Indeed, all transcribed interviews filled over a hundred pages of text. A major challenge was to identify both what was relevant as well as irrelevant, while at the same time reflecting the complexity in the data. The process was iterative, moving back and forth between the six steps presented in the sections below (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis required the most time. Approximately two months were spent on analysing the data, including writing the results chapter. Considerable time was spent constructing codes, categorising codes and producing themes as the analysis sought to discover some (new) order rather than confirming (disproving) the question in mind using existing theories (Charmaz, 2006).

Phase 1: Transcription, Reading and Re-Reading the Data Material

To ensure accuracy and reliability, the aim was initially to transcribe all the data material immediately after each interview, however as three of the interviews took place during the same day, this could not always be carried out. These interviews were however transcribed within 24 hours — still making it possible to reflect upon relevant information that did not take place during the interview. All ten interviews were personally transcribed. This was helpful in several ways. Firstly, it was helpful for increased awareness of the role as interviewer. Second, it gave insight into what was in the data. The transcripts were all written in Norwegian bokmål despite and because of many respondents spoke in dialects. All transcribed interviews were then translated to English. This process of translation became an initial phase of deepening the data which involved repeated reading and reading the data in an active way, i.e., searching for meanings and patterns. A separate document was created for each interview containing relevant details of its delivery, notes and ideas that could be relevant for subsequent phases and potential codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The extract below shows the notes which were written immediately after the interview with respondent 8.

The respondent seemed comfortable and confident in herself and her own skills. Topics she talked about more than others were: being heard, being able to use her competences, experiencing valid career development, having trust in the management, that the management should be available for the employees, the management showing the employees respect, and that employees should feel well at work and get what they are entitled to (e.g., getting good food and a meal break, and good training so that everyone has good enough knowledge of the product being sold). She also said that she would never eat or stay somewhere that does not have a collective agreement.

Phase 2: Generating Codes

After all interviews were transcribed, along with a generated initial list of ideas regarding what was in the data, the phase of producing initial codes began (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The purpose of initial coding was to reduce the complexity of the unstructured data and develop some ideas about what was going on in the data by producing more abstract labels to important sections (Morse & Richards, 2002). It was coded for as many categories as possible (Braun & Clark, 2006).

The production of the initial codes was made in a data-driven way, i.e., initial codes were created in direct response to the data (Braun & Clark, 2006; Charmaz, 2006). The process consisted by extracting relevant text from each transcript along with an initial code representing the extract. The process of coding was then followed by comparing all initial codes with each other *and* the codes with the data extracts. During the process of comparing codes with codes and codes with data, some codes were more developed, or focused, into a higher level of abstraction (Charmaz, 2006). Other codes remained as they were at this stage. As it was strived for equal and full attention to all data, after coding each interview, the transcript was read again to see if anything had been left out (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 3.5 Initial coding example extracted from respondent 4

Text extract	Initial code	Focused code
If there are no vacancies here, then I will continue to work and do well, and rather show that I want to move on, so that those above see it	Expects good work will give something in return	Expectations of good work being rewarded
I've only worked in Choice in the hotel industry, but it's very good here. I get a lot of benefits, even if I only work at the reception	Happy with benefits	Equitable rewards and benefits
You also have to have a balance. You work, but then you also have free time	Work-life-balance	Work-life-balance
Balance for me is the most important thing. If you have a certain position, you may want to have a little less free time, but a higher salary	The salary must reflect the work	Fair base pay
What I like here is that you get a bit of free rein. I can arrange a lot myself. It is very important. There is no one monitoring all errors	Autonomy and opportunity to self-manage the work	Autonomy and self-management
The best thing is that positions are advertised internally. Then you also get loyal people, I think.	Positions being advertised internally	Internal recruitment
It's sad if someone from Scandic comes in and takes a reception manager position that I might also have wanted. It could have been fair if he or she were more qualified and more experienced. I wouldn't really mind, but if Choice knows they have people who are good enough, I'd give them the offer first.	Internal recruitment	Demonstrate loyalty
Right now it's that I'm learning since I'm going to move on in the industry,	Learning and developing	Need for development
and I think they are very good at that here. When I ask about things, they answer and show everything from numbers to marketing	Inclusive leaders who are eager to teach their expertise	Leader involvement in employee training and development
When I feel I'm doing well, and people notice, I'm more likely to stay	Be seen as a good resource	Being valued and appreciated

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

After coding the data, the analysis was focused to a broader level. This phase consisted of sorting and assessing the codes into potential themes. Themes were generated inductively, i.e., themes were strongly linked to the data and had little relation to specific questions asked in the interviews (Braun & Clark, 2006). It was strived for not abandon any codes at this stage. Printed copies of the coded data and mind-maps were used to sort codes into themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). At this stage it became clear that a common feature and subsequent theme was the perception of *feeling appreciated* or *valued* by the organisation. I searched for themes for further

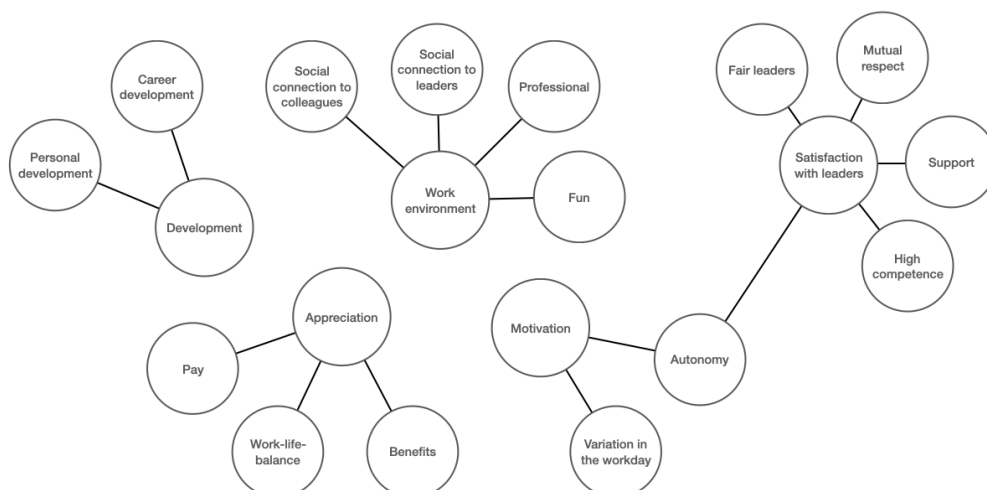
analysis that were either particularly widespread (the prevalence was to rely on counting the number of interviews in which the themes appeared) or particularly important to understand and illustrate how the respondents felt appreciated or valued.

Another particularly widespread theme was the importance of having a good working environment. The extract below illustrates how respondent 2 highlight the theme by answering the question: “Could you imagine a career in your current organization?”.

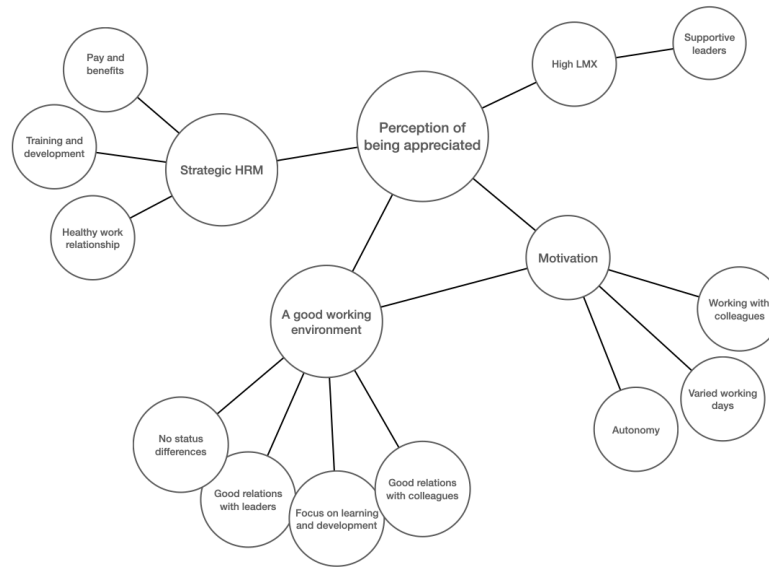
“Yes, I really like the culture here. We have incredibly good contact with everyone, and there is a good atmosphere all the time” (the respondent said). “What will it take for you to accept an offer with another company then?” (The interviewer asked). “There must be a good job title, higher salary, but there must be a good working environment. That is the most important thing. I never want to work somewhere where I dread going to work. But the way it is right now: I would never change. It's such a good environment, everyone is friends. I like it that way. It's probably the only thing that can make me choose another place. If the environment is bad” (he said).

