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Examining the Influence of Personal Resources on Employee Job Engagement in the Tourism Sector

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Abstract

This research investigates the link between personal resources and employee engagement. A survey was conducted among 365 employees working in tourism companies in Hanoi. Drawing on the conservation of resources theory, three key personal resource factors were examined: self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism. Using the PLS-SEM analytical approach, findings indicate that all three personal resource factors have a direct positive effect on job satisfaction. Additionally, the study reveals that self-esteem and optimism significantly influence job engagement, while self-efficacy does not show a direct impact on engagement. The results further demonstrate a positive association between job satisfaction and job engagement within the tourism sector. Moreover, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism indirectly affect job engagement through their influence on job satisfaction. The study concludes with a discussion of the findings, implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Job engagement, Personal resources, Tourism companies, Job satisfaction

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted the tourism industry, with over 95% of tourism-related businesses shutting down or suspending their activities, according to the General Department of Tourism. A significant portion—around 20 to 30%—faces the risk of bankruptcy. In Hanoi, the Department of Tourism reported that approximately 12,600 workers in the hospitality sector lost their jobs in the first half of 2021. Furthermore, about 90% of employees in travel-related firms resigned or ended their contracts, amounting to over 12,100 individuals. Before the pandemic, Hanoi's tourism sector was flourishing, showing an average growth rate of 15% to 17%, with nearly 29 million visitors recorded in 2019. Nonetheless, the past two years have posed extraordinary challenges, particularly impacting hotels and other tourism businesses. Due to prolonged pandemic effects, many tourism companies now face difficulties in recruiting qualified and experienced staff. Even after reopening in April 2022, a considerable number of hotel employees did not return to their jobs.

Employee engagement plays a critical role in building organizational competitiveness, as emphasized by Ncube and Jerie (2012)[1]. For this reason, organizations should focus on optimizing resources to enhance employee development and engagement. In the tourism sector, management is well aware that a skilled workforce is essential to boost operational efficiency. However, high rates of voluntary turnover and job switching continue to challenge the industry. Additionally, Hiên and Vinh (2022) highlight that workers tend to feel insecure about their job stability, particularly in the wake of the COVID-



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19 crisis[2]. Hardaningtyas (2020) notes that employees with a positive mindset are generally more motivated and engaged in their work[3].

Although various studies have explored factors influencing job engagement in different contexts, most have concentrated on job design or organizational variables [4]. Research examining employees' personal resources—such as their self-perceptions and optimism—is limited, especially regarding their impact on turnover intentions [1, 5–8]. After reviewing key academic databases like ResearchGate, Science Direct, IEEE Xplore, Scopus, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar, no study was found that specifically investigates how personal resources relate to job satisfaction and engagement in the tourism industry, nor the mediating role of satisfaction.

To address this gap, the present study examines how personal resources affect both job satisfaction and engagement among employees working in tourism businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies. The study further explores the interrelationships among these variables. The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 outlines the theoretical framework; Section 3 details the methodology; Section 4 presents the findings; and Section 5 provides conclusions and management implications.

Literature review

Theory of conservation of resource

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, introduced by Hobfoll (1989), focuses on how individuals invest in, develop, and preserve their personal resources—traits and conditions within an organizational context that are highly valued by the individual[9]. According to Wen *et al.* (2019), the loss or lack of these critical resources can trigger negative psychological outcomes. Employees tend to act in ways that protect their resources, which might include leaving a job or seeking new resources elsewhere. Van den Heuvel *et al.* (2010) found that when employees possess sufficient resources, they perceive their work as more meaningful and are better equipped to overcome workplace challenges[10]. COR theory has been extensively applied in human resource research. For example, Srung *et al.* (2021) and Hardaningtyas (2020) validated the applicability of COR in explaining individual attitudes and organizational behaviors, emphasizing how employees invest in and conserve valuable personal traits, strengths, and organizational factors. Hence, this study adopts COR theory as the foundational framework to explore how personal resources and job satisfaction influence employee engagement[3, 10].

Personal resources and job satisfaction

Personal resources refer to the qualities and capabilities inherent within employees. Kim and Hyun (2017) describe personal resources as individual attributes that hold value in specific professional domains[7]. This perspective aligns with the COR framework highlighted by Trần and Lê (2019)[11]. Expanding on this, Halbesleben *et al.* (2014) define personal resources as all assets an individual possesses that are beneficial to their tasks and contribute to improved job performance[12]. In the assessment of unique employee resources, three core components are widely recognized: self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism. Similarly, Hardaningtyas (2020) identifies these three elements—self-efficacy confidence, organizationally rooted self-esteem, and optimism—as key personal resource factors to consider[3].

