



EXPLORING THE CONNECTION: ENGAGEMENT, EMBEDDEDNESS, AND PERFORMANCE OF HOTEL STAFF

Miriam Tandoh¹, Eunice Fay Amissah^{1*}

Abstract

This study employed the Job Embeddedness and Conservation of Resources theories to examine the significant direct and moderating effects of job embeddedness and work engagement on the job performance of hotel employees. Using an explanatory research design, a structured questionnaire was administered to 379 employees, and descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyse the quantitative data. The results revealed that both work engagement and job embeddedness significantly and positively affect job performance, implying that increases in these factors lead to measurable improvements in performance. However, job embeddedness alone does not significantly moderate this relationship. These findings highlight the importance of considering both job embeddedness and work engagement in human resource strategies to effectively enhance employee job performance.

Keywords: Job Embeddedness, Work Engagement, Job Performance, Hotel Employees, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The global hospitality industry plays a pivotal role in national economic development by generating revenue and creating employment opportunities (Amissah et al, 2025). According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2025), the sector supported 371 million jobs globally in 2025 and contributed one in every ten jobs, whilst contributing \$11.7 trillion (10.3% of global GDP), with a market size of \$5,524 billion growing at a 5.5% CAGR into 2026. It added 14 million net new jobs that year, contributing at least 2% of GDP in smaller economies and over 10% in larger ones.

Ghana's economy has significantly benefited from the hospitality sector (Ampofo, 2020). In 2024, it created 370,000 direct jobs (813,000 total across value chains), generated \$4.82 billion in revenue, and accounted for 5.7% of GDP, with strong domestically driven growth projected into 2025-2026 (WTTC, 2025). Hotels represent a significant component of the hospitality industry, encompassing various subcategories (Narteh, Agbemabiese, Kodua, & Braimah, 2013). Their function is indispensable for

ensuring efficient service delivery, optimising guest satisfaction, and sustaining competitiveness in the industry. However, the performance and sustainability of hotels depend largely on employees, whose engagement, commitment, and retention are vital for operational efficiency. In the Ghanaian context, and particularly in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, a rapidly growing industrial city and tourism destination, the need to ensure optimal employee performance is increasingly important, as hotels face mounting pressure from customer expectations, high competition, and fluctuating labour markets (Hervie, Tatár, & Illés, 2020). Work engagement, defined as employees' emotional and cognitive investment in their work, has been linked to improved job performance and customer service in hospitality (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Likewise, job embeddedness, which captures the extent to which employees are connected to and integrated within their organisation and community, has emerged as a

¹ University of Cape Coast, Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Cape Coast, Ghana.

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predictor of employee retention and reduced turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Although these constructs are increasingly acknowledged worldwide, there is limited empirical research on how work engagement, job embeddedness, and job performance interact within Ghana's hospitality sector. Existing studies on Ghanaian hotel staff mainly explore job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and HR challenges (Deri, Zaazie, & Bazaanah, 2021; Ampofo, Owusu, Coffie, & Asiedu-Appiah, 2022; Baah & Amoako, 2011; Karatepe, 2013). Yet, the effects of engagement and embeddedness on performance outcomes warrant more examination. Hotels often face high employee turnover, low morale, and inconsistent service quality, threatening their competitiveness in a market marked by fierce rivalry and high customer expectations. Anecdotal reports indicate that, despite training programs and incentives, employee performance often falls short of international standards. This prompts critical questions about employee engagement levels and whether social and organisational bonds that promote job embeddedness are sufficiently nurtured. The Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area, influenced by oil industry fluctuations, living costs, and evolving tourism patterns, has unique community-embeddedness characteristics that could impact engagement and performance, yet these have not been empirically studied. The absence of empirical evidence on these relationships in Ghana, particularly in Sekondi-Takoradi, limits the ability of hotel managers and policymakers to design evidence-based strategies to enhance employee performance and service quality. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the interplay among job embeddedness, work engagement, and job performance among hotel employees in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana. Specifically,

we aim to examine the relationship between work engagement and job performance among hotel employees, investigate the influence of job embeddedness on job performance in the hospitality sector, and assess the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between job embeddedness and job performance.

This study is significant for three reasons. First, it contributes to the limited body of knowledge on work engagement, job embeddedness, and job performance within the Ghanaian hospitality context, thereby filling a critical literature gap. Secondly, it provides practical insights for hotel managers in Sekondi-Takoradi and beyond on how to create a work environment that promotes engagement, enhances embeddedness, and ultimately drives performance. Thirdly, the findings inform policy and human resource practices within Ghana's broader hospitality and tourism sector, aligning with national goals of improving service quality, job creation, and competitiveness under the Ghana Tourism Development Plan and the African Union's Agenda 2063. By linking theory to practice, the study strengthens both academic discourse and managerial decision-making in hospitality and tourism management.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The study is theoretically grounded in the interaction of resources and employee attachment, which together explain the dynamics of engagement, embeddedness, and performance in the hospitality sector.