Other themes regarded experiencing *fair pay and benefits, development and learning, experiencing safety, satisfaction with leaders and managers, work-life-balance, mental health focus, varied working days* and *autonomy*. These themes were first collected under four categories, as shown in Figure 2.

Initial Thematic Map Showing Five Themes



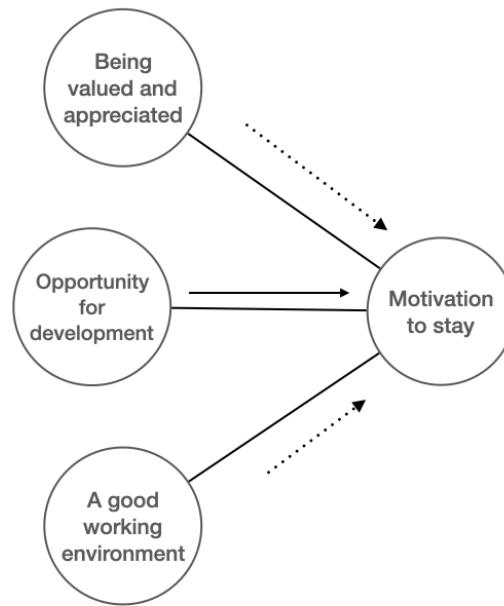
Developed Thematic Map, Showing One Main Theme



Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

After developing a set of candidate themes, the phase of reviewing and refining themes begun (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, another review was carried out at the level of the coded data extracts, which involved reading all compiled extracts for each theme assessing whether they formed a coherent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then themes were compared to the text in the entire data set to investigate whether some text had been overlooked. During this phase some candidate themes were not considered as themes as there was not enough data to support them (e.g., employee safety), while others (e.g., supportive and inclusive leaders) were collected. During this phase, the researcher had a good idea of the different themes, how they fit together and the story they tell about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To ensure the themes reflected the data, the researcher returned to the transcripts.

Thematic Mind Map Showing Three Main Themes



Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

After developing a satisfactory thematic map of the data, the process sought to define the themes. In practice, this included to carefully describing each theme its connection to the research problem. This phase used more of an abductive logic, i.e., moving back and forth between the themes and existing theory — comparing the themes with existing themes (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Charmaz, 2006). Attention was then made to ordering the themes in a way which best reflected the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 6: Producing the Report

4. Assessment of the Study's Quality

This chapter assess the quality of the research. Firsts it assess the study's ethical considerations, and then the study's validity and reliability.

4.1 Ethical Considerations

The study has been approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD). The research ethics in this study is based on basic requirements linked to the relationship between researcher and respondents: informed consent, concern for privacy and concern to be correctly reproduced. All candidates was sent an information letter, developed by Sikt, regarding the research purpose, declaration of consent and contact information. Respondents were informed in advance of their rights, including the possibility to whit draw at any time and discard parts or all of the interview. All data was treaded confidentially, and transcribed material was permanently deleted after use. In general, the study strived for discretion, which was done by guaranteeing participants full anonymity. The interviews were conducted with audio recordings via the «Nettskjema-Diktafon» mobile app, where recordings immediately encrypt on the phone. Each interview ended with a short summary of important points, where respondents had the opportunity to confirm that information had been interpreted correctly. As it was impossible to reproduce results in their complete context, the study has presented data completely where necessary for understanding a result. The research does not use any results taken out of context to argue for something that the respondent clearly did not originally mean.

4.2 Validity and Reliability

Validity regards whether the interpretation of the data material can be said to have a high degree of validity. In case studies, the internal validity is considered high, and as the study's results correspond a lot with previous research, this helps to strengthen the validity (Flyvberg, 2006).

Reliability is about the credibility and consistency of the research results. An important aspect regards whether the result can be reproduced at a different time by other researchers using the same data collection methods (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). The reliability of the study is strengthened by the fact that the researcher has explained the research process. The researcher explains how the interviews were conducted and how the interviewer may have influenced the

answers. In order to increase reliability, many extracts have also been included which make it possible for readers to interpret the information in possible other ways.

5. Results

This chapter presents the processed data material related to the problem statement: “How can hospitality companies retain their hospitality talents?”. Topics that were given the most attention will be highlighted. The data material is divided in three main themes: 4.1) development, 4.2) perception of appreciation, and 4.3) work environment. The respondents are referred to as respondent 1-10. Pronouns are used to obtain a better flow however they do not reflect the actual gender.


4.1 Development

Opportunities for development is considered one of the most important topics of which the respondents highlighted. Firstly because it was very widespread and was associated with other important topics, for example, development was an important element in a “good” organizational culture, and it contributed to perception of being recognised, appreciated and valued.

"... everyone wants to develop in some way. Even if you work as a barista or whatever you work as, it's nice to get recognition and say "okay, now you show that you know this job very well, maybe you can also take responsibility for *this*". Everyone likes that kind of recognition too" (respondent 8).

Secondly because development showed direct links to intention of staying. The topic regarded a need for experiencing some sort of career development, or providing some sort of value to oneself and one’s professionalism, either in terms valid career development (higher position or increased responsibility) or in terms of opportunities for learning and developing that contributed to deeper professional insight and which was expected to be of value in the future.

“I definitely need courses and training in coding”. (...). “But it is expensive. I have already taken a course. It cost me 1000 kroners for one hour. But I know that I am sitting on data that is so useful... it is valuable. It is worth it” (respondent 7).

The respondents highlighted a need to be trusted and invested in by being assigned more responsibility, promoted or allowing to take part in projects. For example, respondent 7 was currently happy in her job. She was involved in a project and part of a team working with some new development processes for the organisation, and worked on writing her own job description, which she found very exciting and motivating. She usually worked at the reception. Respondent 10 was also very satisfied in his job. He also worked as a receptionist, but was also part of a team that worked with two different organisational projects. He emphasised: “It is very cool. You know  and the opportunities he creates for people. It's very motivating” (respondent 10).

The direct link between development and intentions to stay was particularly evident from respondents who did not experience the career development they needed (5, 8, 9). In fact, respondent 8 did recently apply for a new job (higher position) in another organisation due to absence of development opportunities in his current workplace. “I've said that I need this and that to develop here, but I don't feel like I've been taken seriously, so if they want me to continue here they have to put something on the table or else I'm going to say yes and move on” (he said). Along with respondent 5 and 9, he experienced stagnation in own development and did not feel appreciated.

“I feel it is the time for a new step. I often hear that I do a very good job, but nothing more than that. And then it's a bit like, okay, are you grateful for me? Do you want me to stay? If they want to bet on me, why don't they give me any opportunities or responsibilities? Do they understand that if I don't get any development, I'll find something else? Do they really value me? I feel like I'm wasting my time. Why? I don't get any development” (respondent 5).

Another common feature was that they felt they had valuable competences that were neither valued nor exploited, and perceived scarcity of being able to utilise their competences. Several others also highlighted the importance of being able to utilise own competence. Respondent 8 and 10 had

resigned from their previous jobs because they experienced no room to utilise their full potential which resulted in experiencing stagnation. This came from perceptions that their input and suggestions were not heard which made them feel their competences were not valued.

