

THE INTERACTIVE ROLE OF MANAGERIAL TITLE AND OVERALL SATISFACTION ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF HOTEL KITCHEN STAFF

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Abstract

This study examines whether managerial rank influences job satisfaction among hotel kitchen staff and whether this relationship is moderated by overall satisfaction. Data were collected from 148 employees working in various four- and five-star hotels across different regions of Turkey. The analysis was conducted using Hayes' PROCESS Model 1, with managerial rank specified as a multi-categorical independent variable and dummy-coded with lower-level staff as the reference category. The findings indicate that managerial titles do not have a consistent direct effect on job satisfaction across all hierarchical levels. Similarly, the overall moderating effect of overall satisfaction on the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction was not statistically significant. However, a closer examination of the interaction terms revealed a significant interaction effect, particularly for section chefs. This finding should be interpreted with caution, as it does not indicate a general moderating effect but rather suggests a role-specific pattern within the sample. Therefore, the results suggest that the dynamics of job satisfaction may vary across hierarchical levels; however, the evidence is limited to specific roles rather than indicating a consistent pattern across the entire model.

Keywords: job satisfaction, hotel, kitchen, staff, managerial title

JEL Classification: J28, L83, M12

1. Introduction

Accommodation businesses, which play an important role in the service sector, are required to provide high-quality services to ensure continuous customer satisfaction. In this context, human resources, one of the fundamental elements of service production, are of vital importance, especially for kitchen staff (Abdulrab & Hezam, 2024). Hotel kitchen staff have a wide range of responsibilities, including planning and preparing the food service offered to guests, implementing hygiene rules, and making aesthetic presentations (Amalia & Elvandari, 2024; Ko & Lu, 2022). Therefore, the level of job satisfaction among these personnel directly affects not only their individual performance but also overall service quality and customer experience (Amoako et al., 2023).

This study examines the factors affecting job satisfaction among hotel kitchen staff in a multidimensional manner. Specifically, it investigates the effect of managerial title on job satisfaction and assesses the moderating role of employees' overall satisfaction levels in this relationship. In this context, the study explores whether the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction varies depending on employees' overall satisfaction. This approach is important in revealing that job satisfaction is shaped not only by direct effects but also by individual perceptions and evaluations.

The theoretical background of this study is mainly based on organizational behavior perspectives that emphasize the importance of hierarchical structure and workplace dynamics in shaping employees' attitudes toward their jobs. In organizational settings, employees' perceptions of their position within the hierarchy, as well as their general evaluation of the work environment, may influence how they feel

about their work. These effects are not always uniform and can vary depending on the context in which employees operate and how they perceive their organization overall. From this point of view, the present study examines whether the job satisfaction of hotel kitchen staff differs according to managerial title and whether this relationship changes depending on employees' overall satisfaction levels.

This study makes three key contributions to the literature. First, it aims to add sectoral depth to the job satisfaction literature by focusing on kitchen staff, who are often overlooked in the hospitality industry. Second, it seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the impact of organizational hierarchy elements, such as managerial titles, on employee attitudes. Third, by proposing a model that explains how employees' overall satisfaction levels shape this interaction, the study aims to provide a strategic perspective on managerial practices within organizations.

Consequently, it is argued that policies and practices aimed at increasing job satisfaction among employees working in hotel kitchens should not be limited solely to direct working conditions; rather, they should be addressed holistically, considering managers' positions, leadership styles, and employees' overall organizational satisfaction. In this context, the study aims to present important findings from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Job satisfaction in hotel kitchen work

Job satisfaction refers to a range of positive reactions employees exhibit toward their work (Bădulescu & Bădulescu, 2020). It describes the general level of satisfaction employees feel about their jobs and is closely related to variables such as motivation, job performance, and organizational commitment (Purwanto et al., 2022). High job satisfaction contributes to employees developing a positive attitude toward their work and a tendency to stay with the company longer. In contrast, low job satisfaction can lead to negative consequences such as turnover intention, burnout, and poor performance (Susanto et al., 2023).