The Job Embeddedness Theory

According to Yao (2004, p. 159), the embeddedness theory is the sum of factors that prevent a person from quitting his/her job. Organisational fit, links, and sacrifices are the three primary components. Organisational fit is the belief about how well-suited an employee is to an organisation (Mitchell et al., 2001). Further, an individual's level of fit inside an organisation is determined by a variety of factors, including professional goals, personal beliefs, job knowledge, needs, skills, and talents. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), a person will be more immersed at work if they are a better fit with the organisation. Organisational links, or the number of official or informal ties an employee has with the organisation, comprise the second component. Further, an employee's link to the organisation may come from relationships with groups and or coworkers. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), an employee's level of embeddedness increases with the number of relationships they have within the organisation. The third facet of job embeddedness is sacrifice. Mitchell et al. (2001) define this as the perceived loss of possible financial or psychological benefits that an individual would experience upon leaving an organisation. The loss of coworkers, worthwhile projects, promotions, retirement benefits, and "switching costs" (i.e., the loss of job stability and/or promotional chances, accrued eligibility for a pension plan, etc.) are all examples of organisational sacrifices.

In Ghana's hospitality industry, where turnover is high, job embeddedness helps explain why some employees remain despite challenges. Employees who have strong links with colleagues, feel they fit the organisational culture, and feel they would sacrifice valuable benefits if they left the organisation, are more likely to stay engaged and perform well.

Embedding employees through training, mentorship, and community support can thus be a strategic approach to reducing turnover and boosting performance.

The Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, developed by Hobfoll (1989), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how employees acquire, maintain, and protect valuable resources essential for well-being and job performance. Resources under this theory are categorised into personal (e.g., self-efficacy, resilience, emotional intelligence), social (e.g., support from supervisors and coworkers), and structural [e.g., job security, organisational policies, access to training] (Hobfoll, 1989; Holmgreen, Tirone, Gerhart, & Hobfoll, 2017; Törnblom & Kazemi, 2023).

The theory posits that a depletion of these resources could lead to stress and burnout, whereas accumulation fosters greater work engagement and improved performance (Timotius & Octavius, 2022). COR theory helps explain how employees cope with resource loss and maintain job embeddedness and performance (Duffour, Gbolonyo, & Chen, 2021). Social support, a key social resource, has been identified as crucial for fostering resilience and engagement among hotel employees, thereby reducing turnover intentions and enhancing organisational commitment (Clack, 2021; Owusu-Ansah, 2017).

Similarly, structural resources such as job security and access to development opportunities have been shown to mitigate stress and promote sustained performance (Hobfoll, Tirone, Holmgreen, & Gerhart, 2016). Hobfoll (2011) further emphasises that employees protect valuable resources through sacrifices that yield



positive returns, contributing to higher engagement levels. Consequently, understanding how personal, social, and structural resources interact is essential, as it helps to know how the COR theory affects employee well-being and productivity. Employees who believe they have sufficient resources in each of these areas are better able to handle job demands and deliver quality work (Nielsen, Ogbonnaya, Käsälä, Saari, & Isaksson, 2017).

The theory highlights how, in the face of threats posed by inadequate salaries, unstable employment, and unfavourable working conditions, these workers attempt to safeguard their meagre resources. For instance, in Ghana's hospitality context, marked by low pay, irregular shifts, and instability, COR explains why employees under resource threat prioritise survival (e.g., minimal effort) or seek embeddedness as a protective "resource caravan". Thus, COR underpins the idea that employees who perceive themselves as adequately resourced will exhibit higher work engagement and sustained job performance.

The integration of these theories helps explain job embeddedness through its dimensions of fit, links, and sacrifice, which together function as a bundle of organisational and social resources. Drawing on COR, job embeddedness helps employees retain and protect valuable resources, thereby reducing the risk of resource loss. Supportive workplace relationships and alignment with organisational values provide social and structural resources that encourage vigour, dedication, and absorption, the core elements of work engagement (Mitchell et al., 2001). In the context of Ghanaian hotels, where resources may be limited, low embeddedness can accelerate resource depletion, leading to burnout and turnover, while high embeddedness fosters positive resource

gain spirals that enhance task, contextual, and adaptive performance among hotel staff, as highlighted in the work of Mitchell et al. (2001).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Work Engagement and Job Performance

Recent empirical studies within the hospitality industry consistently demonstrate a positive association between work engagement and job performance. Work engagement, characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption, has been identified as a critical motivational state that enhances employees' effectiveness in service-oriented environments. For instance, (Gupta & Shaheen, 2023) found that transformational leadership significantly predicted employee performance through its influence on work engagement among frontline hotel employees, highlighting the importance of leader-driven resource provision in service contexts. Similarly, Karatepe and Aga (2020) reported that intrinsic job-related motivators enhance employee engagement, which subsequently promotes both in-role and extra-role service behaviours that are essential for guest satisfaction and customer loyalty.

In addition, Ampofo (2020) observed that employees who perceive their employers as supportive through the provision of tangible benefits and organisational resources are more likely to reciprocate with higher levels of engagement and improved job performance. Contemporary research further highlights emerging workplace pressures affecting engagement. For example, Kim et al. (2023) found that technology-related job stress, particularly stress associated with the adoption of artificial intelligence, negatively influences employee engagement, although psychological capital was found to mitigate this effect.



These findings suggest that organisational and personal resources remain crucial for sustaining employee engagement and maintaining performance outcomes within hospitality organisations. Based on these arguments, work engagement is expected to function as a proximal predictor of job performance in hospitality settings.

H1: Work engagement positively influences job performance among hotel employees.