“I have changed jobs once here actually. But the reason for that was that I felt that I was stagnating, my opinions were not understood, if I had suggestions they were not acted upon. And I felt I had so much knowledge, they did not use” (respondent 10).

Finally, 5 and 9 expressed that they did not experience value in the investment they had made in their personal career development (i.e., the time and money spent in studies).

“... Right now I'm very stuck over there, I do the same thing every day. And, when I soon have an education as well, I want to do something with it. If there had been an HR position at [REDACTED], I would applied. Then I know that I can use my education and my knowledge, in addition to the fact that I am still in hospitality. After all, I want to learn more and I don't want an education I can't use” (respondent 9).

Thus, the feeling of being in development was perceived as a decisive factor to thrive and achieve career goals. Firstly because, as illustrated, development were closely linked to motivation and success. Respondent 5, 8 and 9 clearly expressed lack of motivation in their current workplaces due to absence of development opportunities, scarcity (of challenges) and experiencing mastery. Secondly, because it was important fo feel valued and appreciated.

“It's about development, experience and learning new things. That I will gain more knowledge within the field. I want to be valued and feel valued. That they offer development and that they show that they invest in their employees. Simply that you are appreciated” (respondent 5).

And thirdly, because the respondents expressed a need of feeling competent enough and being comfortable in their career development progress. “I think you must build yourself up a bit to be

able to take on the slightly bigger jobs” (respondent 5 said), and along with most others, respondent 10 shared this thought.

“I imagine that I will spend a few years working in different departments and perhaps have various managerial responsibilities. I have a rather strong need to be a good leader the day I become one”. (...) “I want to do that until I feel comfortable moving on to hotel director” (respondent 10).

I experienced a relative big difference between the respondents who did and did not experience the career development they felt they needed. For example, respondent 4 and 10 clearly expressed perception of learning and developing. Not only were they very positive about staying in their companies, they also expressed more positivity in general to the workplace, for internal career development opportunities, leaders and current work situation such as salary and job characteristics, than the respondents who clearly expressed not to experience such development.

“There is so much being done that is not right. Many managers do not even know the laws. I don't want to work somewhere like that either. (...). It is about the trust in managers, being seen, the salary, everything” (respondent 9).

4.2 Perception of Appreciation

Perception of being appreciated was also fundamental for all respondent. It was highlighted differently however not always separately. Some sought affirmation from their environments and valued positive feedback, several made demands for a visible management in order to be seen, many sought recognition, and some highlighted a fair salary and equitable benefits. All expressed the idea that loyalty should pay off and be advantageous. “I imagine if you are loyal, then there is a greater chance of moving up” (candidate 4). Many stated the importance of reciprocity, that leaders need to show that they want to take care of and keep employees.

“It is that the management has confidence in you, that you are seen. For me to be loyal, they have to be loyal back. It goes both ways. The management must show that they want us to stay. Those who have potential, those who have been there for many years, that they actually do something with it... and maybe pay better” (respondent 9).

Many respondents expressed the importance of positions being advertised internally and that it would be unpleasant if someone from another organisation was brought in for e.g., a middle-management position.

“I like the fact that they are looking for people in their own organisation. And I think that is very import. When I feel I’m doing well, and people notice, I’m more likely to stay” (respondent 4).

Being seen and acknowledged was highly important to feel appreciated. Some respondents emphasised acknowledgement though positive feedback in the form of praise, which contributed to confirmation, recognition and acceptance (2, 3, 5, 10). Others emphasised such acknowledgement not sufficient and highlighted the need to be seen (8, 9). These respondents said that leaders needed to be present in every day life “and not just hide in an office” (respondent 8). Respondent 9 stated: “we work so much, but they don't understand how much we work. In good months there are 200-300 check-ins every day. If the management doesn't even see what we're doing, what's the point” (respondent 9). Despite receiving praise from leaders, it was not always sufficient because they lacked trust in them. One of several reasons for this for respondent 9 was the experience of being constantly understaffed. “Once we were two people at the reception, and it was complete chaos. (...) We stood there and nearly cried because we needed help. There was queue out the door. People didn't get their rooms because we also lacked housekeeping” (respondent 9). He further expressed:

“You are not heard, and I am often the one who speaks up about things. They don't do anything about it. Don't wait for the same thing to happen again. Then show up yourself and help” (respondent 9).

Respondent 5 experienced his education was not valued, and further addressed this to industry level, i.e., that the entire industry should appreciate and get hold on newly graduated hospitality students and employ the knowledge they possess.

“The industry is kicking itself in the ass, quite simply. Then you can just hire some randoms who have no education to save money. And it's such a shame. I know that many people I know, who have studied hotel management, are working in something else, and I know they want to work in the industry, so if the industry manages to get hold of them: that would be very good. It had helped lift the entire industry” (respondent 5).

4.2.1 Fair Pay and Equitable Benefits

Pay and benefits did serve as additional motivation for loyalty through the experience of being appreciated. Although salary and other benefits were not determined by the respondents as important as development opportunities and a good working environment in the choice between staying or leaving a company, all respondents emphasised the importance of a *fair salary*. Not only in connection with not being exploited, however, that the salary should reflect one's education, the job itself and the responsibilities the job entails.

Several stories emphasised the importance of fair pay. In fact, one of the first things respondent 5 told in the interview was not being paid for his bachelor's degree, and during the interview he began to reflect upon if he was treated unfairly because of this. He did not experience his education was valued and accordingly he did not experience he could make demands or negotiate for a better salary. He stated that companies were more concerned with saving money instead of taking care of their employees (of which he was not alone). Respondent 6 also told he had worked for six months without being paid for his vocational certificate which he thought was “a bit painful to think about”. He also considered this in light of being valued.

“The first six months I worked at [REDACTED], I didn't know that you got more pay as a skilled worker, so I worked for less money than I could get. It's a bit painful to think about. Getting a small pay rise is important. A lot depends on the

employee, but at the same time you feel like you are being cared for if the manager actually sees the professional certificate” (respondent 6).

Some also highlighted that a small pay rise was an important way of showing gratitude and respect to loyal employees (3, 4, 8, 9).

Some respondents believed the salary they now received was too low in relation to the stressing nature of the job, the poor and long working hours and the investment they had made in their education/ development. Some also believed that several middle management positions were unattractive because the pay did not reflect the amount of work and responsibility the job entailed. With that, the norm of "rising the ranks" became demotivating for some and several talked about the discrepancy between pay and work in the hospitality industry. Two respondents were considering changing industry because of this, despite the fact that they thrived very well in the hotel sector (3, 9).

"The bad thing about the hotel industry is that you get so little pay. That's why people quit. Again, you can work your way up and you can negotiate, but it is not easy. You have to negotiate a lot. In relation to what you do, you should be paid fairly. And you really don't get that. I expect a salary that, firstly, can pay off my student loan, that I can live in Oslo and that I can save some, for example for housing” (respondent 9).

Regarding other benefits, the respondents who experienced good benefits (free hotel stays, free Mastercard, cheap hotel nights), also perceived these benefits to be a good contribution from the organisation to the employees for showing appreciation and gratitude.

“When you get these benefits you feel that you are appreciated, and I feel it is a measure that is taken to make you feel wanted. And it largely works for me” (respondent 10).

On the other hand, respondent 9 was not as thrilled about their benefits and experienced that the employees had more or less the same benefits as the members. She also argued that individual

bonuses (or other gifts) based on results was unattractive, and she rather wished to receive a slightly higher salary that reflected the amount of work she did (and the conversation returned to the topic of being appreciated by the company). Other respondents thought individual bonuses was a good way to show gratitude, however, it was not sufficient for wanting to remain with the organisation.

4.2.2 Balancing Work and Free Time

Balancing work and free time was an important element in itself, in addition to that the company takes care of its employees and that leaders contribute to ensuring that employees do not become burnt out or ill from work.

“I have a love/hate relationship with the industry. I love the industry, but then I hate it because you get so tired which also affects your quality of life. It extends throughout the everyday life. So future career plans will either be in restaurant or hotel, but I'm not one hundred percent sure” (respondent 3).

