

THE PERMA MODEL AND JOB PERFORMANCE: UNVEILING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION IN THE TOURISM SECTOR STRATEGY

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Abstract

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The tourism industry faces persistent challenges due to labor shortages and high employee turnover, highlighting the necessity of understanding the factors influencing employee satisfaction and performance. This study examines the positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (PERMA) model — comprising positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement — as a framework for improving job satisfaction and employee performance in the tourism sector. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to analyze data from 375 employees in the tourism industry. The analysis reveals that relationships and meaning significantly drive job satisfaction and performance. Additionally, job satisfaction functions as a crucial mediating variable, connecting the components of the PERMA model to enhanced employee performance. The findings emphasize the importance of creating a positive and meaningful work environment to promote employee well-being. Prioritizing employee satisfaction not only enhances individual performance but also strengthens organizational competitiveness in the dynamic tourism landscape. These findings are consistent with prior work in positive psychology and workplace behavior (Seligman, 2011; Judge et al., 2001). This study contributes to the literature by contextualizing the PERMA model in tourism, a high-pressure and customer-facing environment.

Keywords: PERMA Model, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance, Tourism Sector, PLS-SEM

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the fastest-growing economic sectors globally, contributing approximately 10.4% of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and creating over 333 million jobs, accounting for 10% of the global workforce (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2019). In Vietnam, tourism plays a pivotal role as a key economic sector, contributing 9.2% directly to the GDP in 2019, before experiencing significant disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as provided by Vietnam National Administration of Tourism¹. Despite its economic significance, the tourism industry continues to face persistent challenges, such as high labor pressures, elevated turnover rates, and limited employee engagement. These challenges underscore the importance of fostering employee satisfaction and performance as fundamental strategies for maintaining service quality and sustaining competitive advantages.

The positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (PERMA) model of well-being, introduced by Seligman (2011), provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing well-being and optimizing individual performance through five dimensions: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Empirical studies have consistently shown that higher levels of well-being are associated with improved productivity, reduced turnover, and increased employee engagement (Bui et al., 2024; Butler & Kern, 2016; Jimenez et al., 2024). Job satisfaction, as a critical indicator of individual well-being, serves as a mediating mechanism that links these well-being factors to enhanced work performance (Dyrbye et al., 2021). For example, a US-based survey reported that happy employees are 12% more productive, whereas dissatisfied employees exhibit a 10% decline in productivity (Oswald et al., 2015).

Despite these established relationships, there is a scarcity of research examining the application of the PERMA model in Vietnam's tourism industry. Existing studies indicate that businesses in this sector primarily focus on improving working conditions and skills training, often neglecting the psychological and emotional well-being of employees (Karatepe, 2013). The lack of attention to these factors has the potential to undermine employee motivation, thereby impairing both service quality and operational performance. For instance, Phuong and Vinh (2020) demonstrated that job satisfaction significantly impacts employee loyalty and work performance in Vietnam's hospitality sector. Similarly, Khuong et al. (2016) emphasized that inadequate recognition and limited personal development opportunities reduce motivation and productivity.

Among various psychological constructs that mediate the relationship between well-being and job performance, job satisfaction stands out as a central mechanism. Unlike constructs such as organizational commitment or employee motivation, job satisfaction captures an employee's overall affective evaluation of their work experience, making it both a consequence of well-being and a predictor of performance. Prior studies have consistently highlighted its pivotal role in service-oriented sectors, particularly tourism, where

employee attitudes directly influence customer experiences (Fisher, 2010; Judge et al., 2001). Therefore, this study positions job satisfaction as the key mediating variable linking the PERMA model to job performance. Investigating this mediating role provides valuable insights into the impact mechanisms of the PERMA model, forming the foundation for more effective human resource management strategies. Such strategies are essential for enhancing organizational performance, fostering long-term employee engagement, and advancing sustainable development in the tourism industry (Al-Sabi et al., 2024).

This study investigates the influence of the five components of the PERMA happiness model on job satisfaction and employee performance, with a focus on the mediating role of job satisfaction in the tourism industry. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is employed as the analytical approach, providing a robust theoretical framework to explore the relationships among variables within the PERMA model. The findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of the PERMA model's application in organizational settings and offer practical insights for improving human resource management strategies, enhancing employee performance, and supporting the sustainable growth of Vietnam's tourism sector. By addressing the psychological dimensions of employee well-being, this study provides novel insights that bridge theoretical advancements with actionable recommendations for the tourism industry.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 reviews the relevant literature on the PERMA model and job performance. Section 3 outlines the research methodology. Section 4 presents the empirical results and findings, and Section 5 concludes with implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Well-being theory

Although several frameworks, such as the job demands-resources (JD-R) model and Herzberg's (1996) two-factor theory, have been widely applied in the context of work performance, the PERMA model provides a more holistic view rooted in positive psychology. Its multidimensional structure captures both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being, which are particularly relevant in service-driven sectors like tourism, where emotional labor and interpersonal interactions dominate the work context.