Job Embeddedness and Job Performance

Research emphasises that job embeddedness (JE) serves as an important stabilising mechanism within the hospitality workforce. Job embeddedness strengthens employees' sense of compatibility with their organisation (fit), their relationships with colleagues and the community (links), and the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation (sacrifice). Through these dimensions, employees develop a stronger attachment to their workplace, thereby reducing turnover intentions and enhancing organisational stability.

Empirical evidence supports this relationship. For instance, Wang et al. (2024) found that off-the-job embeddedness significantly reduced employees' turnover intentions through the mediating role of affective commitment, highlighting the importance of community connections in retaining service employees. Similarly, Ramaite, Rothmann, and Van der Vaart (2022) identified distinct job embeddedness profiles among hospitality employees, demonstrating how the patterns of links, fit, and sacrifice shape employees' organisational attachment and behavioural outcomes.

In addition, Karatepe and Ngeche (2012) argued that employees who receive adequate

organisational resources, such as training and development opportunities, are more likely to believe that their employer values their contributions. Consequently, they may reciprocate through higher levels of engagement and improved job performance. Conversely, when employees perceive a lack of organisational support, they may experience emotional detachment and reduced commitment to their organisation (Ampofo, 2020). Therefore, job embeddedness is expected to contribute positively to employee performance outcomes in the hospitality sector.

H2: Job embeddedness positively influences job performance among hotel employees.

Moderating Role of Job Embeddedness in the Relationship Between Work Engagement and Job Performance

Job embeddedness also plays an important moderating role in the relationship between work engagement and job performance. Scholars such as Ferreira et al. (2017) and Mitchell et al. (2001) argue that job embeddedness extends beyond traditional explanations of employee retention, offering a broader understanding of organisational behaviour. Employees who are strongly embedded within their organisations may remain committed and productive even when they experience certain job-related challenges (Yu et al., 2020).

Empirical studies further demonstrate that job embeddedness strengthens employees' access to social and organisational support, which in turn enhances their capacity to translate engagement into improved job performance (Khan et al., 2018; Kapil & Rastogi, 2020). For instance, Ibrahim et al. (2019) found that social support derived from workplace



relationships enhances the positive effects of engagement on performance. Similarly, Kapil and Rastogi (2020), as well as Vera, Martinez, and Lorente (2016), reported that embedded employees tend to demonstrate stronger performance outcomes due to the resources and support available within their organisational networks.

Consequently, job embeddedness is expected to strengthen the relationship between work engagement and job performance.

H3: Job embeddedness moderates the relationship between work engagement and job performance, such that the relationship is stronger when job embeddedness is high.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study proposes that work engagement directly influences job performance among hotel employees. In addition, job embeddedness is expected to have a direct positive influence on job performance. Furthermore, job embeddedness is proposed to moderate the relationship between work engagement and job performance, strengthening the positive effect of engagement on employee performance outcomes. The framework, therefore, positions work engagement as the primary motivational mechanism influencing employee performance, while job embeddedness functions both as a direct predictor and a contextual condition that enhances the strength of this relationship. In Ghana's hospitality sector, where employee retention and service consistency remain critical challenges, understanding these relationships offers valuable insights into strategies to improve employee commitment, engagement, and performance.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework illustrating the hypothesised relationships among job embeddedness, work engagement, and job performance within the hospitality sector.

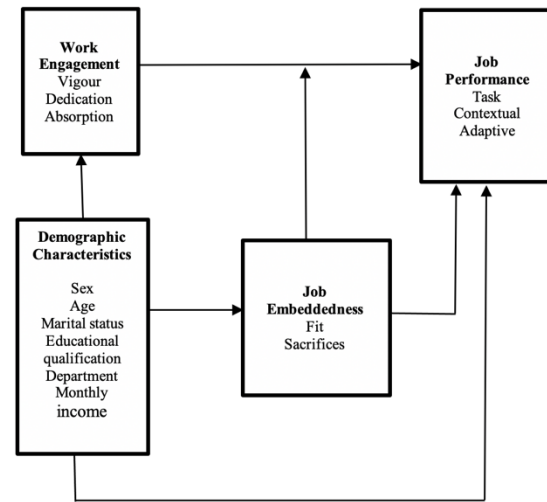


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODS

Research Approach and Design

A positivist research philosophy underpinned this study, emphasising objectivity, quantifiable observations, and hypothesis testing (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Levin, 1988). Based on this, a quantitative explanatory research design was adopted to explore the effects and relationships among work engagement, job embeddedness, and job performance. The explanatory research design was deemed appropriate for establishing causal links and laying the foundation for future studies (Zikmund et al., 2012).

Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this study was calculated utilising the Fisher, Laing, Stoeckel, and Townsend



(1998) formula. The sample size was derived as follows:

$$n = Z^2 pq / d^2$$

where:

n = desired sample size

Z = confidence level set at 95% (standard value = 1.96)

p = proportion of the target population that has similar characteristics

$$q = 1 - p$$

d = the margin of error set at 5% (standard value = 0.05)

Hence, the desired sample size calculated will be

$$n = (1.96)^2 (0.50) (0.50) / 0.05^2$$

$$n = 384$$

This approach was appropriate because reliable data on the total number of frontline employees across the selected hotels were not available. To account for possible non-response, a 6% buffer was added, increasing the total number of questionnaires distributed to 400.