Most respondents emphasised a need for balancing work and free time. Two respondents spoke about the scarcity of sufficient time off as a factor for not continuing in the industry. Despite thinking it might be better in a managerial position, the way to getting there was demotivating and perhaps not worth it (3, 9).

“People and people's everyday lives follow routines, and nothing about this follows routines, and I think many people drop out of the industry because of that. It creates an unpredictable everyday life and free time, little sleep, and you cannot plan your life” (respondent 3).

Leaders played a major role regarding this particular “issue” because they were considered responsible for taking care of the employees. Leaders should simply avoid employees working too much. Some respondents highlighted that many leaders were “too hung up on the company making as much profit as possible and forget that is those in front who market the hotel” (respondent 4).

Other respondents spent more time talking about the importance of that leaders should focus more on mental health and burnout (1, 3, 6, 9).

“I know several people who have worked themselves “to death” because they simply work too much. The management often does not take as good care of them and does not think that people need a break. I don't think they always see each and every one of the employees” (respondent 6).

While most respondents thought sufficient time off it was important, respondent 2 and 10 did not find this important, which was justified by they finding their jobs a lot of fun. Respondent 10 also emphasised having highly supportive leaders: “I have leaders who look after me and want the best for me. I feel a general focus on well-being” (respondent 10). This highlights the importance of experiencing support from leaders and a supportive working environment.

4.3 “the Good” Work Environment

This theme regards the working environment which was presented by the respondents as the most important prerequisite for well-being and desire to stay with an organisation. All said that if the working environment was bad they would find a new place to work, even if it meant salary decrease. Some respondents also said that, if one was to consider a new place to work, *seeing a good working environment* (that was, being adequately staffed, employees were allowed to be themselves, employees were cheerful, committed and knew their tasks) was fundamental before even considering working in the particular organisation (6, 8, 9).

“It's probably the employees I look at first, are they cheerful and committed. Are they allowed to be themselves at work. Then I want to get to know that company, and perhaps envision a career within it” (respondent 6).

The respondents emphasised an inclusive and respectful environment reflecting no status differences, cohesion, diversity and team spirit. For example, the respondents highlighted the importance of being included in decision making and experience managers and leaders being open

to input and ideas. Some respondents told they had leaders that actually sat aside time to include employees in strategies and decisions, which contributed to experience of being appreciated and valuable. The extract below illustrates the importance of being seen and heard, not only as an important contributor however as an equal human being. In this conversation, the respondent had just said that a good employee was a loyal employee, and the interviewer asked what made him loyal. He answered:

“Being heard and seen. It was recently that I had a suggestion that we should bring in some games (...). Apparently, another employee had also brought it up many years ago, but nothing had been done about it. But then it was done this year, so then I was heard. Having conversations throughout, whether there is something that can be improved, both whether there is something that I can improve and whether there is something that I want to be improved. Everyone is human, and some bosses like to talk to employees as if they are not human. We must have proper dialogue. If your “shirt is too tight” all the time, it won't work” (respondent 6).

The excerpt also illustrates a norm of mutual respect and was highly emphasised by all. In fact, respondent 3 — who did not intend for a career in her current organisation, said that lack of perceived respect from the management was a major reason for not wanting to stay there.

“Respect is the foundation of loyalty. For example, I love my colleagues and really like working there. But I applied a little while ago for a position that was advertised, and got no response. Then a few days later I see that they have hired a new person externally, while I haven't even received a response to my application. Then I felt quite small, and I didn't feel any mutual respect. It doesn't matter that I didn't get the job, but the fact that they don't even respond, that's a lack of respect. It was a deal-breaker for me. So right now I'm working there only because I need income, and that's one reason I don't want to make a career there” (respondent 3).

Further on, an informal tone between managers and employees was desired, and managers should earn their respect by balancing a personal acquaintance and professional relationship with each employee.

“As a manager you are responsible for finding out what motivates the individual employee, how the employee wants to be spoken to, how the employee wants to feel at work, how the employee sees his own development in the company. It is so important, it should be addressed during the job interview. Everyone is different” (respondent 10).

Most respondents expressed valuing (a culture and environment valuing) learning and development, where both leaders and colleagues were eager to share and teach away their knowledge. This was particularly clear in several stories by respondent 4 and 10 who largely experienced their managers and leaders to be inclusive and eager to involve and develop employees.

“I have asked whether I can be involved in different things, for example revenue. And then they send an email to the person who works with revenue, and if he has the time, I can come look at how things are done. I feel they spend more time on you, show you what you are wondering about and set up the time to be involved in things here. It is very wise for keeping me and for me to learn. They also show that they trust me, that I will use this further and will not change the organisation to use it there instead” (respondent 4).

Learning and development did not just have to happen "formally" through leaders. Some also expressed learning to be something continuous and "informal", for example, there had to be room to make mistakes. In fact, a major motivation for several respondents was that they experienced great room for action. For example, respondent 4, stated that he could do much as he pleased and manage his own work day without any monitoring (which included room for making mistakes and trying fixing them). He also told he had leaders who facilitated autonomy to learn: “the boss said he wanted me to make mistakes in the beginning, so I learned” (respondent 4).

On the other hand, respondent 3 and 9, who did not experience autonomy, clearly expressed that they found it very demotivating. Experience of being controlled and following strict rules and lists contributed to absence of motivation for staying in their organisations. Respondent 3 also answered very quickly he did not intend for a career in his company as he found them very strict while at the same time as there was no room for personality and creativity.

“Thon Hotels is very strict, there are a lot of rules for employees. It's very much like "that's exactly how it should be done", and no creativity or personality. You get a list of things, and that list must be done. I want a job where every day is a little different, that there are no set times for everything” (respondent 3).

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how hospitality employers can better retain talents. The results show that the respondents prefer learning, growing and development, rather than compensation. They need jobs where they can acquire new knowledge and collaborate with other people. In addition, they set requirements for a good working environment. They want to feel valued and be an important contributor for the organisation, while at the same time experiencing their own competence and potential being utilised. These findings are supported (Fratricová & Kirchmayer, 2018). These results also strongly suggests that they find their occupation inherently satisfying and that they want to be inherently motivated (e.g., through indirectly incentives tied to performance) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2020). These results also highlights the need for relatedness in connection with social connection with colleagues and leaders. Accordingly, the quality of social relations can be considered to provide employees with self-determination.

5.1 Motivating and Demotivating Factors for Working in Hospitality

The results of positive and negative feelings and attitudes towards a career in the hospitality industry illuminate some of the challenges with the labor shortage. Positive attitudes and motivations for a career in hospitality were the opportunity to work and collaborate with other people, many career opportunities, inclusive and motivating managers, and a good working environment. Demotivating themes were lack of work-leisure balance, poor pay, long working hours, tiring jobs and bad managers. These results highlight previous findings (Goh & Lee, 2018; Mqwebedu et al., 2022). With this as a background, along with studies that show that unfulfilled expectations often result in dissatisfaction and resignation (e.g., Richardson, 2009), employers should at least ensure that the positive attitudes and motivations for working in the industry meet

the expectations. Thus, the opportunity for good social relations, cooperation and development should be high on the list of characteristics organisations should offer employees for their motivation, well-being and loyalty.

