



**WORK STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN
HOSPITALITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CASINO HOTELS
AND NON-CASINO HOTELS IN MACAU**

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to analyze the differences in employees' work stress and job satisfaction across the casino hotels and the non-casino hotels in Macau. Through questionnaires, the paper investigates total 400 employees from both casino hotels and non-casino hotels. Work stress and job satisfaction of employees in casino hotels and non-casino hotels are compared. Statistic techniques such as descriptive statistics and one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) are applied. The result indicates there are not significant differences in employees' work stress and job satisfaction perception between different genders, positions, marital situations and fertility situations. The result confirms there are significant differences in employees' work stress and job satisfaction perception between casino and non-casino employees. Moreover, Work stress negatively influences job satisfaction.

Key Words: Casino, Employee, Job satisfaction, Work stress

INTRODUCTION

Macau gambling industry has been booming since 2002, when Macau opened its door to international gambling firms. Macau's gross gambling income has exceeded that of Las Vegas, becoming the largest gambling city in the world. With the development of gambling industry, the casino hotels have been developing quickly, which also increase the fierce competition in Macau casino hotel industry.

Work stress has been recognized as a global issue, especially in customer-oriented fields. Employees' work stress will affect job performance and customer services; highly stressed employees deliver poorer customer services than less stressed employees (Varca, 1999). The

stable, qualified and highly motivated employees would have the strategic importance to the core competence of hotels.

Researchers have identified that employees' work stress in the hospitality industry is much higher than that of other industries (Kim et al., 2007; Wildes, 2007), because it involves real-time nature of the service, evening and night shift, direct interactions with customers (Hayes and Weathington, 2007; Lee et al. 2011). Poor working conditions and low wages in hospitality industry may even worsen the situation (Lo and Lamm, 2005). Working in the casino industry is demanding (Wan, 2013). Employees in gaming industry also suffered high levels of work stress (Hing and Gainsbury 2011).

Casino hotels are different from the non-casino hotels in many aspects, such as customer source, the main profit source and services providing. However, few studies have been conducted to examine the difference in employees' work stress and job satisfaction of the casino hotels and non-casino hotels. The paper explores and compares the employees' work stress and job satisfaction between the casino hotels and the non-casino hotels. The paper tries to achieve the below aims: Firstly, explore and compare the impact of gender, job position, marital status and fertility status on employees' work stress and job satisfaction. Secondly, explore the perception of work stress and job satisfaction across casino hotel and non-casino hotel employees. Thirdly, explore the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Work stress

Work stress is someone's response to the threats of the job (Jamal, 1990). According to the theory of Person- environment fit (P-E fit), a poor fit between personal ability and working environment may lead to high work stress.

Work stress has been considered as one significant issue in the hospitality industry (Wildes, 2007). On the organizational level, high work stress and low job satisfaction may increase interpersonal conflict, absenteeism and staff turnover. The work stress adversely affects the effectiveness and the service of the casino industry. Employees who reported high work stress require more on the business health care (Michie and Williams, 2003) and deliver poor service to customers (Kim, 2008; Varca, 1999). On the individual level, work stress negatively affect employees' personal well being (Fortes-Ferreira et al., 2006; Shani and Pizam, 2009), employees who widely exposed to anxiety and stress may suffer physical and psychological strains (Boswell et al. 2004). In a word, work stress and low job satisfaction will lead to undesirable and expensive consequence to both of employees and businesses.

In hospitality industry, hotel managers suffered much more stress than employees (O'Neill and Davis, 2011; Mohamed, 2015). Women reported higher work stress than men [Mohamed, 2015; Nolen-Hoeksema, 1987]. Married employees reported greater work stress than single employees [Mohamed, 2015].

Based on the previous research, the below hypothesis presented: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between different genders, job position, marital status and fertility status. There are 4 variables: gender, job position, marital status and fertility status, which are marked as H1 、 H2 、 H3 and H4 respectively.

H1: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between different genders.

H2: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between different job positions.

H3: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between different marital situations.

H4: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between different fertility situations.

Different working condition and workload are the external stressors for employees (Antoniou, Polychroni and Vlachakis, 2006). Employees work stress may be different under different working condition. Thus, hypothesis 5 is presented as below. H5: There were significant differences in employees' work stress perception between casino hotel and non- casino hotels.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the employees' attitude towards the job and job conditions; it reflects the degree of one's job pleasure in general. Job satisfaction is one's emotional experiences at work; it is the result of one's assessment of job characteristics and work environment (McShane and Glinow, 2004). Job satisfaction closely linked to the employees' behavior and performance in the work place (Judge et al. 2001). Gu and Sin (2009) also revealed that job satisfaction is significantly connected with work performance with samples of Macau's casino hotel employees.

The previous researches have found that employee satisfaction varies from person to person; individual characteristics (such as gender, age, education, length of service, position, etc.) may affect one's job satisfaction. Job satisfaction of Male employees is higher than that of female (Saner and Sadikoglu, 2016). Moreover, married employees had reported higher job satisfaction compared to single employees (Yildirim, Gulmez and Yildirim, 2016).