In this study, job satisfaction is treated as a general measure of employees' contentment with their work. It encompasses both overall satisfaction with the job and satisfaction with specific aspects such as compensation, bonuses, and leadership quality. According to Karatepe and Olugbade (2009), job satisfaction reflects employees' positive perceptions and attitudes toward their organizational roles[13].

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's confidence in their ability to successfully perform tasks and meet job demands [6]. When employees possess high self-efficacy, they are more likely to approach their work with assurance and achieve favorable outcomes, fostering a more positive work attitude. **Self-esteem** in the workplace refers to how much an individual values their role, competence, and significance within the organization. Those with elevated job-related self-esteem tend to view themselves as key contributors to their organization, which enhances their dedication and motivation to perform well [14]. **Optimism** is described by Toth *et al.* (2020) as a general tendency to expect positive results in life and work[15]. Optimistic individuals often take responsibility for successful outcomes and attribute failures to external factors, differing from pessimistic outlooks.

Several studies, including those by Hardaningtyas (2020), Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019), and Toth *et al.* (2020), have established that these three personal resource dimensions positively correlate with job satisfaction[3, 4, 15]. Furthermore, research by Halbesleben *et al.* (2014) and Wertheim (2016) indicates that employees equipped with strong personal resources are more satisfied with their jobs, which translates into improved work attitudes and behaviors[6, 12]. Hardaningtyas (2020) also highlights that self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism enhance employee engagement by increasing energy, enthusiasm, and productivity[3].

Based on these insights, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Self-efficacy positively influences employee satisfaction in the tourism sector.

H1b: Self-esteem related to work positively impacts employee satisfaction in tourism companies.

H1c: Optimism regarding work outcomes positively affects employee satisfaction among tourism employees.

Personal resources and job engagement

Job engagement has been defined in various ways. According to Kim and Hyun (2017), it is a positive and fulfilling mental state related to work, marked by energy, dedication, and enthusiasm[7]. Karatepe *et al.* (2018) describe employee engagement as a favorable attitude employees hold toward their organization, which is influenced by the support they receive from it[8]. These definitions reflect two perspectives: one focuses on the individual employee's internal experience, while the other emphasizes the employee's perception of organizational backing. Jeanson and Michinov (2020) further characterize engagement as employees' positive regard for their organization's values and activities[16]. Engaged employees understand the broader business environment and collaborate with colleagues to enhance organizational performance. Cultivating engagement is essential for organizations since it depends on a reciprocal relationship between employees and the workplace. Chandani *et al.* (2016) define engagement as a positive psychological state involving substantial emotional and energetic investment in job performance[17]. Consequently, engagement is seen as emerging when individuals feel emotionally connected to others, find meaning in their work, and trust their organization.

Personal resources are considered significant drivers of employee engagement and creativity. These resources foster positive feelings toward work, encouraging deeper involvement [15]. Employees with high self-confidence tend to be more motivated and productive, which naturally translates into greater job engagement. Jeanson and Michinov (2020) demonstrated that self-confidence strengthens employee engagement, and Wertheim (2016), through a study of female nurses in Iran, supported the positive influence of self-esteem on job engagement. Based on these findings, the following hypotheses are proposed[6]:

H2a: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on job engagement in tourism enterprises.

H2b: Self-esteem positively influences job engagement among tourism employees.

H2c: Optimism regarding work positively impacts job engagement in the tourism sector.

Job satisfaction and employee engagement

Numerous studies have examined how job satisfaction relates to employee engagement. For example, Preko and Adjetej (2013) explored this connection within commercial banks and found a strong positive association between employee satisfaction, loyalty, and performance[18]. Likewise, Book *et al.* (2019) reported a positive correlation between satisfaction and loyalty among employees in the hotel food and beverage industry[19]. Additionally, research by Suong *et al.* (2021) indicated that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in strengthening employees' commitment to their organizations, particularly in retail settings[10]. Based on these findings, this study hypothesizes that:

H3: Employee job satisfaction positively influences engagement in tourism businesses.

Despite these findings, the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between employees' personal resources and their engagement has not been thoroughly explored. Kianto *et al.* (2016) emphasize that satisfied employees tend to develop stronger emotional bonds to their workplaces and display behaviors beneficial to the organization[20]. Building on this, the study posits that job satisfaction may act as a mediator in the link between personal resources and job engagement, leading to the following hypotheses:

H4a: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and job engagement.

H4b: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between self-esteem and job engagement.

H4c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between optimism and job engagement.