Sampling Procedure

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select respondents. First, the list of licensed star-rated hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area obtained from the Ghana Tourism Authority (2023) directory served as the sampling frame. The metropolis was selected because it hosts a growing number of hospitality establishments in the Western Region of Ghana. In total, 37 star-rated hotels were identified, comprising three 4-star hotels, five 3-star hotels, eight 2-star hotels, and twenty-one 1-star hotels.

Second, stratified sampling was applied based on hotel star ratings to ensure representation across hotel categories. Proportional allocation was then used to distribute the sample across the strata,

resulting in 49 respondents from 4-star hotels, 76 from 3-star hotels, 119 from 2-star hotels, and 156 from 1-star hotels, giving a total target of 400 frontline employees drawn from departments such as front office, food and beverage, and housekeeping.

Finally, convenience sampling was used to select respondents within the hotels due to the irregular work schedules of frontline staff. Frontline employees from departments such as front office, food and beverage, and housekeeping were approached when they were readily available, such as during breaks, shift changes, or less-busy service periods. With the permission of the hotel management, the researchers briefly explained the purpose of the study to the employees and invited those willing to participate to complete the questionnaire. This approach enabled the recruitment of respondents who were available at the time of data collection while minimising disruption to hotel operations (Amissah, Gamor Deri, & Amissah, 2016; Gamor, Amissah, & Boakye, 2014).

Research Instrument and Pre-test

Primary data were collected through structured, self-administered questionnaires distributed to employees across star-rated hotels in the metropolis, assessing job embeddedness, work engagement, and socio-demographic traits. The questionnaire was divided into five modules, each using a four-point Likert scale. Module One examined job embeddedness using a measurement scale developed by Mitchell et al. (2001) and refined by Holtom and Inderrieden (2006), focusing on organisational sacrifice and fit. This section contained seventeen (17) items (e.g., *I foresee myself working here for a long time; I like my teammates*, etc.). Module Two assessed work engagement using



Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova's (2003) Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. This module consisted of sixteen (16) statements that assessed the three constructs of an employee's work engagement: vigour, dedication, and absorption (E.g., *I take my work very seriously; I feel like going to work anytime I wake up in the morning*).

Module Three assessed job performance, with nineteen (19) statements (e.g., *I take on extra work responsibilities; I always try to understand the views of my colleagues when interacting with them*) using an employee job performance scale developed by Schmitt et al. (2003), which focuses on contextual, task, and adaptive performance. The fourth module asked questions about respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, including department, education level, age, sex, marital status, and monthly income. The third component of job embeddedness (i.e., organisational links) was covered in Module Five as employee work characteristics.

A pre-test of the instrument was carried out with 25 hotel employees at one 2-star and one 3-star hotel in Cape Coast, yielding satisfactory reliability coefficients for job embeddedness ($\alpha = .906$), work engagement ($\alpha = .841$), and job performance ($\alpha = .784$).

Data Collection

The data collection was conducted between April 1 and May 6, 2024, with support from five trained field assistants. Prior to data collection, hotel managers were thoroughly informed of the purpose of the study through an introductory letter issued by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of Cape Coast.

Permission was sought from managers, particularly Human Resources managers, before approaching

employees during work breaks or less-busy periods. After obtaining their consent, the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents. They were then asked to complete self-administered questionnaires. Some respondents submitted their questionnaires immediately, while others requested the researcher to return later for collection. Occasionally, questionnaires were misplaced or incomplete, leading the researcher to discard those that were not fully filled out. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 379 were returned, representing a 94.8% response rate. After excluding incomplete responses, 354 questionnaires were retained for the final analysis.

To maximise the response rate, the researcher collaborated closely with managers to develop a structured internal follow-up plan. This plan involved managers conducting weekly follow-ups with their employees to remind and encourage participation. Subsequently, the field assistants visited the hotels every two weeks to retrieve the completed questionnaires, maintaining a steady collection process and minimising delays.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was secured from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board. Key considerations, including informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality, were carefully upheld. Participants voluntarily completed the questionnaires after being reassured of their privacy and the confidential use of their responses, which were anonymised to protect their identity. Prior to data collection, their consent was obtained, ensuring they understood that their responses would be used solely for the study.



Data Analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, skewness, and kurtosis) to summarise the data and assess normality, and inferential techniques, including Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The EFA was used to evaluate the measurement properties of the constructs and to examine factor loadings and refine measurement items. Subsequently, PLS-SEM was employed to assess both the measurement and structural models. The use of PLS-SEM was justified by its strength in handling complex models and small sample sizes, its robustness to non-normal data, and its predictive orientation (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Hair et al., 2017; Shmueli et al., 2019).

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic and Work Characteristics of Respondents

The study surveyed hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, revealing that 53.6% were females, with the majority being young, predominantly single, and graduates of tertiary institutions (71.5%). Respondents predominantly worked in the front office departments of the hotels (44.3%), followed by the food and beverage department (31.1%) and the housekeeping department (22.0%), while those categorised in other departments (such as accounts and security) were the fewest (2.6%). The majority earned monthly salaries below GH¢1,000. The study found that 70% of hotel employees had held their current positions and worked for their current employers for 1 to 5 years. Over half (69.1%) of the respondents had 1-5 years of industry

experience. Coworker interactions were mostly limited to 1–5 coworkers (53%), and 62.3% of those (1–5 coworkers) relied on their colleagues. Team participation was also low, with 65% involved in 1-3 work teams and 59% in 1-3 committees.