Based on the previous research, the below hypothesis presented: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between different genders, job position, marital status and fertility status.

H6: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between different genders.

H7: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between different job positions.

H8: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between different marital statuses.

H9: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between different fertility statuses.

Job satisfaction may be different with diversified working environment and job characteristics. Based on this, hypothesis 10 is presented. H10: There were significant differences in hotel employees' job satisfaction between casino hotels and non-casino hotels.

Work stress and job satisfaction

Work stress affects not only employees' well being (O'Neill and Davis, 2011), but also employees' performance. Cavanaugh et al. (2000) identified that work stress was significantly related to lower job satisfaction. Work stress negatively affects employee's job satisfaction (Fortes-Ferreira *et al.*, 2006; Shani and Pizam, 2009); it may lead to poor morale and low working efficiency. Based on the findings, the below hypothesis has been proposed.

H11: There were negative correlations between hotel employees' work stress and job satisfaction.

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

Data were collected from employees of casino hotels and non-casino hotels in Macau. Snowball sampling method was implied. A pre-test was taken by collecting questionnaires from 30 employees from both casino and non-casino hotels prior to the formal data collection. Some adjustments on the questions were made accordingly.

Total 400 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of 10 hotels in Macau. 200 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of casino hotels (e.g. Sheraton Macau hotel,

Ponte 16 Resort, MGM Macau). The other 200 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of non-casino hotels (e.g. Hotel Royal Macau, Metropark hotel Macau) . Total 261 questionnaires were collected and 1 was invalid and was deleted because of incomplete information.

Among these respondents, more than half (58.1%) were from non-casino hotels, 41.9% were from casino hotels. Exactly half (50%) of the respondents were female. Most of the respondents (83.1%) were single. 69.6% respondents were first line employees. Only 10.4% of the respondents had kids.

Measure

The work stress measurement scale was based on The Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI), developed by Cooper, Sloan, and Williams (1988). There are total 24 questions. The five point Likert scale was implied, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A higher score indicates that the respondent perceived a higher degree of work stress. The reliability test ($\alpha=0.893$) indicates the measurement scale was reliable.

The short form of the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ) , developed by Weiss et al. (1967), was implemented to measure the job satisfaction. There are total 20 questions, including the measurement of intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction and general satisfaction. The five point Likert scale was implied, ranging from 1 (very unsuitable) to 5 (very suitable). A higher score indicates that the respondent perceived a higher degree of job satisfaction. The reliability test ($\alpha=0.914$) indicates the measurement scale was reliable.

RESULTS

A. Work stress

One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the work stress of employees. The data of different gender, job position, marital status, fertility status and the nature of hotel have been compared. The result shows there were not significant differences in employees' work stress perception whether employees are male or female, ordinary employees or managers, single or married, and with or without kids($p > .05$). Hypotheses 1,2,3,4 are rejected.

TABLE 1: THE MEAN COMPARISON BETWEEN EMPLOYEES' WORK STRESS

Questions	Mean	
	Casino hotels	Non-casino hotels
Complex work	3.0275	3.3709
Need work overtime frequently	2.6147	3.0066
Not ideal working environment	3.0459	2.6093
Not enough training	2.7798	2.3841
Insufficient support from managers	3.0734	2.5762
Lack of promotion opportunity	3.65	3.15
Rigid organizational structure	3.1927	2.6040
Low organizational efficiency	3.3028	2.8986
Insufficient communication between departments	3.2936	2.9527

*All these questions showed a significant difference in job satisfaction perception.

The result shows that there were significant differences in work stress perception between casino and non-casino hotels in 11 questions, which have been summarized in table 1. Table 1 compares the mean value of employees' work stress between casino and non-casino hotels. This partially supports hypothesis 5.

According to the result, non-casino hotels employees are more sensitive in the work complexity and overtime working than that of casino hotels employees. Yet, casino hotel employees are more concern about their working environment (3.0459, comparing with 2.6093 of non-casino hotels). Casino hotels employees claimed that hotels did not provide enough training program. They were not satisfied with staff support and promotion opportunity. These problems are highly connected with hotel human resource management. Casino hotels employees also reported higher stress in the business bureaucracy (question "rigid organizational structure"); they are not satisfied with poor communication, low efficiency, and inappropriate business policy and salary system.

Job satisfaction

One-way ANOVA was implemented to compare the job satisfaction of the employees. The result shows there were not significant differences in employees' job satisfaction perception between different genders, positions, marital situations and fertility situations ($p > .05$). Hypotheses 6,7,8,9 are rejected.

The result shows that there were significant differences in job satisfaction perception between casino and non-casino hotels in 14 questions, which have been summarized in table 2. Table 2 compares the mean value of employees' job satisfaction perception between casino and non-casino hotels.