Research methodology

The research was carried out through a sequential four-step process: initial qualitative analysis, preliminary quantitative assessment, comprehensive quantitative survey, and final qualitative follow-up. The personal resource variables were adapted from Hardaningtyas (2020)[3]. Job satisfaction variables were drawn from the framework established by Trần and Lê (2019), while the job engagement measures were sourced from Suong *et al.* (2021)[10, 11]. **Table 1** provides a detailed summary of the observed variables and their respective origins.

Table 1. Measured Variables and Their Sources

Variable	Items	Coding	Source
Self-Efficacy	I confidently pursue and achieve my objectives	SEF1	Hardaningtyas (2020)[3]
	I am capable of handling unforeseen challenges effectively	SEF2	
	I remain composed during difficulties, trusting my coping skills	SEF3	
	I can manage most situations that arise	SEF4	
	I anticipate potential issues and prepare solutions in advance*	SEF5	
Self-Esteem	I am valued and respected	STM1	Hardaningtyas (2020)[3]

	Others trust me	STM2	
	People have confidence in my abilities*	STM3	
	I feel I have worth	STM4	
	I perform my tasks efficiently	STM5	
Job Optimism	In challenging times, I expect positive outcomes	OPT1	Hardaningtyas (2020)[3]
	I generally believe things will work out well*	OPT2	
	I maintain a hopeful outlook for my future	OPT3	
	I anticipate more positive than negative outcomes	OPT4	
Job Satisfaction	I consider this organization the ideal workplace for me	JSF1	Trần and Lê (2019)[11]
	If given the choice, I would still work for this organization	JSF2	
	I view the organization as a second home*	JSF3	
	The organization provides me with meaningful benefits*	JSF4	
	Overall, I am very pleased to work here	JSF5	
Job Engagement	I feel proud of the work I do	ENG1	Suong <i>et al.</i> (2021)[10]
	I become fully immersed in my tasks, losing track of my surroundings	ENG2	
	Time passes quickly when I'm working	ENG3	
	I find joy in working diligently	ENG4	

The survey targeted 400 employees working in hotels, travel agencies, and restaurants located in Hanoi between October and December 2021. All variables under study were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Additionally, the questionnaire collected demographic details such as gender, age, and job role.

This research employed partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the gathered data. Primary data were obtained through the questionnaire and processed using SPSS and SmartPLS 4.0 software. Following Henseler and Chin's (2010) guidelines, the PLS-SEM approach involves two main phases[21]: first, the measurement model's evaluation, which checks the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the constructs; second, the assessment of the structural model. The structural model analysis applied the bootstrapping technique with 5,000 resamples to determine the significance of paths and indicators. Key metrics such as the variance inflation factor (VIF), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and the coefficient of determination (R^2) were also examined.

Results and Discussion

From the 400 distributed questionnaires, 381 responses were returned. After filtering out incomplete or invalid submissions, 365 valid responses remained, representing a response rate of 91%. **Table 2** summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents included in this study.

Table 2. Demographic Information of Employees

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	108	29.6
	Female	257	70.4
Age	under 25-year-old	107	29.3
	26-35-year-old	102	27.9
	36-45-year-old	112	30.7
	above 45-year-old	44	12.1
Education	High school degree	208	57.0
	Occupation degree	113	31.0
	Bachelor degree	30	8.2
	Master or more	14	3.8
Position	Staff	298	81.6
	Manager	67	18.4
Experience	Below 5 years	109	29.9
	6-10 years	89	24.4
	11-15 years	83	22.7
	Above 15 years	84	23.0
Type of business	Travel	227	62.2
	Hotel	75	20.5
	Restaurants	63	17.3
Total		365	100.0

Measurement model analysis

The measurement model, which included five constructs and 22 observed indicators, was examined. During the initial evaluation, three indicators—EEF1 (“I easily stick to my goals and accomplish my goals”), EST3 (“Everyone has faith in me”), and OPT2 (“I always expect things to go my way”)—showed factor loadings below the 0.7 threshold and were therefore excluded from the model. The updated results are presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3. The Reliability and Validity of the Structural Model

Variables	Items	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	C.R	AVE
Self-efficacy	EEF5	0.790	0.844	0.893	0.676
	EFF2	0.796			
	EFF3	0.840			
	EFF4	0.862			
Self-esteem	EST1	0.832	0.849	0.898	0.688
	EST2	0.799			
	EST4	0.855			
	EST5	0.830			
Optimism	OPT1	0.857	0.848	0.908	0.767
	OPT3	0.881			
	OPT4	0.889			
Job satisfaction	JSA1	0.743	0.803	0.871	0.629
	JSA2	0.847			
	JSA4	0.818			
	JSA5	0.760			
Job engagement	WEN1	0.875	0.868	0.910	0.717
	WEN2	0.871			
	WEN3	0.868			
	WEN5	0.767			

The results of the second evaluation, presented in **Table 3**, indicate that all observed variables have factor loadings exceeding 0.7. Additionally, both Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability indices are above the 0.7 threshold, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpass 0.5. These results confirm that the data meets the necessary reliability criteria [22]. **Table 4** demonstrates that discriminant validity is established, as all diagonal values are greater than the corresponding values in their respective columns, following the Fornell-Larcker criterion [23].