The Effects of Employees' Job Embeddedness and Work Engagement on Job Performance

Table 1 presents the skewness and kurtosis of the measurement variables before the SEM analysis. According to Hair et al. (2014), a skewed data distribution is indicated by skewness values outside the range of -1 to +1, while Singh (2007) suggests that the range for kurtosis may be anywhere from -3 to +3. Table 1 shows that the kurtosis and skewness values for this study fall within the acceptable threshold. Hence, the variables in the study are normally distributed.

Table 1: Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable		Statistic	Std. Error
Job Embeddedness	Skewness	-0.760	0.125
	Kurtosis	0.427	0.250
Work Engagement	Skewness	-0.385	0.125
	Kurtosis	-0.698	0.250
Job Performance	Skewness	-0.269	0.125
	Kurtosis	-0.266	0.250

Measurement Model Assessment

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) analytical technique was used in the study to assess the research objectives. The following fundamental presumptions served as the foundation for the development of the measurement model: item loadings, construct validity and



reliability, convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity. The structural model addressed the study's goal and included the coefficient of determination (R^2), significance (p-values), and path coefficients. Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics. (2009) states that these presumptions are put to the test in order to clearly interpret the outcomes of the structural model, including the study's validity and reliability.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The indicator loadings for each construct were analysed to evaluate the items as the initial step in the evaluation. This step was crucial to ensure that the indicators accurately measured each construct within the study's context. As a general guideline, items with loadings of 0.70 or higher are considered accurate indicators of the relevant constructs (Henseler et al., 2009). As a result, items with loadings less than 0.70 were eliminated. This shows that, even though these items from the questionnaire or scale were taken from previously published research, they were insufficient to measure the components in this particular study. Table 2 displays the outcome.

Table 2: Factor Loadings of Job Embeddedness, Work Engagement, and Job Performance among Hotel Employees

Scale/items	Loading
<i>Job Embeddedness</i>	
M1i (This work gives me a lot of freedom)	0.732
M1j (I receive very good incentives here)	0.785
M1k (I feel my co-workers respect me here)	0.719
M1l (I would sacrifice a lot if I leave this job)	0.772

M1m (I have a good chance of getting promoted here)	0.757
M1n (I receive fair compensation for my work here)	0.710
<i>Work Engagement</i>	
M2a (Time flies fast when I am working here)	0.797
M2b (When I am working, I forget everything else around me)	0.799
M2c (I feel happy when I am busily working)	0.830
M2d (I take my work very seriously)	0.791
M2e (I get carried away when I'm working)	0.835
M2f (I find it difficult to detach myself from my job)	0.799
<i>Job Performance</i>	
M3h (I try to stay current with my work skills)	0.737
M3i (I come up with innovative ways to solve new problems)	0.792
M3k (I take an active part in discussions and/or meetings)	0.777
M3l (I always go out of my way to propose new ideas for doing things)	0.779

Table 2 indicates that to ensure the quality of the specified structures, any item loadings below 0.70 were eliminated. The variables with the highest loadings are M1j (*I receive very good incentives here*) for Job Embeddedness (0.785), M2e (*I get carried away when working*) for Work Engagement (0.835), and M3i (*I come up with creative solutions to solve new problems*) for Job Performance (0.792). These factors are the leading factors for each variable. The greatest correlations between these items and their



corresponding constructs suggest that they are the most important markers of each variable. The final model extracted from the PLS-SEM analysis served as the foundation for additional evaluation.

Construct Reliability and Validity

The results of additional evaluation criteria, including average variance extracted convergent validity, construct validity, and reliability, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	CA	Rho_A	CR	AVE
Job Embeddedness	0.840	0.841	0.883	0.557
Work Engagement	0.751	0.751	0.843	0.572
Job Performance	0.895	0.900	0.900	0.654

CA: Cronbach's Alpha, CR: Composite Reliability, AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Indicator reliability (IR) was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (CA) and rho_A. IR measures the percentage of an indicator's variance attributable to its underlying latent variable (Hair, Gabriel, Silva, & Braga, 2019). Due to its reputation as a more stringent indicator of reliability metric than CA, the study reported the rho A result (Hair et al., 2019). To provide satisfactory and acceptable outcomes, it is generally recommended that Jöreskog's rho_A (ρ) values be greater than 0.70. Reliability requirements were met since all of the constructs' rho_A scores, which ranged from 0.751 to 0.900, were more than 0.70. Work Engagement (0.751), Job Embeddedness (0.841), and Job Performance (0.900) were the respective construct values.

Additionally, Table 3 presents the study's composite reliability (CR), which indicates how well

a construct is measured by its indicators (Sarstedt, Ringle, Henseler, & Hair, 2014). This indicates that a substantial correlation among all indicators attributed to a particular concept is necessary for CR. A CR score of ≥ 0.70 is the general rule of thumb (Bagozzi & Yi, 1989; Sarstedt et al., 2014). This requirement was satisfied because all constructs had CR scores greater than 0.70, with a lowest value of 0.843. This suggests that there were strong correlations between each assigned indicator and its corresponding variable.