Compared to the JD-R model, which emphasizes job resources and demands, the PERMA model emphasizes internal psychological resources, thus making it more applicable for analyzing emotional well-being and intrinsic motivation in the tourism workforce. Seligman's (2011) well-being theory, outlined in his book, highlights the importance of enhancing happiness and psychological health through the PERMA model. This model consists of five factors: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. These components are essential for individuals to achieve well-being and prosperity. The PERMA model is particularly relevant in the tourism industry, where high levels of customer service and human interaction are crucial. Each

¹ <https://vietnamtourism.gov.vn/en>

element contributes to a positive work environment where employees feel valued. Positive emotions boost motivation and energy (Donaldson & Villalobos, 2024), while engagement creates a “flow state” that enhances work satisfaction and performance. Strong workplace relationships reduce stress and improve work quality (Butler & Kern, 2016). Finding meaning in work motivates long-term contribution (Seligman, 2018), and achievement fosters pride and enhances motivation. Research over two decades supports the PERMA model’s connection to job satisfaction and performance, demonstrating its role in enhancing work well-being (Jimenez et al., 2024; Seligman, 2018). In summary, the PERMA model not only promotes mental health but also creates a supportive work environment. This is particularly important in the tourism sector, where employee satisfaction directly affects service quality and customer experiences.

2.2. Work performance and job satisfaction

Work performance measures how effectively employees complete their tasks according to set standards. It reflects not only task completion but also factors like motivation, skills, and collaboration with the work environment. Liona and Yurniardi (2020) describe it as the collective value of individual behaviors contributing to organizational success. Wolkoff et al. (2021) highlight that effective performance includes quality, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. Personal factors such as professional skills and motivation significantly impact this performance.

Job satisfaction determines how employees feel about their roles and is influenced by salary, promotion opportunities, recognition, and social relationships within the organization. High job satisfaction leads to greater engagement and commitment, enhancing work performance. Research by Katebi et al. (2022) consistently shows that satisfied employees perform better. Job satisfaction fuels motivation and commitment, making it essential for driving exceptional work performance. Employees will show more commitment and enthusiasm for their work when they feel satisfied.

2.3. Research hypotheses

Recent studies have demonstrated that positive emotions in the workplace significantly enhance employee motivation and performance. For instance, Donaldson and Villalobos (2024) and Jimenez et al. (2024) found that positive emotional factors within the PERMA model play a crucial role in reducing turnover intentions and improving adaptability to the work environment. These emotions enable individuals to maintain persistence, foster creativity, and facilitate effective interactions within workgroups (Butler & Kern, 2016). Additionally, positive emotions contribute to higher job satisfaction by fostering recognition and a sense of appreciation from colleagues and supervisors. When employees experience positive emotions, they tend to feel more satisfied, which, in turn, increases their motivation to perform optimally. Based on these findings, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1a: Positive emotions have a direct positive effect on the job satisfaction of tourism workers.

H1b: Positive emotions have a direct positive effect on the job performance of tourism workers.

H1c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between positive emotions and job performance among tourism workers.

Work engagement, particularly the phenomenon of “flow”, is vital for boosting productivity and overall performance. Research by Donaldson and Villalobos (2024) reveals that engagement not only enhances individual performance but also significantly improves team coordination and adaptability within organizations. Engaged employees consistently outperform their less engaged peers and achieve goals more efficiently (Butler & Kern, 2016). Moreover, studies by Chandani et al. (2016) demonstrate that a higher level of engagement leads to greater job satisfaction and motivation, directly enhancing individual and team outcomes. Based on these insights, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H2a: Job engagement directly influences the job satisfaction of tourism workers.

H2b: Job engagement directly influences the job performance of tourism workers.

H2c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between job engagement and job performance among tourism workers.

Positive relationships in the workplace are critical for fostering collaboration and minimizing conflict. Recent research (Carmeli & Gittell, 2009; Park et al., 2022) underscores a compelling connection between high-quality relationships and enhanced team and individual performance. Strong interpersonal connections boost support and foster a deep commitment to shared objectives. Moreover, studies by Yadav et al. (2023) reveal that nurturing these relationships creates a positive work environment, leading to increased job satisfaction and improved performance. Employees who cultivate supportive relationships experience greater security and heightened motivation in their roles. Given these insights, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H3a: High-quality relationships significantly enhance job satisfaction among tourism workers.

H3b: Strong relationships are directly linked to improved work performance among tourism workers.

H3c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workplace relationships and work performance among tourism workers.

Connecting work to a larger purpose is a powerful motivator for enhancing employee performance. Seligman (2018) highlights that when individuals find meaning in their work, it increases job satisfaction and fosters strong loyalty to the organization. Supporting this viewpoint, research by Yadav et al. (2023) shows that employees who view their work as meaningful often exhibit remarkable leadership qualities and creativity. When employees experience a sense of purpose in what they do, their satisfaction rises, directly improving their performance (Butler & Kern, 2016). According to Bakker and Demerouti (2017), helping employees connect their work to a broader purpose or personal values significantly boosts their perception of meaning, elevating satisfaction and motivation. Given these insights, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: Meaning in work directly impacts the job satisfaction of tourism workers.