Employers should also focus on the barriers to motivation and retention, and be open to rethinking the way hospitality operations are organised. Naturally, it cannot be expected to avoid all potential barriers to motivation. At the same time, it is conceivable that improving one or more of the aforementioned barriers to motivation could have a positive impact on others. Let's illustrate salary as a starting point. Naturally, employers cannot meet all their demands for higher wages. Nevertheless, it is not a given that the salary itself is the main cause of the problem, however the job the salary should actually compensate for. The results illustrated that a high salary in itself was not particularly important. Rather, it was important that the salary should be perceived as fair and reflect the content, responsibility and stressful nature of the job (in addition to the employee's knowledge and competence). Furthermore, the results illustrated the importance of (for example) work-leisure balance. Not only did employees need adequate free time, but also leaders who indeed respected it by e.g., not put pressure on them to work during free periods. In this regard, trust in the management and experience of supportive managers were important. By providing sufficient free time, managers showed understanding of the stressing the job and that employees thus needed to disconnect. Kuvaas and Dysvik (2017a) illustrate that employees interpret the exchange of basic salary together with the exchange of socio-emotional resources such as perceived support (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2017). This was also evident in the study's results. Those who largely experienced a high degree of operational support also expressed being most satisfied with the salary.

"Right now I don't need more salary. I don't think the job is that demanding, apart from the fact that I have to deal with angry guests from time to time, but it doesn't require much from me. I also have free rein to give them what they need" (respondent 4).

5.2 Development and Work Environment Most Important

The results highlighted the working environment and development as the most important elements for the intention to stay in a workplace. The respondents all shared the idea that loyalty should pay off and be advantageous — preferable by getting adequate opportunities to develop within the organisation, as well as opportunities for learning and self-growth. Everyone who experienced some form of development also had intentions to stay. Nevertheless, a good working environment was expressed to be the most important element for the intention to stay in a workplace. At the same time, everyone expressed their own working environment as very positive. Despite this, several had intentions of quitting. With that, there are good reasons to believe that a good working environment is fundamental, however not sufficient for intention of retention, and the work environment should be seen in combinations with other elements, such as high social relations with leaders (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2006). The results showed the employees valued relations reflecting mutual trust and respect, and leaders should provide support and growth opportunities such as greater autonomy and involve employees in decision making. Such relationships indeed highlights existing literature on social exchange theory and studies on leader-member-exchange (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Kraimer et al., 2012). The results thus suggest that the environment plays an important role in shaping employees intention to stay — both through trust that the management will support the employee, and through fulfilling the employee's psychological need of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The results suggested that the biggest problem for talent shortage lies in the development opportunities. This highlights previous findings (Ghani et al., 2022; Vetrakova et al., 2019). With that said, it is important to consider intentions of retention as a complex phenomenon that is influenced by several combinations of elements. For example, the results showed that development opportunities should be implemented in the organisation's cultural values and the workplace's working environment. First and foremost, organisations should want to develop their employees

rather than fill a position. Equally important is it to have internally consistent measures and the execution of the measures. For example, it will not be effective to strive for an organisational culture that values employee learning and development if the workplaces do not have managers and middle managers who also lay the foundation for such HR approaches. With that, managers can also illustrate being one of the problems (which also emerged in the results). Leadership should be based on the assumption that employees like to do a good job and that they want to develop. In other words, leading employees to ensure internally motivating job design and through strengthening the social relationships between both employees in between and employees and management, which makes them want to make an extra effort via prosocial motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Humphrey et al., 2007).

5.2.1 “Loyalty Should Pay Off”

On the other hand, the results suggested that employees were as much oriented towards securing themselves and their own personal career development as the organization's development and achievements. And many were not afraid to change employers if they could not satisfy their needs. This was related to the perception of being appreciated. When the management showed they invested in employees, for example as development in form of competence (respondent 4) or development in form of participating in new projects (respondents 7 and 10), they responded with positive attitudes and loyalty.

This shared idea that loyalty should pay off and be advantageous, indeed illuminates the foundational element of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). When the employee does the organization a favour by being loyal, there is an expectation of some future return (Blau, 1964; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2009). In fact, the study's results are in general consistent with many arguments of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and empirical research that economic, social and emotional resources such as perceived appreciation and investment, leadership style and

organizational culture are predictors for the retention of employees (Blau, 1964; Hom et al., 2009). However, as an important element of the result was motivation, and because social exchange theories almost exclusively consider that the outcome of social exchange relies on reciprocity and does not consider the potential effect of the motivational factor of the job itself (intrinsic) or towards others (prosocial), social exchange theories and studies will only contribute with partial explanations to why some employees choose to stay and others not.

5.2.2 the Importance of Intrinsic Motivation

Beyond the practical, i.e. loyalty, the experience of being invested in through development is also important because studies show that the experience of being invested in has positive associations with both intrinsic and prosocial motivation (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008; Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009). At the same time, literature shows that intrinsic motivation strengthens the experience of development opportunities in the organization (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009). This probably means that intrinsic motivation has a two-sided effect, where intrinsic motivation both has a positive effect on such measures and a result of them. This was evident in the study's results. The respondents who experienced being invested in through development measures also expressed having intrinsic motivation. The respondents who expressed having the most intrinsic motivation (4 and 10) also expressed being very satisfied with the investment in terms of development, also future development opportunities in general in their companies. There may of course be several reasons for this which will not be discussed here.

In addition to experiencing autonomy, competence and relatedness, they expressed being internally motivated by finding the job itself interesting and fun: "my motivation is that I have never been as happy with anything else as what I hold on now (...) it gives me enormous joy and a sense of mastery" (respondent 10); they were not particularly concerned with external incentives such as salary:

"They say that pay doesn't have that much of an impact, but if I had been on the job with a low hourly wage, and someone offered like 800,000 to do what I wanted to do, then it would have been a factor gradually. But it would have been mainly if I had felt I was stagnating here" (respondent 10);

they experienced their job as meaningful:

"I feel this is quite a rewarding job. Being able to give people a good hotel experience means they don't have to stress and they can just relax. I'm in control. If, for example, a fire starts then I have control. I know that she has her earplugs in that night up on the 6th floor, and that I might have to get her if something were to happen" (respondent 4);

and they were eager to take personal initiative for their own learning and development: "When you work in, for example, reception and have managers above you, you have the best opportunity in the world to see what they do and see what you want to take with you further and learn from it, you also have the opportunity to see what you would not do. It is a valuable learning anyway" (respondent 10).

The latter is particularly important regarding the issue of fulfilling all needs for development. Consistent with SDT, the results suggested that employees driven by intrinsic motivation tend to take responsibility for their own development (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zhou et al., 2020). Although it is difficult to say whether these respondents were *more* motivated to stay than others, it was clear that they *were* motivated to stay. In addition, they considered themselves to be loyal employees. Focusing on facilitating work environments that promote self-development (i.e. employees who proactively take responsibility for their own development rather than waiting for organizations to take responsibility for it (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zhou et al., 2020), can thus be an important strategic development measure to retain employees rather than considering that development only takes place under the auspices of traditional measures such as courses and promotions (e.g., Dachner et al. 2019). The results also showed that traditional development methods such as courses were not lucrative. Rather valued employees a development that could

happen anywhere and at any time. Below will be discussed why organizations and leaders should rethink development.

5.3 New Focus on Development

Despite the importance of self-developing employees, the results also highlighted the employees' environments as a key factor for their perception of development. That is, both organizations (integrated culture of career development) and leaders (supporting employees' career development) played a role in employee's career development and the experience of career success.

High economic relations with the workplace were highlighted by several. They did not experience being respected, had low trust in the management and high turnover intention. In addition, they experienced a lack of organisational support, were unsatisfied with managers and did not experience fairness in procedures. "Actually, I think someone else should have been given that position" (respondent 9).

"So right now I work there only because I need income, and that's one reason why I don't want to make a career there. Mutual respect is a deal-breaker" (respondent 3).

In order to avoid such relationships, the results illustrated the importance of avoiding lack of investment in development, low quality of manager-employee relationships and absence of a climate for well-being and cooperation. In addition, these respondents experienced no job autonomy, strict rules and unfairly low salaries. As trust is an important part of social relationships, anything that is experienced as rigid and inflexible or generous can in theory lead to employees developing economic relations such as excessive control over employees, and low wages (Shore et al., 2006). Let me illustrate with another example.

"I don't get paid for my bachelor's degree. It's very strange, I think. They reason that I am not in a leadership role. If I had been in a managerial role, I would have been paid for my bachelor's degree, and I think I'm really stupid of the industry. You get an education, so it should be valued" (respondent 5).