Table 3 also presents the study's convergent validity (CV), calculated as the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2019). The AVE indicates how the construct accounts for an indicator's variance relative to both the total variance and the variance attributable to measurement error, according to Hair et al. (2019). Bagozzi and Yi (1989) and Hair et al. (2019) recommend that AVE scores be ≥ 0.50 for each construct. Given that every construct had an AVE greater than 0.50, the study meets this requirement. In particular, the AVE scores for Job Embeddedness (0.557), Work Engagement (0.572), and Job Performance (0.654) demonstrated a satisfactory convergent validity for the measurement scale.

Discriminant Validity

As indicated by Hair et al. (2019), Table 4 tests discriminant validity to further assess the model's quality. When evaluating the structural model for collinearity, discriminant validity (DV) is assessed. The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio and the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion are the main tools used to verify this validity. Interestingly, the HTMT ratio is considered a better indicator of discriminant validity than the Fornell and Larcker (1981) standard (Hair et al., 2019). For testing discriminant validity, Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, and Hair (2014)



advise using the HTMT ratio. Thus, the HTMT score was used in this study to evaluate DV.

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) for Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Job Embeddedness	Work Engagement	Job Performance
Job Embeddedness	0.746		
Work Engagement	0.531	0.757	
Job Performance	0.429	0.453	0.809

According to Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001), there is an issue with discriminant validity when utilising the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) if the HTMT value exceeds 0.90. Every value in Table 4 fell short of 0.90. Therefore, the level of discriminant validity was very high. Given how diverse these constructions are from one another and how different they should be, this is to be expected.

Model Fit

In Smart PLS, the average magnitude of differences between observed and predicted correlations is measured by the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), an essential metric for evaluating the fit of structural equation models (SEM). A good model fit is indicated by the SRMR score in Table 5 (0.066), further supporting the study's hypothesised linkages by suggesting a good fit between the measurement model and the real data.

SRMR values less than 0.10, or more cautiously, less than 0.08, suggest a satisfactory fit, according to Hu and Bentler (1999).

Table 5: Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)

Measure	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual	0.066	0.066

Measurement Model

Figure 2 presents the final measurement model.

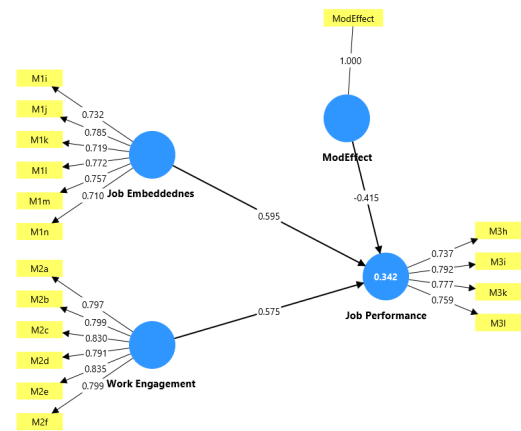


Figure 2: Measurement Model

Significance of Path Coefficients

Path coefficients are relevant in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), which is used to analyse the structural model and reveal correlations among components. Bootstrapping is a resampling strategy where the first sample is assumed to be representative of the population (Hair et al., 2011). Using random sampling methods facilitates a more thorough assessment of the sample distribution. Nonetheless, this method is considered



suitable for tracking and confirming the accuracy of the results.

The measurement model was assessed to ensure that it met PLS-SEM standards, and then the results were discussed with respect to the objectives of the study. The study's objectives examined the direct and moderating effects of job embeddedness and employee work engagement on job performance among hotel employees within the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. Table 6 presents the connections among the study variables.

Table 6: Effects of Job Embeddedness and Work Engagement on Job Performance

Model	B	β	t	p
Job Embeddedness → Job Performance	0.598	0.595	4.093	0.005
Work Engagement → Job Performance	0.580	0.575	3.745	0.021
JE * WE → Job Performance	-	-	0.876	0.346
	0.421	0.415		

*Significant, $p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.342$

Effect of Job Embeddedness on the Perceived Job Performance of Hotel Employees

The first hypothesis looked at the possibility of a statistically significant effect of job embeddedness on job performance. According to the analysis, the dependent variable was job performance, while the independent variable was job embeddedness. The route coefficient from Job Embeddedness (JE) to Job Performance (JP) is considerable ($\beta = 0.595$, $p < 0.005$), as Table 6 makes clear. Furthermore, job performance is anticipated to increase by roughly 0.413 units for every unit increase in job embeddedness, according to Table 6's β coefficient of

0.595. Additionally, job embeddedness and perhaps other model-included characteristics can account for 34.5% of the variance in job performance, as indicated by the R-squared value ($R^2 = 0.342$), implying that additional factors outside the scope of this study may explain the remaining variance. The study's hypothesis, according to the results, is substantiated, i.e., employees' job embeddedness has a statistically significant impact on their job performance.

Effect of Work Engagement on the Perceived Job Performance of Hotel Employees

The second hypothesis sought to ascertain whether or not work engagement influences job performance in a statistically significant way. An examination of the path coefficient from Work Engagement (WE) to Job Performance (JP) revealed a significant effect ($\beta = 0.575$, $p < 0.05$). This demonstrates that work engagement positively affects job performance. The analysis's β coefficient of 0.575 indicates that a 1-unit increase in work engagement is associated with a predicted increase in job performance of about 0.575 units. Furthermore, it appears that work engagement and job embeddedness account for 34.2% of the variation in job performance, as indicated by the R-squared value ($R^2 = 0.342$). This suggests that the remaining variation in an employee's job performance may be explained by other variables not covered in the study.