Determining the level of satisfaction in occupational groups with physically and psychologically demanding work conditions, such as kitchen staff, is strategically important for sectoral development (Parteca et al., 2020; Singh & Sreenivasan, 2025). Job satisfaction among hotel kitchen staff depends not only on individual factors but also on variables such as organizational structure, managerial attitudes, relationships with colleagues, career opportunities, and job security (Croes et al., 2025).

2.2. Managerial title and hierarchical position

Among the organizational factors affecting job satisfaction, managerial title is one of the most notable variables. This is because the manager's position, the level of authority they possess, and how this authority is reflected on the staff greatly affect the dynamics of the work environment (Ochieng, 2023).

Managerial title refers to a manager's hierarchical position and status within an organization. Managers with higher titles may have more decision-making authority, while those at lower levels may have a greater direct impact on staff (Qatawneh, 2023; Gandrita, 2023). In hotel kitchens, there are usually various managerial positions such as executive chef, section chef, and assistant chef (Kukreti, 2023). The communication style, level of authority, and leadership style associated with each managerial position shape how lower-level employees experience their work. For example, a kitchen staff member working under an authoritarian management style may experience lower job satisfaction compared to one working under supportive and democratic leadership. In this context, managerial title can be understood not merely as a job description, but also as a psychosocial factor influencing employees' work experiences (Lee & Ding, 2023; Cai, 2023).

2.3. Overall satisfaction and its relationship to job satisfaction

On the other hand, employees' general evaluations of their organizations – that is, their overall satisfaction levels – can also play a decisive role in job satisfaction (Gazi et al., 2022). Overall satisfaction can be understood as the sum of employees' general opinions about the work environment, working conditions, compensation policies, career opportunities, organizational culture, and managerial practices. This broader assessment provides an overarching framework that shapes job satisfaction

(Adinew, 2024). For example, an employee who is generally satisfied with their organization may be more likely to evaluate their job positively, despite specific job stresses or problems with managers. Therefore, overall satisfaction may act as a buffer, reducing the potential negative effects related to managerial titles (Li et al., 2023).

Although overall satisfaction and job satisfaction are conceptually related, they represent different levels of employee evaluation. Job satisfaction primarily reflects employees' emotional and cognitive evaluations of their own job roles and tasks (Williams et al., 2024). In contrast, overall satisfaction refers to a more comprehensive and holistic evaluation of the organization, including the organizational climate, policies, and overall work environment (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). In this context, overall satisfaction is conceptualized as a higher-level evaluation framework that extends beyond the boundaries of role-specific experiences.

Previous research has raised concerns about a potential overlap between these concepts, as they may be empirically similar. Therefore, in this study, overall satisfaction is treated not as a parallel outcome variable, but as a contextual perception that may shape how employees interpret the impact of management hierarchy on their job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 1997). This approach allows overall satisfaction to function not as an extension of job satisfaction, but as a moderating condition.

2.4. Research gap and study focus

The literature indicates that job satisfaction in hospitality settings is shaped by demanding work conditions, organizational factors, and hierarchical dynamics. It also suggests that broader evaluations of the organization may influence how employees perceive their work roles. However, the interaction between managerial hierarchy and overall satisfaction has not been sufficiently examined in the specific context of hotel kitchen staff.

This study examines whether managerial title influences job satisfaction among hotel kitchen employees and whether this relationship varies with their level of overall satisfaction. In doing so, it aims to contribute to a more context-sensitive understanding of employee attitudes in hospitality organizations.

3. Methodology

The research included 148 kitchen staff members working in various four- and five-star hotels in the Mediterranean region of Turkey. Participants were divided into four groups: executive chefs, section chefs, assistant chefs, and lower-level staff (independent variable: X). Job satisfaction (Y) served as the dependent variable, and overall satisfaction (W) was used as the moderator variable. Because the executive title is a categorical variable, dummy coding was applied in the analysis using SPSS PROCESS Model 1. Managerial title was classified into four categories: executive chef, section chef, assistant chef, and lower-level staff, with lower-level staff used as the reference category. The effect of the X*W interaction terms was also tested in the model. The conceptual model illustrating the relationships among managerial title, job satisfaction, and overall satisfaction is presented in Figure 1.