The extract highlights how managers contribute to expectations of a vertical career and an unhealthy pressure to rush for a vertical career. Firstly, this leader sends strong signals that education is not valued. Secondly, signals are sent that the knowledge the employee has acquired through education is not valuable enough when pay is justified solely on the basis of hierarchical position in the company rather than qualifications and competence. Thirdly, the leader signals that if employees want a good salary development and a title that is in reasonable proportion to the number of years in the organisation, the organization demands that they also have to become leaders. Employees' strong focus on career pursuit can with good reason be claimed to be strongly influenced by the environment. Namely, the results illustrated a career rush where the only possibility for career development was to move up the organizational hierarchy. With that, lack of vertical career development becomes a signal that the employee should find another employer.

Experience of success therefore become more difficult to achieve because success only becomes visible through objective results such as salary levels, salary increases and promotions. "I will feel like a failure no matter how nice it is and how much I enjoy the hotel. I don't want to be in the same position in the same hotel in 8 years. Then I have failed" (respondent 5 said). A disadvantage of this is that employees apply for leadership positions not because they are genuinely interested in leading other people, but because they feel that the organisation and their surroundings expect it.

In fact, most respondents had intentions of leader positions, and many spoke of "rising through the ranks" as the norm for development. At the same time, the results indicated that more employees actually sought what the career literature calls "subjective career success", which is about subjective assessment of satisfaction in one's own career, rather than relating success to objective job titles and salary increases (e.g., Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Ng & Feldman, 2014). "...it's really about development, experience and learning new things. That I will gain more knowledge in the field" (respondent 5). The results thus suggested that development was as much about learning

and acquiring more experience as it was about rising the ranks. The problem then is that organizations do not have consistent development initiatives with what employees are actually motivated by. Despite the fact that most aspired to higher positions, employees were motivated to a greater extent by intrinsic motives than external rewards. The fundamental needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness were important, while pay was less important. They wanted room for action and decision-making authority, the opportunity to use their own expertise, as well as the opportunity to seek challenges in order to express their full potential, the opportunity to develop positive relationships with others, and to be included in decisions.

Despite this, a desire for a higher salary does not necessarily mean that one is driven by external motives. As the example with respondent 5 above illustrated, the salary functioned as a value signal from the organisation. Not only did it signal not being invested in (lack of trust), it also contributed to the experience of injustice. When the employee experiences a basic salary reflected by broadly defined achievements, characterised by trust and a long-term orientation, it will probably be perceived as reflecting the organisation's long-term investment in the employee (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2020). Such reciprocity reduces turnover intention via perceptions of fairness and is fundamental in social exchange (e.g., Shore et al., 2006). As the example also illustrated, studies also show that employees with relatively higher salaries can feel more valued by the organization than those with lower basic salary levels, which reduces employee's intention of turnover through higher intrinsic motivation (Kuvaas et al., 2016).

5.4 What Can Be Done

Employers should focus on filling employee needs rather than filling a position. In practice, this means that leaders must understand what a working relationship should contribute in the employee's context, which also provides a better opportunity to relate to the employee over a longer period of time. The results suggested that a high degree of autonomy, involvement, delegation of responsibility and the provision of internal career opportunities lead to engaged and satisfied

employees who want to stay in their companies. However, a large degree of autonomy presupposes that the employee wants to use this development initiative for the good of the organization and not to make himself more attractive on the labor market. With that, the development of personal social relationships based on mutual trust and respect becomes important again.

In addition, employers should implement development measures that reflect that development is a shared responsibility between the organization and the employee. The focus should go from the employer "knowing best" what is the right development for the employee (offer courses and objective promotions), to recognising the importance of the employee's inherent "entrepreneurial spirit". This naturally requires proactive employees, who often turn out to be guided by intrinsic motivation (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2000) or prosocial motivation (Lysova et al., 2019). Since not all employees are self-directed in their goal development or are prosocially motivated, organisations therefore play a major role in facilitating self-development via intrinsic motivation (Pimenta de Devotto et al., 2022; Tae-Won et al., 2018; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In accordance to this study's results, Lysova and colleagues (2019) suggested organisations should build and maintain work environments characterised by the possibility of job crafting (Lysova et al., 2019). Pathiranage and Wickramaratne (2020) suggested that organisations should support their employees in creating a culture for career development and provide career support from top management so that they experience career satisfaction, in addition to promoting employees to take active responsibility in development (Pathiranage & Wickramaratne, 2020). Building on this, this study also illustrates the importance of creating good and personal social relations where mutual trust and long-term investment is fundamental.

6. Conclusion

Due to the ongoing issues of labor challenge in the hospitality industry, this study suggests that organisations need to focus on developing retention strategies reflecting employees' personal and career development needs. In order to increase employees' intrinsic motivation to the job and

occupation, organisation and leaders need to think differently about how to develop their employees. They should facilitate an inherently motivating job design and social relations. This is suggested to promote employees desire for self-development. Also, the employees' environments should show support for their career progress.

By using the self-determination theory as framework, the study could gain possible reasons to why hospitality such retention strategies will be of value. The study's respondents needed to perceive that they were valued by the organisation and their leaders, and the feeling of being in development was as a decisive factor to thrive and achieve career goals because they needed to feel competent and comfortable in their career development progress. Accordingly this research suggests that the main problem of hospitality labor issues regards the problem organisations face of fulfilling all employees needs for development, especially as employees expect career success due to their personal investments in their educations.

7. Limitations of the Study

The study presents several limitations. Due to limited time, the limit of the researchers theoretical knowledge might limit the analysis of the study especially as the study sought theoretical complication which could illuminate the research question and the data in the best way. The sampling is also a limitation. Despite aiming for sample diversity, the snowball method is a non-probability sampling method. Accordingly the study can not guarantee for selection bias. Further, the credibility of analysis could be further enhanced if other researchers were included in analysing the data. Peer debriefing and exchanging thoughts and ideas could help interpret aspects of the data in new ways. Another limitation is the extent and complexity of the research, i.e., the thesis simply dealt with too much.

References

- Aggarwal, A., Sadhna, P., Gupta, S., Mittal, A. & Rastogi, S. (2020). Gen Z entering the workforce: Restructuring HR policies and practices for fostering the task performance and organizational commitment. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 22(2).
- Allen, N.J., & Meyer, J.P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitments to organization. *Journal of occupational psychology*, 63, 1-18.
- Bailey, C., Yeoman, R., Madden, A., Thompson, M. & Kerridge, G. (2019). A Review of the Empirical Literature on Meaningful Work: Progress and Research Agenda. *Human Resource Development Review*, 18(1), 83-113.
- Ballout, H.I. (2009). Career commitment and career success: moderating role of self-efficacy. *Career Development International*, 14, 7. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Baum, T. (2007). Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change. *Tourism Management*, 28(6), 1383–1399.
- Baum, T. (2019). A changing world of work. What can we learn from the service sector about employing millennials (and Gen Z)? *Organizational Dynamics*, doi: 10.1016/j.orgdyn.2019.04.001.
- Baum, T., Mooney, S.K., Robinson, R.N. & Solnet, D. (2020). COVID-19's impact on the hospitality workforce—new crisis or amplification of the norm?. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(9) 2813-2829.
- Bhaskar, R. (2015). *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences* (4th ed.) Abingdon: Routledge.
- Birtch, T.A., Chiang, F.F., Cai, Z. & Wang, J. (2021). Am I choosing the right career? The implications of COVID-19 on the occupational attitudes of hospitality management students. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 95, 102931.
- Blau, P. (1986). *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.uis.no/10.4324/9780203792643>
- Blaikie, N. (2018). Confounding issues related to determining sample size in qualitative research. *International Journal of Social Research methodology*, 21(5), 635-641.
- Blaikie, N. & Priest, J. (2019). *Designing Social Research*. (3.Ed.). Malden: Polity Press.
- Bouraoui, K., Bensemmane, S., Ohana, M., & Russo, M. (2019). Corporate social responsibility and employees' affective commitment. *Management Decision*, 57(1), 152–167
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brinkmann, S. (2007). Could Interviews Be Epistemic?: An Alternative to Qualitative Opinion Polling. *Qualitative inquiry*, 13(8), p.1116-1138.
- Brinkmann, S. (2020). Unstructured and Semistructured Interviewing. In P. Leavy (2.Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 424-456). Oxford Handbooks Online.
- Briscoe, J.P. & Hall, D.T. (2006). The interplay of boundaryless and protean careers: combinations and implications. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69(1), 4-18.
- Chapman, D. S., Uggerslev, K. L., Carroll, S. A., Piasentin, K. A., & Jones, D. A. (2005). Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice: A meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(5), 928–944.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Charmaz, K. (2017). Special invited paper: Continuities, contradictions, and critical inquiry in grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16, 1–8.