Work engagement among hotel employees within the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolitan has a statistically significant impact on their job performance, as Table 6 demonstrates. Consequently, the study failed to reject the hypothesis.



The Moderating Effect of Job Embeddedness in the Relationship between Work Engagement and Job Performance

This study examined how job embeddedness influences the relationship between work engagement and performance. The interaction term (Job Embeddedness * Work Engagement) was included to assess whether the strength or direction of the relation between work engagement and job performance varies across levels of job embeddedness. This is shown in Figure 2 and Table 6. Based on the analysis, the interaction effect is negative but statistically insignificant ($\beta = -0.415$, $p = 0.346$). The absence of statistical significance indicates that the effect is not empirically substantiated, even though the negative coefficient points to a possible inverse moderating direction. Therefore, job embeddedness does not significantly affect the relationship between job performance and work engagement. Accordingly, job embeddedness has no bearing on the strength or direction of the association between work engagement and job performance. Although work engagement and job embeddedness independently affect job performance, job embeddedness had no discernible impact on the association between work engagement and job performance in this study.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the interplay between job embeddedness, work engagement, and job performance among hotel employees in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana. The results provide several important insights that contribute to both theory and practice in hospitality management.

First, the finding that job embeddedness significantly predicts job performance confirms the

central assumptions of Job Embeddedness Theory (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employees who perceive stronger links with colleagues, feel that their values align with organisational culture, and recognise potential sacrifices if they were to leave, tend to invest more effort and remain productive. The study suggests that among hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis, job embeddedness has a favourable and statistically significant impact on job performance. How much hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis feel a part of their jobs does not significantly impact how well they carry out their tasks there. The positive path coefficient in H1 further explains the relationship between increased job embeddedness and better job performance. This aligns with recent empirical evidence in hospitality and tourism contexts (Aboramadan et al., 2021; Karatepe & Turgut, 2023), which underscores the fact that embedded employees are less distracted by turnover intentions and more focused on service delivery.

This finding also confirms observations by Khan et al. (2018), Liu (2018), Ampofo (2020), and Ampofo et al. (2022) that job embeddedness significantly impacts employee performance. Kapil and Rastogi (2017) also posited that because job embeddedness is a strong predictor of job performance, the more employees feel they fit in the organisation, the deeper their perceived relationships are, and the more embedded they will be at work. Moreover, providing job-embedded resources enables employees to invest in them, resulting in enhanced performance behaviours and more successful execution of assigned roles. This finding further reinforces the job embeddedness theory by Mitchell et al. (2001). As per the theory, job embeddedness is a concept that quantifies and identifies workplace elements that have a tendency to attach workers to



their positions, making it more challenging for them to quit. In addition, Burton et al. (2010) proposed that work embeddedness has an effect on employee retention by increasing employee engagement and performance.

Second, the study reveals that work engagement has a positive effect on job performance. This is consistent with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), which posits that when employees have adequate resources—such as supportive supervision, opportunities for growth, and recognition—they experience higher levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption, which in turn enhance performance. In line with recent hospitality research (Wong et al., 2022; Kim & Li, 2023), engaged employees in the Ghanaian hotel sector demonstrate superior service quality, customer satisfaction, and efficiency. The positive path coefficient in H2 contributes to the understanding of the relationship between enhanced job performance and higher work engagement.

The findings corroborate those of Mundhra and Pramanik (2024), who found a strong correlation between employee job performance and work engagement, which means that engaged employees usually perform better. Furthermore, according to Hendrik, Fanggidae, and Timuneno (2021), work engagement positively and significantly affects employee performance, i.e., an employee's performance increases in proportion to their level of work engagement. Also, the premise that work engagement positively and significantly predicts job performance is supported by the results of an empirical study conducted by Kapil and Rastogi (2017). According to a study by Burrows et al. (2022), workers who are involved in their work will inevitably become more engaged, which will lead to better workplace

attitudes and improved performance levels. When faced with difficult circumstances at work, they will also be more proactive in their work because proactive work behaviour and work engagement are closely correlated (Lebel, 2017; Sonnentag & Starzyk, 2015).

Third, the finding that job embeddedness does not significantly moderate the relationship between engagement and performance suggests that embeddedness and engagement operate as independent predictors of performance rather than in an interactive fashion. This nuance highlights the importance of contextualising theoretical assumptions. While embeddedness provides stability and long-term orientation, engagement drives the day-to-day energy employees bring to their work. This indicates that, in this study, job embeddedness does not significantly affect the connection between job performance and engagement at work. Accordingly, job embeddedness has no bearing on the strength or direction of the association between work engagement and job performance. Although work engagement and job embeddedness independently affect job performance, job embeddedness had no discernible impact on the association between work engagement and job performance in this study.

This suggests that work engagement will consistently have a favourable impact on job performance for hotel employees, irrespective of their amount of job embeddedness. This study's outcome contradicts the conclusions of earlier research. Previous studies have discovered that an employee's job embeddedness is a special predictor of their work engagement and productivity (Khan et al., 2018; Kapil & Rastogi, 2020).