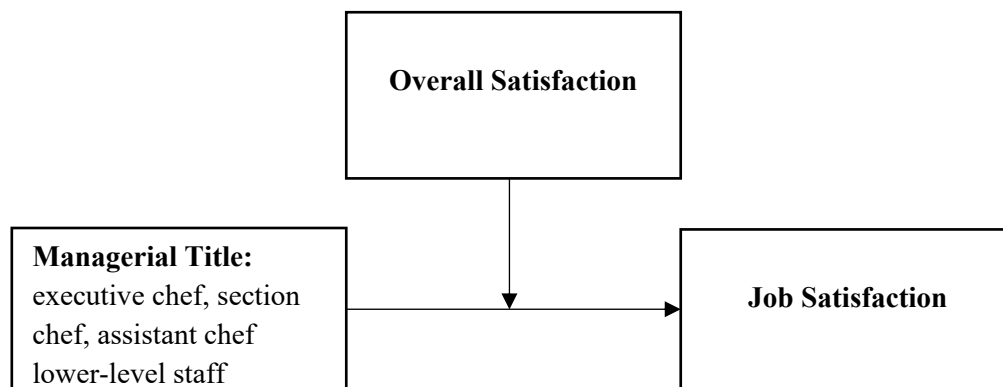


Figure 1. Conceptual model 1 from Hayes' process

Source: Hayes (2022)

The study sample consists of 148 kitchen staff working in various four- and five-star hotels in Turkey in 2025. Participants were selected voluntarily using purposive sampling. Their ages ranged from 20 to 58; 61.5% were male and 38.5% were female. Most participants had a total service duration and an average service duration at the same hotel of less than one year. Managerial titles among participants included executive chef, section chef, assistant chef, and lower-level staff. The majority were assistant chefs (50.7%), followed by lower-level staff (25.7%), section chefs (13.5%), and executive chefs (10.1%).

The data collection tool is a survey form consisting of three sections:

- a) Demographic information form: This section includes descriptive information about participants, such as gender, age, length of service, and managerial title.
- b) Job satisfaction scale: Job satisfaction is measured using the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967). The scale consists of 12 items and is structured as a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the scale in this study was calculated as .88.
- c) Overall satisfaction scale: This scale, developed to measure employees' overall assessments of the organization, contains 7 items. These items address satisfaction with management processes, relationships with teammates, career development, compensation policy, and the overall work atmosphere. It is a 5-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the scale was found to be .84.

The data were collected offline using printed survey forms following preliminary contact with several four- and five-star hotels in Turkey between April and May 2025. The participants consisted of 148 employees working in the kitchen departments of these establishments. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, confirming their voluntary participation in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the data collection process. After preliminary screening, the data were checked for accuracy and suitability for analysis, then transferred to SPSS 26.0 for statistical analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 and the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and minimum–maximum values, were calculated for all variables. To test the research model, PROCESS Model 1 was used to examine the effect of managerial title on job satisfaction and the moderating role of overall satisfaction. Managerial title was treated as a multicategorical independent variable with four groups (executive chef, section chef, assistant chef, and lower-level staff). Indicator (dummy) coding was applied, with lower-level staff as the reference category. Three dummy variables were created to represent the managerial levels and entered into the model along with their interaction terms with overall satisfaction. The significance of the interaction effects was assessed based on changes in R^2 and the statistical significance of individual interaction terms. All coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and 95% confidence intervals were reported. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

4. Results

This section presents the study's findings, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and moderation analysis results.

Table 1. Mean job satisfaction by managerial title

Managerial Title	N	Mean	SD
Executive Chef	15	4.36	0.52
Section Chef	20	4.31	0.51
Assistant Chef	75	4.18	0.72
Lower-level Staff	38	4.27	0.62
Total	148	4.24	0.65

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

Table 1 presents the mean job satisfaction scores by managerial title category. The results show slight differences between groups. Executive chefs reported the highest job satisfaction ($M = 4.36$), while assistant chefs reported lower levels ($M = 4.18$).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2
1. Job Satisfaction	4.23	0.64	—	.36**
2. Overall Satisfaction	3.24	0.56	.36**	—

Note. Pearson correlation coefficients are reported. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed). $N = 148$.