H4b: Meaning in work has a direct impact on the work performance of tourism workers.

H4c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between meaning in work and work performance among tourism workers.

Achieving personal milestones at work is crucial for enhancing performance, as it instills a sense of ownership and bolsters self-confidence. Research has shown that employees who feel recognized and successfully meet significant goals are more motivated to sustain high productivity and long-term dedication to their organizations (Donaldson & Villalobos, 2024; Norman & Pokorny, 2017). This sense of achievement generates pride and increases personal satisfaction, positively influencing overall job satisfaction. Dyrbye et al. (2021) found that employees who frequently experience success are more content with their roles, fostering a commitment to excel. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H5a: Personal achievement at work directly influences the job satisfaction of tourism workers.

H5b: Personal achievement at work directly affects the work performance of tourism workers.

H5c: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between personal achievement at work and work performance among tourism workers.

The findings of previous studies underscore the relevance and application of the PERMA model in workplace settings (Donaldson & Villalobos, 2024; Seligman, 2018; Yadav et al., 2023). Research demonstrates a strong connection between PERMA factors and work performance, emphasizing the pivotal role of job satisfaction as a crucial mediating variable within the model. Job satisfaction reflects employee contentment and directly influences work performance (Butler & Kern, 2016). Employees with high satisfaction levels are more likely to perform effectively and remain loyal to their jobs and

organizations (Dyrbye et al., 2021). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H6: Job satisfaction significantly impacts employees' work performance in the tourism industry.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research design

The research methodology consisted of four stages. First, initial qualitative research grounded in established theories was conducted to develop observational variables and measurement scales. Second, a preliminary quantitative research phase involved a pilot study to ensure the clarity and coherence of the questionnaire. Third, formal quantitative research included comprehensive data collection to empirically test the proposed research model. Finally, supplementary qualitative research provided deeper insights by interpreting and elaborating on the quantitative findings.

This study builds upon a comprehensive review of existing literature concerning the influence of the PERMA model on employee satisfaction and performance within the tourism sector. Measurement scales were adapted from prior works, notably the PERMA-profiler developed by Butler and Kern (2016) and Seligman's (2011) framework for assessing PERMA constructs. For job satisfaction metrics, instruments from Katebi et al. (2022) were utilized, while performance indicators were informed by the scales of Wolkoff et al. (2021). Insights garnered from expert interviews were integrated to refine and enhance the research model, ensuring its relevance and applicability. The observational variables and their corresponding codes utilized in this study are compiled and detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Research variables, observational measures, and sources

Research variable	Observational variable	Code	Source
Positive emotion	The work environment always brings me joy.	PO1	Butler and Kern (2016) and Seligman (2011)
	I always feel positive about my job.	PO2	
	I am satisfied with my work.	PO3	
Engagement	I become engrossed in what I am doing.	EN1	
	I feel excited and enthusiastic about everything.	EN2	
	I feel time passes quickly while working.	EN3	
Relationships	I receive help and support from others.	RE1	
	I feel loved through my relationships at the company.	RE2	
	I am satisfied with my relationships at the company.	RE3	
Meaning	I find life purposeful and meaningful through my work.	ME1	
	I feel daily life at the company is valuable and worthwhile.	ME2	
	Overall, I feel I have direction in life.	ME3	
Achievement	I feel I am making progress toward achieving my goals in the company.	AC1	
	I have achieved the important goals I set for myself in the company.	AC2	
	I can handle the tasks within my responsibilities at the company.	AC3	
Job satisfaction	I am satisfied with what I have achieved in my job.	SA1	Katebi et al. (2022)
	I feel content with the comfort of working at the company.	SA2	
	I always consider the company as my second home.	SA3	
Job performance	I always complete daily tasks on time.	PE1	Wolkoff et al. (2021)
	Work issues are promptly resolved by my colleagues and me.	PE2	
	Evaluations show that my work quality and creativity are improving.	PE3	

All observed variables within the constructs were effectively measured using a five-point Likert scale, allowing responses from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Furthermore, the questionnaire skillfully captured essential demographic information from the participants, such as gender, age, and work experience.

3.2. Pilot study of the questionnaire

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with 50 employees from tourism businesses in Hanoi, including hotel staff, travel agency employees, and representatives from tourist destinations. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient showed that all research variables achieved a value above 0.7,

indicating strong internal consistency. This meets the standards set by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), who suggest that a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher is acceptable for basic research.

3.3. Official survey

The official survey was conducted with 500 employees between August and November 2024, targeting individuals from hotels, travel agencies, and tourist attractions in Hanoi. To enhance data quality and address respondents' inquiries, the surveys were administered by tourism interns interning at these establishments. This approach not only improved the accuracy of the collected information but also provided valuable learning experiences for the interns involved.

By following this methodology, the study ensured the collection of reliable and valid data, contributing to the robustness of the research findings.