The results partially extend the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), suggesting that while embeddedness represents a



reservoir of retained resources, it may not amplify the motivational role of engagement in all contexts, particularly in high-turnover industries such as hospitality in sub-Saharan Africa. The theory emphasises that job embeddedness regulates the relationship between work engagement and job performance among employees. This is because hotel employees may receive support from their colleagues, which could improve their engagement at work (Kiazad et al., 2014; Lee, Xu, & Yang, 2021; Quratulain & Al-Hawari, 2021). Furthermore, according to job embeddedness theory, workers who are highly embedded in an organisation are more likely to have a range of experiences that encourage them to stay, especially in the face of potential discontent with their jobs and/or relationships with co-workers. This shows that hotel employees who get along well with their co-workers and are socially supported by them may have more personal resources, such as time and energy, available to them, enabling them to participate more fully in their jobs. Based on empirical research, employees who exhibit compatibility with their organisation and receive social support from their colleagues have been found to exhibit high levels of work engagement (Ibrahim et al., 2019; Vera et al., 2016). According to Kapil and Rastogi (2020), embeddedness improves employee work engagement and performance.

Implications for Theory and Practice

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the robustness of the Conservation of Resources (COR) and Job Embeddedness theories as frameworks for predicting performance outcomes in service industries. It also provides evidence for the direct effect of job embeddedness on performance, while questioning its assumed moderating function in

the engagement–performance relationship. Thus, embeddedness should be conceptualised not only as a retention mechanism but also as a performance-enhancing construct in its own right.

In practical terms, the findings highlight the need for human resource managers in Ghana's hotel industry to focus simultaneously on strengthening embeddedness and promoting engagement. Initiatives such as mentoring programs, community-building activities, and alignment of organisational values with employee expectations can increase embeddedness. At the same time, adequate job resources, recognition, and opportunities for skill development are needed to sustain engagement. Importantly, managers should not rely on embeddedness to enhance engagement's effects; rather, they should view both as complementary drivers of performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study contributes to the growing body of hospitality management research by demonstrating that job embeddedness and work engagement are important predictors of hotel employees' performance. The findings show that while work engagement enhances employees' energy, dedication, and involvement in their daily work activities, job embeddedness strengthens employees' attachment to the organisation through their sense of fit, links, and perceived sacrifice associated with leaving. The results further suggest that although both constructs positively influence performance, job embeddedness does not significantly strengthen the relationship between work engagement and job performance. This indicates that the two constructs operate through complementary but distinct mechanisms, implying that improving employee performance in the



hospitality sector requires strategies that simultaneously address both engagement and embeddedness.

The broader implication of these findings is that hospitality organisations, particularly within the Ghanaian context, where employee turnover remains relatively high, must adopt holistic human resource management approaches that focus not only on motivating employees in their immediate roles but also on strengthening their long-term attachment to the organisation. By doing so, hotels can improve service quality, sustain organisational knowledge, and maintain consistent performance levels among frontline employees. The findings therefore provide useful insights for hotel managers, HR practitioners, and policymakers seeking to enhance workforce stability and service delivery within the hospitality sector.

Based on these findings, several practical recommendations are proposed. First, hotel managers should strengthen job embeddedness strategies by promoting strong workplace relationships, encouraging teamwork, and promoting organisational values that align with employees' personal and professional goals. Creating opportunities for career development, mentoring, and internal promotion can also enhance employees' sense of fit and increase the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation.

Second, organisations should implement initiatives that promote work engagement by providing adequate job resources. These may include supportive leadership practices, regular feedback, employee recognition programmes, and opportunities for skills development. In addition, creating a positive work climate through team-building activities, open communication, and participatory decision-making

can enhance employees' motivation and commitment to service delivery.

Third, hotels should develop context-specific human resource policies that address the unique challenges of Ghana's hospitality sector. Such policies may include structured training and development programmes, transparent promotion and career progression policies, employee welfare and work-life balance initiatives, and fair reward and recognition systems. Implementing clear policies on employee support, mentoring for early-career staff, and retention incentives can further strengthen employees' attachment to their organisations and reduce turnover intentions.

Overall, by integrating policies that simultaneously promote work engagement and job embeddedness, hospitality organisations can enhance employee performance, improve service quality, and sustain long-term organisational competitiveness within Ghana's growing tourism and hospitality industry.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study is not without limitations. First, the use of a cross-sectional quantitative design limits the ability to infer causality among work engagement, job embeddedness, and job performance. While statistically significant associations were found, it remains unclear whether these relationships hold over time or whether reverse causality may exist. Future studies could employ longitudinal or experimental designs to establish stronger causal inferences.

Second, the study relied exclusively on self-reported data from hotel employees, which may be subject to common method bias and social desirability effects. Although procedural remedies were applied to minimize bias, the use of multi-source data (e.g., supervisor ratings of employee performance or



customer satisfaction indices) would provide a more robust picture of the engagement–embeddedness–performance nexus.

Third, the study was conducted among 379 hotel employees in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana, which, although adequate for quantitative analysis, may limit the generalisability of the findings. Regional, cultural, and organisational variations within Ghana's broader hospitality sector may produce different dynamics. This study should be replicated in other regions or across different types of hospitality establishments (e.g., resorts, restaurants, airlines).

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