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

As shown in Table 2, overall satisfaction is positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .36$, $p < .01$). A moderation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro Model 1 (Hayes, 2022) to examine whether overall satisfaction moderated the effect of managerial title on job satisfaction. The analysis used a sample of 148 participants, a 95% confidence interval, and 5,000 bootstrap samples.

Table 3. Model summary

R	R ²	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.416	0.173	0.366	4.18	7	140	0.0003

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

According to Table 3, the overall model was statistically significant ($F(7,140) = 4.18$, $p < .001$), explaining approximately 17.3% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .173$).

Table 4. Regression coefficients

Variable	Coeff	se	t	p	%95 CI (LLCI-ULCI)
Constant	4.5789	0.4280	10.6989	.000	[3.7328, 5.4251]
Executive Chef (X1)	-0.5526	0.4942	-1.1182	.265	[-1.5297, 0.4244]
Section Chef (X2)	-0.9085	0.4462	-2.0360	.043	[-1.7906, -0.0263]
Assistant Chef (X3)	-0.5359	0.4653	-1.1518	.251	[-1.4557, 0.3840]
Overall Satisfaction	-0.2510	0.4597	-0.5460	.585	[-1.1599, 0.6579]
X1 × Overall Satisfaction	0.6495	0.5464	1.1887	.236	[-0.4308, 1.7298]
X2 × Overall Satisfaction	0.9844	0.4841	2.0335	.043	[0.0273, 1.9414]
X3 × Overall Satisfaction	0.5647	0.5082	1.1112	.268	[-0.4400, 1.5693]

Note: Both statistically significant and non-significant coefficients are reported.

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

According to Table 4, the overall interaction between managerial title and overall satisfaction was not statistically significant. However, a closer examination of the interaction terms revealed that the interaction between section chefs and overall satisfaction was statistically significant ($\beta = 0.9844$, $t = 2.03$, $p = .044$, 95% CI [0.0273, 1.9414]). This indicates that overall satisfaction moderates the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction only for section chefs.

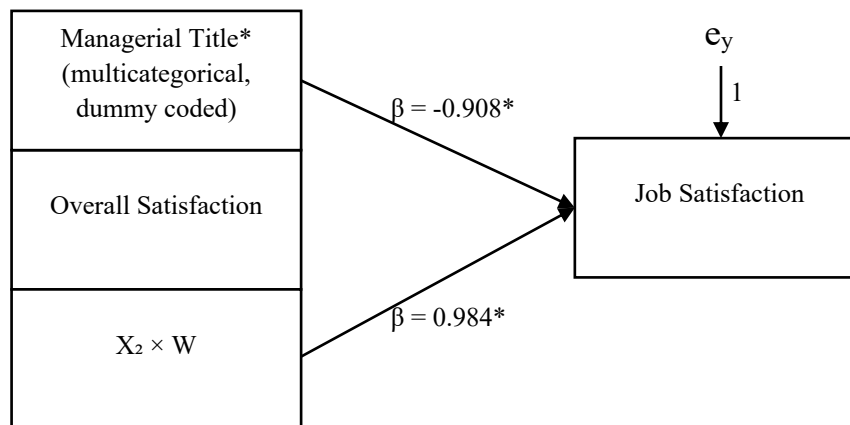


Figure 2. Statistical representation of the moderating effect

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

Note: Managerial title was treated as a multicategorical variable and dummy coded with lower-level staff as the reference category. The model includes three dummy variables and their interaction terms with overall satisfaction. Only statistically significant coefficients are displayed ($p < .05$). Coefficients are unstandardized (β values).

Figure 2 illustrates the moderation model, where managerial title is treated as a multicategorical variable. The results indicate that only section chefs show a significant direct effect and interaction effect with overall satisfaction, suggesting a group-specific moderating effect.