3.4. Common method bias test

To ensure the validity and integrity of our research, we conducted a common method bias (CMB) assessment using Harman's single-factor test and variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis. The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) applied to 10 observed variables identified three distinct factors, with the first factor accounting for 45% of the total variance, well below the 50% threshold. This result indicates that CMB is unlikely to influence the data (Cooper et al., 2019; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

In addition, the VIF analysis confirmed that all variables had VIF values below two, satisfying the multicollinearity thresholds of less than three (Hair et al., 2021) and less than five (Kock, 2015). These findings address potential multicollinearity concerns and reinforce the robustness of the dataset.

By combining these methodological approaches, we confidently affirm that our data is free from significant CMB, thereby ensuring the reliability and accuracy of the study's findings.

3.5. Data analysis

Although this study employs partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) for its flexibility with complex models and smaller samples, alternative methods such as covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) or hierarchical regression could also be suitable for future studies, depending on model assumptions and data distribution. This study employed PLS-SEM to analyze the data, utilizing SPSS and SmartPLS software. According to Henseler et al. (2012), evaluating a PLS-SEM model involves two key steps:

1) *Measurement model assessment*: This step examines the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the constructs.

2) *Structural model assessment*: This involves evaluating the model's structure and applying bootstrapping with 1,000 iterations to assess the significance of indicators and path coefficients. Key metrics include the VIF to check for multicollinearity, effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to determine the explanatory power of independent variables on dependent variables.

Additionally, this study applied the importance performance map analysis (IPMA) technique to evaluate the relationship between the importance and performance of latent variables within the model. It graphically represents independent variables affecting a dependent variable, plotting importance on one axis and performance on the other, thereby identifying areas for improvement.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Demographic survey results

From the 500 survey forms distributed, we meticulously cleaned the data to ensure accuracy. By excluding invalid responses — those that were incomplete or driven by subjective feelings — we confidently focused our analysis on 375 valid samples. This careful selection represents a robust 75% of the total forms issued, enhancing the reliability of our findings.

Table 2. Demographic analysis results of the survey sample

<i>Criteria</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Gender	Male	253	67.5
	Female	122	32.5
Age	< 25 years old	51	13.6
	26–35 years old	159	42.4
	46–45 years old	125	33.3
	> 45 years old	40	10.7
Business	Hotel	184	49.1
	Tourist attractions	81	21.6
	Travel	110	29.3
Experience	> 5 years	18	4.8
	5–10 years	59	15.7
	11–15 years	155	41.4
	< 15 years	143	38.1
Qualifications	Postgraduate	16	4.3
	University	207	55.2
	College	152	40.5
Total		375	100.0

Table 2 delivers essential demographic insights about employees in the tourism sector, forming a robust basis for understanding how the PERMA happiness model influences job satisfaction and job performance. Notably, the gender distribution

indicates a predominance of male employees (67.5%) compared to females (32.5%), while the age demographic reveals that a substantial 75.7% of workers are between 26 and 45 years old,

showcasing the strong presence of motivated middle-aged individuals in this dynamic industry.

Moreover, the data highlights that nearly half (49.1%) of the businesses are hotels, underscoring the significance of the accommodation sector. Employee education levels further reflect this importance, with 55.2% holding university degrees and 40.5% possessing college diplomas, indicating a high level of specialization. Additionally, the study emphasizes workers with over 10 years of experience, who are vital contributors to stability and enhanced overall performance in the industry.

This research underscores the value of investing in employee well-being, as it directly correlates to job satisfaction and greater organizational success.

4.2. Measurement model analysis

The measurement model, consisting of seven variables and 21 observed variables, was analyzed. Table 3 presents the results for reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Reliability and convergent validity

Variables	Indicator	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Positive emotion	PO2	0.897	0.863	0.916	0.785
	PO3	0.891			
	PO1	0.870			
Engagement	EN1	0.835	0.714	0.836	0.631
	EN2	0.727			
	EN3	0.817			
Relationships	RE1	0.862	0.796	0.880	0.710
	RE2	0.844			
	RE3	0.822			
Meaning	ME1	0.882	0.866	0.918	0.789
	ME2	0.897			
	ME3	0.885			
Achievement	AC1	0.869	0.871	0.921	0.795
	AC2	0.905			
	AC3	0.902			
Job satisfaction	SA1	0.901	0.887	0.930	0.816
	SA2	0.916			
	SA3	0.892			
Job performance	PE1	0.870	0.762	0.864	0.680
	PE2	0.856			
	PE3	0.742			

Table 3 demonstrates that the reliability and validity of all concepts within the model meet the necessary criteria. The Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.7, indicating acceptable internal consistency and reliability for the measurement scales used (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Additionally, the CR values also exceed 0.7, confirming adequate reliability (Hair et al., 2021). Moreover, all AVE values are greater than 0.5, which

shows sufficient convergence (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These results confirm the reliability of the measurement model and its appropriateness for further analysis.

Table 4 demonstrates that the Fornell-Larcker discriminant validity of the model is confirmed because all diagonal values are greater than those in the corresponding columns.