- Cho, M., Bonn, M.A., & Han, S.J. (2018). Generation Z's sustainable volunteering: Motivations, attitudes and job performance. *Sustainability*, 10(5), 1400.
- Dachner, A.M., Ellingson, J.E., Noe, R.A., & Saxton, B.M. (2021). The future of employee development. *Human resource management review*, 31(2), 100732.
- Colquitt, J. A., Scott, B. A., Rodell, J. B., Long, D. M., Zapata, C. P., Conlon, D. E., & Wesson, M. J. (2013). Justice at the millennium, a decade later: A meta-analytic test of social exchange and affect-based perspectives. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(2), 199–236. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uis.no/10.1037/a0031757>.
- Colquitt, J.A, Conlon, D.E, Wesson, M.J, Porter, C.O.L.H ; Yee Ng, K. (2001). *Journal of applied psychology*, 86(3), 425-445
- DeVoe, S.E. & Iyengar, S.S. (2004). Managers theories of subordinates: A cross-cultural examination of manager perceptions of motivation and appraisal of performance. *Organizational behaviour and human decision processes*, 93, 47-61.
- Dysvik, A. & Kuvaas, B. (2008). The relationship between perceived training opportunities, work motivation and employee outcomes. *International journal of training and development*, 12(3), 138-157.
- Dysvik, A. & Kuvaas, B. (2013). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as predictors of work effort: The moderating role of achievement goals. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 52, 412-430.
- Fletcher, A.J. (2014). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: methodology meets method. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 20(2), 181-194.
- Feldman, D.C., Leana, C.R. & Bolino, M.C. (2002). Underemployment and relative deprivation among re-employed executives. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75(4), 453–471.
- Fioretti, C., Palladino, B.M., Nocentini, A. & Menesini, E. (2020). Positive and Negative Experiences of Living in COVID-19 Pandemic: Analysis of Italian Adolescents' Narratives. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11.
- Flyvberg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245.
- Fratricová, J., & Kirchmayer, Z. (2018). Barriers to work motivation of generation Z. *Journal of human resource management*, 21(2), 28-39.
- Gagné, M. & Deci, E.L. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of organizational behaviour*, 26(4), 331-362.
- Gagne, M., Forest, J., Vansteenkiste, M., Crevier-Braud, L., van den Broeck, A., Aspel, A.K., Bellerose, J., Benabou, C., Chemolli, E., Guntert, S.T., Halvari, H., Indiyastuti, D.L., Johnson, P.A., Molstad, M.H., Naudin, M., Ndao, A., Olafsen, A.H., Roussel, P., Wang, Z. & Westbye, C. (2014). The multidimensional work motivation scale: validation evidence in seven languages and nine countries. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 24, 178-196
- Ghani, B., Zada, M., Memon, K.R., Ullah, R., Khattak, A., Han, H., ; Ariza-Montes, A., Araya-Castillo, L. (2022). Challenges and Strategies for Employee Retention in the Hospitality Industry: A Review. *Sustainability*, 14(5), 2885.
- Glazer, S., & Kruse, B. (2008). The Role of Organizational Commitment in Occupational Stress Models. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 15(4), 329–344. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uis.no/10.1037/a0013135>.
- Goh, E. & Lee, C. (2018). A workforce to be reckoned with: The emerging pivotal Generation Z hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 73, 20-28.

- Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement. *American Sociological Review*, 25(2), 161–178. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2092623>.
- Grant, A. (2008). Does Intrinsic Motivation Fuel the Prosocial Fire? Motivational Synergy in Predicting Persistence, Performance, and Productivity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(1), 48–58. c.
- Grant, A. M. (2008). The significance of task significance: Job performance effects, relational mechanisms, and boundary conditions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(1), 108–124.
- Guest, D.E., & Rodruiges, R. (2012). Can the organizational career survive? An Evaluation within a social exchange perspective. *The employee-Organization Relationship: Applications for the 21st Century*. London: Routledge Academic.
- Hackman, R.J., & Oldham, G.R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, 16, 250-279.
- Hom, P.W., Tsui, A.S., Wu, J.B., Lee, T.W., Zhang, Y., Fu, P.P. & Li, L. (2009). Explaining employment relationships with social exchange and job embeddedness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94, 277-97
- Humphrey, S.E., Nahrgang, J.D. & Morgeson, F.P. (2007). Integrating motivational, social and contextual work design features: A meta-analytic summary and theoretical extension of the work design literature. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(5), 1332-1356.
- Jacobsen, D.I. (2018). *Hvordan gjennomføre undersøkelser? Innføring i samfunnsvitenskapelig metode*. (3.utg.). Cappelen Damm.
- Jiang, L., & Johnson, M.J. (2017). Meaningful Work and Affective Commitment: A Moderated Mediation Model of Positive Work Reflection and Work Centrality. *Journal of business and psychology*, 33(4), 545-558. DOI:10.1007/s10869-017-9509-6.
- Jiang, Y. & Wen, J. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on hotel marketing and management: a perspective article. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, (32)8, 2563-2573
- Jung, H.S. & Yoon, H.H. (2015). What does work meaning to hospitality employees? The effects of meaningful work on employees' organizational commitment: The mediating role of job engagement. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 53, 59-68.
- Kraimer, M. L., Seibert, S. E., Wayne, S. J., Liden, R. C., & Bravo, J. (2011). Antecedents and outcomes of organizational support for development: The critical role of career opportunities. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(3), 485–500. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uis.no/10.1037/a0021452>.
- Kirchmayer, Z. & Fratricová, J. (2020). What motivates Generation Z at work? Insights into Motivation drivers of business students in Slovakia. *Innovation Management and Education Excellence through Vision*, 6019-6030.
- Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 58(2), 281–342.
- Kurtessis, J.N., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M.T., Stewart, K.A. & Adis, C.S. (2017). Perceived Organizational Support: A Meta-Analytic Evaluation of Organizational Support Theory. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1854 –1884.
- Kuvaas, B. (2011). The interactive role of performance appraisal reactions and regular feedback. *Journal of managerial psychology*, 26(2), 123-137.
- Kuvaas, B. & Dysvik, A. (2009). Perceived investment in employee development, intrinsic motivation and work performance. *Human resource management journal*, 19(3), 217-236.