Table 5. Test of R^2 Change

Interaction	ΔR^2	F	df1	df2	p
Managerial Title*Overall Satisfaction	0.0347	1.9572	3	140	0.1232

Source: Author's own results based on data analysis

According to Table 5, the interaction terms collectively contributed an additional 3.47% of variance to the model; however, this increase was not statistically significant ($\Delta R^2 = .0347$, $F(3,140) = 1.95$, $p = .123$). These findings indicate that the overall moderating effect of overall satisfaction on the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction was not supported. However, as shown in Table 4, a significant interaction was observed specifically for section chefs. This finding should be interpreted with caution, as the overall moderating effect was not statistically significant. Therefore, rather than indicating a general moderating role of overall satisfaction, this result suggests a role-specific pattern within the sample.

5. Discussion

The results indicate a limited, role-specific pattern, particularly among section chefs. This finding is consistent with prior research suggesting that intermediate managerial roles are associated with higher levels of role conflict and pressure (Anglin et al., 2022). This study provides a nuanced understanding of the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction in hotel kitchen settings. Contrary to initial expectations, the results did not support a general moderating effect of overall satisfaction on this relationship. This suggests that the influence of managerial hierarchy on job satisfaction may not be uniform across different organizational levels. However, the results indicate a limited, role-specific pattern. Specifically, section chefs differ from lower-level staff, as their job satisfaction shows a context-dependent association with overall satisfaction. This may be related to the intermediate position of section chefs within the organizational hierarchy, where they are exposed to both managerial expectations and operational pressures. Such a position may make their job experiences more sensitive to broader organizational evaluations.

The absence of a significant omnibus interaction alongside a single significant subgroup effect suggests that the moderating role of overall satisfaction is not systematic across all managerial levels but may

instead reflect context-dependent dynamics specific to certain hierarchical positions. Importantly, this result is based on a single significant interaction coefficient and should not be interpreted as evidence of a general moderating effect. Rather, it reflects a limited, subgroup-specific, and sample-dependent pattern that may be driven by contextual dynamics specific to section chefs.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of distinguishing between job satisfaction and broader forms of satisfaction when examining workplace attitudes. Although these constructs are related, they represent different levels of evaluation, and their roles within statistical models should be carefully justified. The mixed pattern of findings also suggests that the relationship between hierarchical position and job satisfaction is more complex than a simple linear effect.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that strategies to improve job satisfaction should not be applied uniformly across all managerial levels. Instead, organizations may benefit from adopting more role-specific approaches, particularly by addressing the unique conditions faced by intermediate positions such as section chiefs. However, these implications should be interpreted with caution given the limited and context-specific nature of the findings.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study examined the relationship between managerial title and job satisfaction among hotel kitchen staff and tested the moderating role of overall satisfaction. The findings do not support a general moderating effect but suggest a limited, role-specific pattern, particularly among section chiefs. These results indicate that the dynamics of job satisfaction may vary across hierarchical levels, although the evidence remains context-dependent.

This study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the need to consider both hierarchical position and broader organizational perceptions when examining job satisfaction. However, the findings should be interpreted with caution, and further research is needed to validate and extend these results in different contexts.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size is relatively small ($n = 148$) and limited to hotels in the Mediterranean region of Turkey. Additionally, the cross-sectional data structure limits causal interpretations. Future research should replicate this model with different types of hotels, larger samples, and longitudinal data. Furthermore, cultural variables influencing manager–employee relationships (e.g., perceived power distance) could be included in the analysis.

Another important limitation concerns the conceptual and empirical proximity between overall satisfaction and job satisfaction. Although these constructs are theoretically distinguished in this study, the operationalization of overall satisfaction through dimensions such as management processes, relationships with teammates, career development, compensation policy, and work environment may overlap with commonly used components of job satisfaction. This conceptual proximity may have influenced the results and limited the model's ability to clearly distinguish between the two constructs; therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Future research is encouraged to examine the discriminant validity of these constructs using more advanced techniques, such as confirmatory factor analysis, and to consider alternative operationalizations that more clearly differentiate overall organizational evaluations from job-specific satisfaction.

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Compliance with ethical standards: All procedures followed standard ethical principles for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and participation was voluntary and anonymous.

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