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker discriminant validity

	Positive emotion	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Achievement	Job satisfaction	Job performance
Positive emotion	0.886						
Engagement	0.653	0.794					
Relationships	0.699	0.59	0.843				
Meaning	0.72	0.704	0.651	0.888			
Achievement	0.71	0.773	0.714	0.677	0.892		
Job satisfaction	0.605	0.603	0.644	0.605	0.611	0.903	
Job performance	0.725	0.651	0.827	0.812	0.705	0.839	0.825

The heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) approach is a widely recognized method employed to assess and enhance discriminant validity among constructs within a model. According to theoretical guidelines, discriminant validity is deemed

satisfactory if all HTMT values fall below the threshold of 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015). These benchmarks provide a robust basis for evaluating the distinctiveness of constructs.

Table 5. HTMT-based discriminant validity assessment

	Positive emotion	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Achievement	Job satisfaction
Positive emotion						
Engagement	0.653					
Relationships	0.699	0.59				
Meaning	0.72	0.704	0.651			
Achievement	0.71	0.773	0.714	0.677		
Job satisfaction	0.605	0.603	0.644	0.605	0.611	
Job performance	0.725	0.651	0.827	0.812	0.705	0.839

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that all HTMT values are below 0.85, confirming the discriminant validity among the constructs in the model. This finding suggests that the constructs are measured independently, with no significant multicollinearity issues. These results strongly support the discriminant validity, providing both theoretical and empirical justification for further testing of the model.

4.3. Structural model analysis

Table 6 presents the values of f^2 , VIF, R^2 adjusted, and Q^2 , which are used to evaluate the extent to which the independent variables influence *job satisfaction* and *job performance*.

Table 6. Effect sizes and model quality indicators

Variables	Job satisfaction		Job performance	
	f^2	VIF	f^2	VIF
Positive emotion	0.018	2.076	0.006	2.113
Engagement	0.017	1.829	0.001	1.860
Relationships	0.050	1.818	0.083	1.909
Meaning	0.024	2.002	0.110	2.050
Achievement	0.013	2.285	0.002	2.314
Job satisfaction			0.211	1.745
R^2 adjusted	0.419		0.640	
Q^2	0.336		0.430	

The analysis in Table 6 confirms that *relationships* ($f^2 = 0.050$) and *meaning* ($f^2 = 0.024$) are key drivers of *job satisfaction*, while *meaning* ($f^2 = 0.110$) and *job satisfaction* ($f^2 = 0.211$) significantly influence *job performance* (Cohen, 1988). VIF values (1.745–2.314) confirm no multicollinearity issues. The model explains 41.9% of *job satisfaction* and 64.0% of *job performance* (adjusted R^2), with Q^2 values (0.336, 0.430) supporting strong predictive validity (Geisser, 1974). These results highlight the pivotal role of *meaning* and *relationships* in enhancing work outcomes.

The regression analysis employs key parameters to test the hypotheses: regression coefficients to assess the influence of independent variables on dependent variables, t-statistics ($t > 1.96$ at the 5% significance level) to verify significance, and p-values ($p < 0.05$) to confirm statistical validity. Table 7 presents the path coefficients, providing detailed insights into the relationship between *job satisfaction* and *job performance*.

Table 7. Path coefficients and hypotheses results

Path	Original sample (O)	t statistics (O / Std.dev)	p-values	Hypothesis results
Achievement → job satisfaction	0.130	2.089	0.037	Accepted
Achievement → job performance	0.029	0.501	0.616	Rejected
Engagement → job satisfaction	0.135	2.321	0.020	Accepted
Engagement → job performance	0.005	0.124	0.901	Rejected
Meaning → job satisfaction	0.166	2.578	0.010	Accepted
Meaning → job performance	0.282	5.638	0.000	Accepted
Positive emotion → job satisfaction	0.146	1.965	0.049	Accepted
Positive emotion → job performance	0.064	1.325	0.185	Rejected
Relationships → job satisfaction	0.229	3.736	0.000	Accepted
Relationships → job performance	0.237	4.475	0.000	Accepted
Job satisfaction → job performance	0.360	7.290	0.000	Accepted

The findings in Table 7 emphasize the critical role of independent variables in enhancing *job satisfaction*. *Meaning* ($O = 0.166$; $t = 2.578$, $p = 0.010$), *relationships* ($O = 0.229$, $t = 3.736$, $p = 0.000$), and *positive emotion* ($O = 0.146$, $t = 1.965$, $p = 0.049$) exert a statistically significant positive impact. Additionally, *achievement* ($O = 0.130$, $t = 2.089$, $p = 0.037$) and *engagement* ($O = 0.135$, $t = 2.321$, $p = 0.020$) meaningfully contribute to *job satisfaction*, confirming hypotheses *H1a*, *H2a*, *H3a*, *H4a*, and *H5a*.

In terms of *job performance*, *meaning* ($O = 0.282$, $t = 5.638$, $p = 0.000$) and *relationships* ($O = 0.237$, $t = 4.475$, $p = 0.000$) are significant predictors, supporting hypotheses *H3b* and *H5b*.

However, *achievement* ($p > 0.05$), *engagement* ($p > 0.05$), and *positive emotion* ($p > 0.05$) show no substantial effect, leading to the rejection of hypotheses *H1b*, *H2b*, and *H4b*.