Table 4. Discriminant Value of the Model

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)					
	Job engagement	Job satisfaction	Optimism	Self-efficacy	Self-esteem
Job satisfaction	0.794				
Optimism	0.671	0.798			
Self-efficacy	0.497	0.764	0.603		
Self-esteem	0.677	0.796	0.603	0.493	
Fornell-Larcker					
	Job engagement	Job satisfaction	Optimism	Self-efficacy	Self-esteem
Job engagement	0.847				
Job satisfaction	0.680	0.793			
Optimism	0.586	0.665	0.876		
Self-efficacy	0.443	0.652	0.522	0.822	
Self-esteem	0.588	0.662	0.520	0.441	0.829

Henseler *et al.* (2015) suggest that discriminant validity between two latent variables is ensured when the HTMT value is less than or equal to 0.85[24]. As shown in **Table 5**, all HTMT values fall below this threshold, confirming adequate discriminant validity.

Structural model analysis

An important initial step in analyzing the structural model is to check for multicollinearity. According to the results in **Table 5**, all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below 3, indicating no multicollinearity issues among the predictor constructs [22].

Table 5. Value of VIF, f^2 , R^2 , and Q^2

	R^2	Q^2	Self-efficacy		Self-esteem		Optimism		Job satisfaction	
			f^2	VIF	f^2	VIF	f^2	VIF	f^2	VIF
Job satisfaction	0.521	0.405	0.255	1.454	0.226	1.449	0.169	1.605		
Job engagement	0.657	0.354	0.002	1.782	0.053	1.818	0.052	1.876	0.125	2.916

The results indicate that R^2 values exceeding 0.40 demonstrate an acceptable level of explanatory power of the independent variables on the variance of the dependent variables. Additionally, all relationships show a meaningful effect size with f^2 values greater than 0.02. The Q^2 values, all above zero, confirm the model’s satisfactory out-of-sample predictive relevance.

Table 6 presents the evaluation outcomes of the structural model, including path coefficients, t-values, and p-values.

Table 6. Results of the Direct Effect

	Hypothesis	β – Value	T - Value	P- Value	Results
H1a	Self-efficacy -> Job satisfaction	0.335	6.495	0.000	Supported
H1b	Self-esteem -> Job satisfaction	0.356	8.136	0.000	Supported
H1c	Optimism -> Job satisfaction	0.305	6.530	0.000	Supported
H2a	Self-efficacy -> Job engagement	-0.037	0.761	0.447	Unsupported
H2b	Self-esteem -> Job engagement	0.215	3.807	0.000	Supported
H2c	Optimism -> Job engagement	0.216	3.733	0.000	Supported
H3	Job satisfaction -> Job engagement	0.418	5.323	0.000	Supported
H4a	Self-efficacy -> Job satisfaction -> Job engagement	0.149	5.055	0.000	Supported
H4b	Self-esteem -> Job satisfaction -> Job engagement	0.128	3.997	0.000	Supported
Hbc	Optimism -> Job satisfaction -> Job engagement	0.140	3.835	0.000	Supported

According to Hair Jr. *et al.* (2021), a hypothesis is supported when the t-value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05[22]. The findings indicate that job satisfaction is significantly and positively influenced by self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.335$; $t = 6.495$; $p < 0.01$), self-esteem ($\beta = 0.356$; $t = 8.136$; $p < 0.01$), and optimism ($\beta = 0.305$; $t = 6.530$; $p < 0.01$). Additionally, job engagement is significantly and positively affected by self-esteem ($\beta = 0.215$; $t = 3.807$; $p < 0.01$) and optimism ($\beta = 0.216$; $t = 3.733$; $p < 0.01$).

Furthermore, the direct relationship between job satisfaction and job engagement ($\beta = 0.418$; $t = 5.323$; $p < 0.01$) is also confirmed. However, the analysis did not support a direct effect of self-efficacy on job engagement, as the t-value was below 1.96 and the p-value exceeded 0.05.

Figure 1 illustrates the results of the structural model.