- Kuvaas, B., Buch, R., Weibel, A., Dysvik, A. & Nerstad, C.G.L. (2017). Do intrinsic and extrinsic motivation relate differently to employee outcomes? *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 61, 244-258.
- Kuvaas, B., Shore, L.M., Buch, R. & Dysvik, A. (2020). Social and economic exchange relationships and performance contingency: differential effects of variable pay and base pay. *International journal of human resource management*, 31(3), 408-431
- Lai, L. (2011). Employees' perceptions of the opportunities to utilize their competences: exploring the role of perceived competence mobilization. *International journal of training and development*, 15(2), 140-157.
- Lai, L., Rousseau, D. M., & Chang, K. T. T. (2009). Idiosyncratic deals: Coworkers as interested third parties. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(2), 547–556.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Goetz, J. P. (1982). *Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research*. *Review of Educational Research*, 52(1), 31–60.
- Lips-Wiersma, M., & Wright, S. (2012). Measuring the Meaning of Meaningful Work: Development and Validation of the Comprehensive Meaningful Work Scale (CMWS). *Group & organization management*, 37(5), 655-685.
- Lin, M.-Y., Chiang, C.-F., & Wu, K.-P. (2018). How Hospitality and Tourism Students Choose Careers: Influences of Employer Branding and Applicants' Customer Orientation. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 30(4), 229–240
- Lis, B. (2018). Corporate social responsibility's influence on organizational attractiveness: An investigation in the context of employer choice. *Journal of general management*, 43(3), 106-114.
- London, M. & Smither, J.W. (1999). Empowered self-development and continuous learning. *Human resource management*, 38, 3-15.
- Lund, F., Tryggestad, C., Kühn, F., Fjeldstad, S., Therkelsen, C., Vendrig, T., Thoner, K., Krüger, R.I., Langguth, N., Opedal, I., Botten, A.A., Kustani, K., Bjerknes, L., Nausdal, L. & Gjendemsjø, A.M. (2022). *Norge i morgen. Ti mulighetsnæringer for Norge*. McKinsey & Company.
- Lysova, E.I., Allan, B.A., Dik, B.J, Duffy, R.D., & Steger, M.F. (2019). Fostering meaningful work in organizations: A multi-level review and integration. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 110, 374-389.
- Mahmound, A.B. (2021). “We aren’t your reincarnation!” workplace motivation across X, Y and Z generations. *International Journal of Manpower*, 42, 193-209.
- Meyer, J.P., Stanley, D.J., Herscovitch, L. & Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences. *Journal of vocational behaviour*, 61, 20-52.
- Morse, J. & Richards, L. (2002). Coding. In Morse J., Richards (Eds.), *Read me first for a user’s guide to qualitative methods* (pp. 111–128). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mqwebedu, M., Roberson, J.R. & Kleynhans, C. (2022). Perceptions of Full-time Final Year Hospitality Students Towards Working in the Hospitality Industry. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 11(2), 668-682.
- (NESH). Den nasjonale forskningsetiske komité for samfunnsvitenskap og humaniora. (December 16, 2021). *Forskningsetiske retningslinjer for samfunnsvitenskap og humaniora*. ISBN: 978-82-7682-101-7.
- Ng, T. W.H., & Feldman, D. C. (2014). Subjective career success: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 85(2), 169–179.

- Noy, C. (2008). Sampling Knowledge: The Hermeneutics of Snowball Sampling in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(4), 327–344.
- Pathirana, W. & Wickramarat, R. (2020). Sustainability in Career Development: The Impact of Career Development Culture and Career Support of Senior Management on Career Satisfaction. *Emerging markets journal*, 10(2), 1-9.
- Park, J. & Min, H.K. (2020). Turnover intention in the hospitality industry: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 90, 102599.
- Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C., Schaufeli, W.B., & Hetland, J. (2012). Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to work engagement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(8), 1120–1141.
- Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012). Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001)
- Pimenta de Devotto, R., de Freitas, C.P.P. & Wechsler, S.M. (2022). Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction, Job Crafting, and Meaningful Work: Network Analysis. *Trends in Psychology* 1-21.
- Plato (1987). *The republic*. London: Penguin.
- Popaitoon, P. (2022). Fostering Work Meaningfulness for Sustainable Human Resources: A Study of Generation Z. *Sustainability*, 14(6), 3626, doi: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14063626>
- Piccolo, R.F. & Colquitt, J.A. (2006). Transformational leadership and job behaviours: The mediating role of core job characteristics. *Academy of Management journal*, 49(2), 327-340.
- Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour*. London: Sage.
- Richardson, S. (2009). Undergraduates' perceptions of tourism and hospitality as a career choice. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28(3), 382-388.
- Ribiero, N. (2020). Authentic leadership's effect on customer orientation and turnover intention among Portuguese hospitality employees: The mediating role of affective commitment. *International journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 32(6), 2097-2116.
- Roulston, K. (2010). *Reflective interviewing: A guide to theory and practice*. SAGE.
- Rosso, B.D., Dekas, K.H., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2010). On the meaning of work: A theoretical integration and review. *Research in organizational behavior*, 30, 91-127.
- Rusu, G. & Avasilcai, S. (2013). Human resources motivation: an organizational performance perspective. *Fascicle of Management and Technological Engineering*, 22, 331-334.
- Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78.
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage.
- Sayer, A. (2000). *Realism and Social Science*. London: Sage.
- Schutz, A. (1967). *Phenomenology of the Social World*. Northwestern University Press.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics and social constructivism. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research 2* (pp. 189–213). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Shore, L.M., Tetrick, L.E., Lynch, P., Barksdale, K. (2006). Social and Economic Exchange: Construct Development and Validation. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 36(4), 837-867.
- Sigala, M. (2021). Rethinking of Tourism and Hospitality Education When Nothing Is Normal: Restart, Recover, or Rebuild. *Journal of hospitality & tourism research*, 45(5), 920-923.

- Simons, H. (2014). Case Study Research. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 445-470). Oxford University Press.
- Sturges, J., Conway, N., Guest, D., Liefvooghe, A. (2005). Managing the career deal: The psychological contract as a framework for understanding career management, organizational commitment and work behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26, 821–838.
- Styvén, M.E., Näppä, A., Mariani, M. & Nataraajan, R. (2022). Employee perceptions of employers' creativity and innovation: implications for employer attractiveness and branding in tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Business Research*, 141, 290-298.
- Timmermans, S., & Tavory, I. (2012). Theory construction in qualitative research: From grounded theory to abductive analysis. *Sociological Theory*, 30, 167–186.
- Tims, M., Bakker, A.B., & Derks, D. (2012). Development and validation of the job crafting scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80(1), 173–186.
- Tims, M., Derks, D., & Bakker, A. B. (2016). Job crafting and its relationships with person–job fit and meaningfulness: A three-wave study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 92, 44–53.
- Tudorache, A.-M. (2013). The relationship between motivation and efficiency of human resources. *Ovidius University Annals, Series Economic Sciences*, 13, 1035-1038.
- Vansteenkiste, M., Neyrinck, B., Niemiec, C.P., Soenens, B., De Witte, H., & Van den Broeck, A. (2007). On the relations among work value orientations, psychological need satisfaction and job outcomes: A self-determination theory approach. *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology*, 80(2), 251-277.
- Vetráková, M., Šimočková, I., & Pompurová, K. (2019). Age and Educational Diversification of Hotel Employees and Its Impact on Turnover. *Sustainability*, 11(19), 5434
- Verbruggen, M., De Cooman, R., & Vansteenkiste, S. (2015). When and Why Are Internal Job Transitions Successful? Transition Challenges, Hindrances, and Resources Influencing Motivation and Retention Through Basic Needs Satisfaction. *Group & Organization Management*, 40(6), 744–775.
- White, R.L., Bennie, A., Vasconcellos, D., Cinelli, R., Hilland, T., Owen, K. B., & Lonsdale, C. (2021). Self-determination theory in physical education: A systematic review of qualitative studies. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 99, 103247.
- Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J.E. (2001). Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 179–201.
- Wrzesniewski, A., Schwartz, B., Cong, X., Kane, M., Omar, A. & Kolditz T. (2014). Multiple types of motives don't multiply the motivation of West Point cadets. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences - PNAS*, 111(30), 10990-10995.
- Zhou, Li, & Gong. (2019). How Job Autonomy Promotes Employee's Sustainable Development? A Moderated Mediation Model. *Sustainability*, 11(22), 6445.
- Zhou, Q., Mao, J.-Y. & Tang, F. (2020). Don't Be Afraid to Fail Because You Can Learn From It! How Intrinsic Motivation Leads to Enhanced Self-Development and Benevolent Leadership as a Boundary Condition. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 699-699.