Notably, hypothesis *H6* is validated, with *job satisfaction* ($O = 0.360$, $t = 7.290$, $p = 0.000$) emerging as the most significant determinant of *job performance*. These findings emphasize the importance of meaningful work, positive relationships, and job satisfaction in enhancing performance and well-being. Job satisfaction serves as a key mediator in promoting optimal work outcomes. For additional insights, the results for indirect relationships are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Mediating role of job satisfaction in job performance

Path	Original sample (O)	t statistics (O / Std.dev)	Confidence interval (2.5%)	Confidence interval (97.5%)	p-values
Achievement → job satisfaction → job performance	0.047	2.117	0.005	0.09	0.034
Engagement → job satisfaction → job performance	0.049	2.17	0.008	0.095	0.03
Meaning → job satisfaction → job performance	0.060	2.457	0.017	0.113	0.014
Positive emotion → job satisfaction → job performance	0.053	1.903	0.004	0.112	0.057
Relationships → job satisfaction → job performance	0.083	3.34	0.04	0.14	0.001

Table 8 highlights the indirect effects of *job satisfaction* on *job performance*, emphasizing its essential mediating role. *Relationships* exhibit the strongest indirect effect ($O = 0.083$, $p = 0.001$), demonstrating the impact of interpersonal connections on performance. *Meaning* also plays a significant role ($O = 0.060$, $p = 0.014$), further emphasizing its importance. Additionally, *achievement* and *engagement* show significant contributions ($p < 0.05$), supporting hypotheses $H1c$, $H2c$, $H3c$, and $H5c$, while *positive emotion* does not reach

significance ($p = 0.057$). Confidence intervals for all significant paths exclude zero, ensuring the results' robustness. These findings confirm that *job satisfaction* effectively mediates meaningful and relational factors in driving *job performance*. The model's structure and pathways are illustrated in Figure 1.

To better understand the relationship between the importance (total effects) and performance of independent factors influencing job performance, an IPMA was conducted. The results of this analysis are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Path model: Job satisfaction and job performance