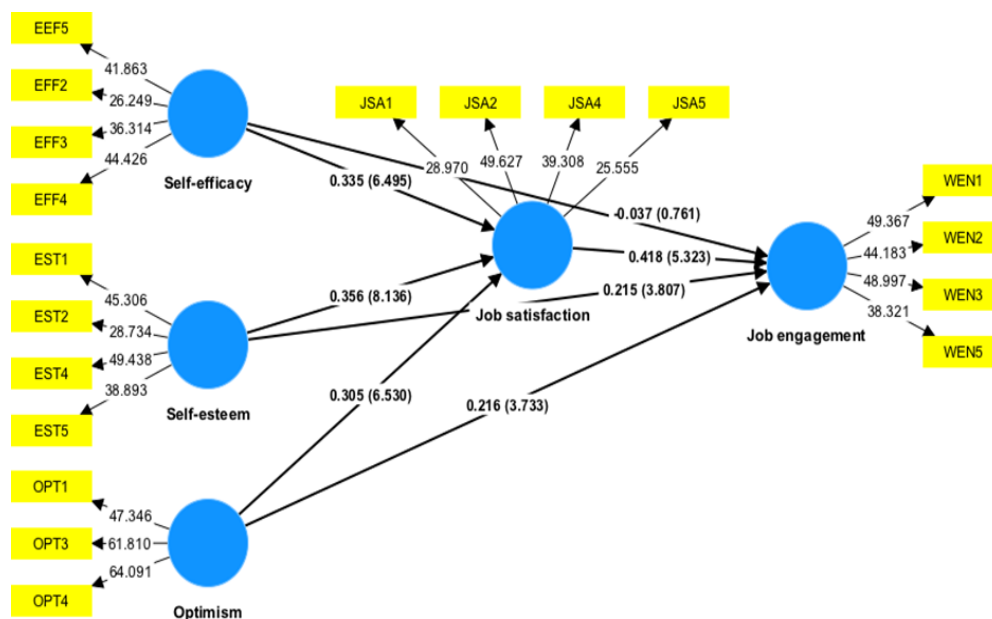


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Results

Mediating effect of job satisfaction

The analysis confirms that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between personal resources—namely self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism—and job engagement. This was evidenced by t-values exceeding 1.96, p-values below

0.05, and confidence intervals excluding zero [25]. These findings align with Nezhadrahim *et al.* (2023), supporting the important role of satisfaction in linking personal attributes to engagement outcomes [26].

Interpretation of findings

This research demonstrates that self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism each contribute positively to employee satisfaction within the tourism sector, echoing results from prior studies such as Karatepe and Olugbade (2009), Hardaningtyas (2020), and Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) [3, 4, 13]. Notably, even after the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism workers in Hanoi maintained a hopeful and confident outlook on their roles. However, some earlier investigations [4] suggest a need for stronger evidence linking optimism with workplace outcomes, as previous research often focused more on organizational support rather than individual psychological resources [6].

The findings also reveal that self-esteem and optimism have a direct positive effect on job engagement, confirming earlier research by Wertheim (2016) and Kim & Hyun (2017)[6, 7]. Interestingly, while optimism had a pronounced effect on employee commitment here, Wertheim's study highlighted self-esteem as the primary influencer. Another key insight from this study is that self-efficacy does not influence job engagement directly but exerts an indirect impact through job satisfaction, consistent with the observations of Halimah *et al.* (2021) and Nurcahyo *et al.* (2023) [27, 28].

All three personal resource factors indirectly shape job engagement via job satisfaction, emphasizing the mediator role of satisfaction—an aspect often overlooked in past research.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how personal resources relate to job engagement among tourism employees in Hanoi. Drawing from Conservation of Resources theory, it focused on three key internal assets: self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism. Results confirm that these resources significantly predict job satisfaction, with self-esteem and optimism also directly enhancing job engagement. Furthermore, job satisfaction serves as a crucial bridge linking these personal resources to employees' engagement.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes by developing a resource-based model that integrates individual psychological traits with engagement outcomes and by highlighting job satisfaction as a vital mediator.

For tourism industry managers, these findings underscore the importance of recognizing and nurturing employees' personal strengths. Given that self-efficacy influences engagement only through satisfaction, managers should prioritize initiatives that boost employees' satisfaction levels to foster stronger work commitment. Additionally, since individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be strong-willed and harder to retain, special attention should be given to talent management and retention strategies.

Limitations and future research

Despite its contributions, this research has some limitations. It was confined to tourism workers in Hanoi, limiting the generalizability of results. Future studies should examine diverse geographic regions and compare demographic variables to gain a broader understanding of engagement dynamics. While the sample size was adequate for PLS-SEM analysis, expanding participant numbers could enhance the robustness of findings.

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