Table 2 indicates clearly non-casino hotels employees enjoy higher job satisfaction than casino hotel employees. Non-casino hotel employees reported higher job satisfaction in involvement (question "opportunity of being an important role"), personal growth (question "opportunity of exploiting personal ability") and income (question "income and workload").

Casino hotel employees were less satisfied with the job autonomy, work achievement and the nature of the work, comparing with non-casino hotel employees. Hypothesis 10 is partially supported.

TABLE 2: THE MEAN COMPARISON BETWEEN EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION

Questions	Mean	
	Casino hotels	Non-casino hotels
Enrich work	3.1759	3.5828
Independent working opportunity	3.4907	3.8013
Opportunity of doing different things	3.3056	3.7219
Opportunity of being an important role	3.1204	3.3311
The way managers treat me	3.0926	3.4067
Decision making skill of manager	3.1296	3.4067
Opportunity of doing things for others	3.3056	3.6490
Opportunity of telling people what to	3.3148	3.5497

do	3.0556	3.4333
Opportunity of exploiting personal ability	2.8241	3.1325
The way of business policy implication	2.6111	3.0199
Income and workload	2.93519	3.26490
The freedom of making own judgments	3.0648	3.4702
	2.9907	3.4834
Work autonomy		
Work achievement		

*All these questions showed a significant difference in job satisfaction perception.

Work stress and job satisfaction

In order to reveal the inter-relationships between stress and job satisfaction, correlation analysis was further implied. The correlation coefficient ($\rho = -.463$) indicates there was a high negative correlation between stress and job satisfaction. Hypothesis 11 is supported. This result is consistent with previous research (Cavanaugh, Boswell and Roehling, 2000;Shani and Pizam, 2009).

CONCLUSIONS

The paper explores employees' work stress and job satisfaction of Macau hotel industry; it further examines how does the work stress influence job satisfaction.

It is interesting to find that personal differences include gender, job position, marital and fertility status, have no influence on employees' work stress and job satisfaction. These results are inconsistent with the findings in the literature.

The perceptions of work stress and job satisfaction between casino hotel and non-casino hotel employees have been compared. The result indicates employees of casino hotels reported higher stress in several questions, such as working environment, training program and promotion opportunity. Moreover, casino hotel employees reported lower job satisfaction.

According to the research of Government of Macao Special Administrative Region Statistics and Census Service (2016), the average monthly salary of full-time employees (excluding bonuses and bonuses) of the gambling industry in 2016 reached 21990 Macau Yuan. The salary was much higher than that of non-casino hotel employees (16810 Macau Yuan). It is very interesting

to notice that even with much higher income, employees of casino hotels still reported higher stress and less satisfaction.

Casino hotels employees experience high work stress due to the special work nature and health-threatening working condition. With very crowded, noisy and passively smoking environment, it is not surprising to find that casino hotels employees are not satisfied with the working condition. The situation could be even worse, when losing gamblers are getting anxious and emotional. The endurance of customers' grumpy temper could be very desperate. Except the working environment, working shift, especially night shifts in casino are very demanding and even harmful to employees' health.

Hotel rooms operations are the profit center for non-casino hotels. In order to maintain the customers, the hotels devote to improve employees' hospitality and customers' stay experience. Training would be extremely important in non-casino hotels. However, for the casino hotels, Gambling facilities, especially VIP gambling rooms, are the profit centers. The non-gambling amenities, such as restaurants and hotel rooms, contribute little to casino hotels' revenue. In order to entice gamblers, food and beverages, and hotel rooms were provided free or at an extremely low price. The profit from casino would be sufficient to offset the loss in the hotel and restaurants' operation. Moreover, comparing with the hotel customers, gamblers may pay less attention to hotel's quality and hospitality. The reason why gamblers choose the hotel could be varied. Some gamblers may stick to the casino because they think they can gain lucky there. Training and employee's support would be less important as a consequence of the priority of gamblers development in the casino hotels.

Casino hotel employees reported higher work stress in insufficient training, staff support and promotion opportunity. Casino hotels should improve their training programs. Ongoing training may improve employees' knowledge and skill, develop employees' capabilities, which would further benefit their career advancement. Moreover, the training of stress management would benefit both employees and the businesses. It is suggested that the casino hotels should strengthen the employee assistance programs, employees' encouragement, sponsorships and promotion. More staff activities, both formal and informal activities, are encouraged to improve interpersonal relationship and communication. As a result a better working atmosphere would be achieved.

Moreover, some casino related positions, such as money-handlers and dealers have to operate under extremely high degree of supervision. This explains why they are less satisfied with job autonomy. Gambling may lead to bankrupt, illegal activities and even criminal cases. By witnessing the consequence of gambling, casino hotel employees may suffer the conflicts of conscience. All these reduced the work satisfaction of casino hotel employees.

Employees of casino hotels were not satisfied with the job autonomy, sense of accomplishment and personal growth, comparing with non-casino hotel employees. Job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment could be implied to motivate employees. Job diversification allows

employees to explore their interest, imply different knowledge. Job diversification may also increase the job autonomy and boost sense of achievement.

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