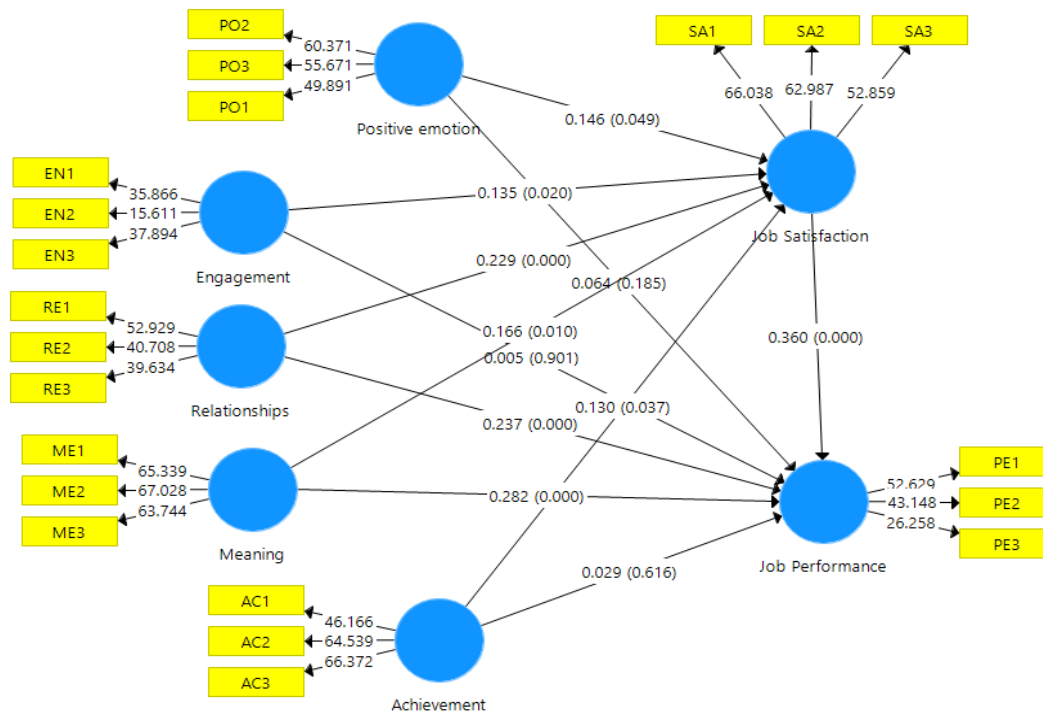


Figure 2. Importance-performance map for job performance

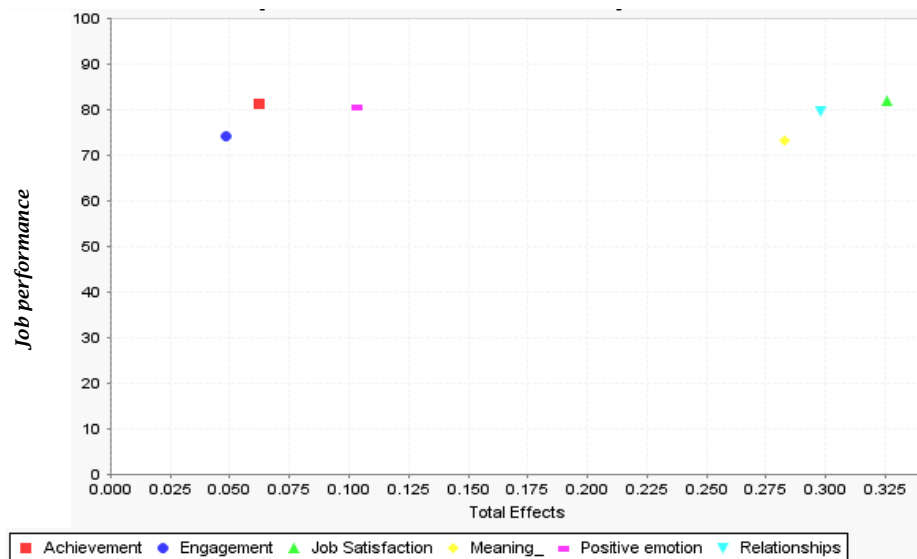


Figure 2 highlights that *job satisfaction* (importance ≈ 0.3 , performance ≈ 90) is the most influential factor, followed by *relationships* (importance ≈ 0.28 , performance ≈ 85) and *meaning* (importance ≈ 0.25 , performance ≈ 80). *Positive*

emotion (importance ≈ 0.1) and *achievement* (importance ≈ 0.07) exhibit moderate importance with high performance (≈ 80), while *engagement* (importance ≈ 0.05 , performance ≈ 70) shows the lowest impact. These findings suggest that

improving *job satisfaction, relationships, and meaning* should be prioritized to enhance overall *job performance* effectively.

4.4. Discussion

This study contributes significantly to the theoretical development of the PERMA model and offers practical insights for the tourism industry, a sector characterized by dynamic human resources and intensive employee-customer interaction. The findings highlight job satisfaction as a critical mediator in the relationship between the PERMA model factors (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement) and job performance.

Consistent with prior research in the tourism sector and other fields (Al-Sabi et al., 2024), this study reinforces the findings of Khuong et al. (2016), which identified job satisfaction as a pivotal mediator in translating psychological and social factors into improved performance. Specifically, job satisfaction demonstrates a substantial direct effect on job performance ($O = 0.360$, $p < 0.01$) (Donaldson & Villalobos, 2024).

Interestingly, the findings reveal that while all five PERMA components positively influence job satisfaction, only meaning and relationships exert a significant direct effect on job performance. This raises important considerations about the contextual relevance of positive emotion, engagement, and achievement in the tourism sector. The lack of direct influence may reflect the high-stress, emotionally demanding environment, where emotional positivity and personal goals are often overshadowed by immediate service delivery pressures. This study extends the existing literature by highlighting that job satisfaction not only serves as an outcome but also acts as a mediating mechanism through which factors such as meaning and relationships significantly influence job performance. This reflects the unique nature of the tourism industry, where meaningful work and positive relationships enhance service quality and customer satisfaction. Regression results reveal that meaning ($O = 0.282$, $p < 0.01$) and relationships ($O = 0.237$, $p < 0.01$) directly and significantly impact performance, underlining their importance. These findings align with (Phuong & Vinh, 2020), who demonstrated that positive workplace relationships improve employee commitment and performance, particularly in customer-facing roles. Similarly, the sense of meaningful work fosters attachment and dedication among tourism employees, enhancing performance and customer satisfaction (Akgunduz et al., 2020).

In addition, prior studies by Liona and Yurniardi (2020) and Bakker and Demerouti (2017) identified positive social factors and a sense of work meaning as critical motivators for job performance. Conversely, this study finds no significant direct impact of positive emotion and achievement on performance ($p > 0.05$). This may reflect the distinct demands of the tourism industry, where high-pressure work environments and heavy workloads make factors such as relationships and work meaning more critical for sustaining motivation and performance (Akgunduz et al., 2020). Nonetheless, positive emotion indirectly influences performance by fostering a positive work environment, consistent with Alwali and Alwali (2022), who emphasized its supportive rather than primary role in driving performance. Although PERMA elements are largely associated with positive outcomes, their over-

application or imbalance may lead to adverse effects such as burnout due to excessive engagement or unrealistic performance expectations. These findings highlight the need for a nuanced application of positive psychology models in demanding sectors like tourism.

The IPMA complements these findings, illustrating that job satisfaction is the most influential factor (total effects ≈ 0.3) with high performance (≈ 90) and should be maintained and developed. Relationships and meaning exhibit high importance but suboptimal performance, indicating areas for improvement to maximize job performance. In contrast, factors such as positive emotion and achievement show good performance but lower importance, suggesting they are secondary priorities. The tourism sector is characterized by high customer contact, emotional labor, and seasonality. These unique characteristics influence how PERMA factors manifest in employees' work lives. For example, meaning in work may be more transient due to job rotation, while relationships may be more volatile due to high turnover. Such dynamics reinforce the need to tailor well-being models to industry-specific contexts.

Demographic variables such as age, gender, and experience level may play a moderating role in how employees perceive job satisfaction and job performance. For instance, older employees or those with more experience may derive different meanings from PERMA components than younger staff.

In summary, this study not only confirms prior findings but also provides new insights into the mediating role of job satisfaction in linking psychosocial factors to job performance. These results offer valuable guidance for optimizing human resource management strategies, particularly in industries requiring high levels of interaction and engagement.

5. CONCLUSION

This study clarifies the relationships between factors in the PERMA model (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, achievement), job satisfaction, and job performance within the tourism industry, emphasizing the mediating role of job satisfaction. The regression results reveal that meaning and relationships significantly and directly impact job performance, while job satisfaction acts as a crucial mediator, transforming external factors into performance outcomes. These findings underscore the unique dynamics of the tourism industry, where strong employee-customer relationships and meaningful work are critical to enhancing performance and customer satisfaction.

This study advances the PERMA model by demonstrating the critical role of job satisfaction as both an outcome and a mediating factor in the tourism industry. By identifying meaning and relationships as significant predictors of job performance, this research provides a deeper understanding of how psychosocial factors drive performance through satisfaction. These findings align with prior studies (Bui et al., 2024; Katebi et al., 2022; Liona & Yurniardi, 2020), while offering new perspectives on how job satisfaction functions as a transformative element, linking external factors to work outcomes. Furthermore, this research reinforces the importance of social and emotional dimensions in enhancing work motivation, commitment, and performance, particularly in

service-driven industries like tourism, where employee interactions and customer experiences are closely intertwined.

Consistent with the findings of Bakker and Demerouti (2017), this study underscores the central role of meaningful work and positive workplace relationships in fostering employee engagement and improving performance. Demerouti's JD-R model highlights that supportive social resources and a sense of meaning at work are essential in reducing job strain while enhancing motivation and outcomes, which parallels this study's emphasis on the impact of meaning and relationships in the tourism sector.

While positive emotion and achievement did not directly influence performance, their indirect contributions highlight the contextual differences inherent in the tourism sector. Employees in this field often face high-pressure environments and customer-facing challenges, where the significance of meaningful work and supportive relationships outweighs the role of individual emotions or personal achievements. This insight emphasizes the need to adapt existing theories to industry-specific contexts, showcasing the dynamic interplay between the PERMA factors and job performance. By addressing these nuances, this study expands the applicability of the PERMA model and deepens its relevance to human resource management strategies in the tourism industry.

This study provides valuable insights for tourism managers aiming to enhance workforce performance and satisfaction. Organizations should prioritize creating meaningful work experiences and fostering strong workplace relationships, as these factors are critical drivers of employee motivation and job performance. Structured initiatives, such as employee development programs, team-building activities, mentorship opportunities, and recognition systems, have the potential to significantly enhance these areas. For instance, development programs that align employees' roles with their personal goals can increase engagement, while team-building activities foster collaboration and a sense of belonging.

Cultivating positive relationships between employees and customers is particularly vital in the tourism sector, where service quality directly impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. Strategies such as customer interaction training, empowering employees to resolve customer issues autonomously, and recognizing outstanding customer service contributions can create a positive feedback loop, benefiting both employees and the organization.

Although engagement and positive emotion may not directly influence job performance, they remain essential for maintaining morale, reducing burnout, and fostering a supportive work environment. This aligns with findings by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), who emphasize that emotional well-being and workplace engagement are crucial for workforce sustainability. Implementing wellness initiatives, flexible work schedules, and regular feedback sessions can address these dimensions, contributing indirectly to enhanced performance.

In summary, prioritizing job satisfaction, fostering meaningful relationships, and addressing emotional well-being should be central to human resource strategies in the tourism industry. By doing so, organizations can not only enhance employee performance and satisfaction but also secure a competitive advantage in a sector where customer retention and service excellence are critical to long-term success.

Despite the significant findings of this study, several limitations remain. First, the study was conducted solely among tourism employees in Hanoi, Vietnam. Therefore, the generalizability of findings to broader populations and other geographic contexts may be limited. Second, the research focused solely on the relationships between PERMA factors and job performance through job satisfaction, excluding other potential influences such as organizational environment, corporate culture, or individual characteristics that may shape these relationships. Future studies should broaden the sample scope to include diverse tourism types and regions, enhancing the model's applicability. Additionally, examining the role of organizational culture and company policies in moderating the relationship between PERMA and job performance could provide deeper insights. As the data were self-reported, there may be potential for response bias or social desirability effects. Future studies should consider triangulating findings with managerial evaluations or objective performance data. Finally, while job satisfaction served as the key mediating variable in this study, future research should examine alternative mediators such as organizational commitment, intrinsic motivation, or psychological empowerment to assess the comparative strengths of different explanatory pathways. Future research could explore nonlinear dynamics and long-term effects on job satisfaction and job performance, offering a more comprehensive perspective on these interactions within the complex tourism industry.

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