

**Relationship Between Job Satisfaction And Work Productivity: A Case Study Of Igongo Cultural Center
And Country Hotel,
Biharwe, Mbarara
Nabaasa Desire**

Metropolitan International University

Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity among employees of Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel, a four-star hospitality establishment situated in Biharwe, approximately 12 kilometres from Mbarara City on the Mbarara–Masaka Highway in Southwestern Uganda. Grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the study employed a mixed-methods cross-sectional design, combining structured questionnaires administered to 78 employees with key informant interviews and documentary analysis. Findings revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.001$), with intrinsic motivators particularly recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth exerting stronger influence on productivity than extrinsic hygiene factors. However, uncompetitive remuneration, limited career advancement structures, and inconsistent supervisory support were identified as principal drivers of dissatisfaction that undermined consistent productivity. The study recommended institution of competitive pay scales, formalised employee recognition systems, structured mentorship programmes, and deliberate investment in professional development as immediate priorities. These findings contributed to the growing body of literature on human resource management in Uganda's hospitality sector and offered actionable insights for Igongo's management and for policymakers concerned with the sector's sustainable growth.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Work Productivity, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Hospitality Industry, Igongo Cultural Center, Mbarara, Uganda, Employee Motivation.

Introduction

The relationship between how employees felt about their work and how productively they performed was among the most extensively studied questions in organisational behaviour and human resource management. In the hospitality sector, where service quality was inextricably tied to the emotional and motivational states of frontline employees, this relationship took on critical commercial and cultural significance. Satisfied employees were more likely to deliver consistent, warm, and attentive service the very currency of competitive differentiation in tourism and hospitality. Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel, located in Biharwe on the Mbarara–Masaka Highway in Southwestern Uganda, presented a compelling setting for this inquiry. Established in 2009 by entrepreneur and historian James R. Tumusiime on the grounds of a former Ankole royal palace, Igongo had grown into a nationally recognised four-star property and a winner of the Global Hospitality and Luxury Awards Africa. The facility seamlessly integrated Ankole cultural heritage—through its Eriijukiro Museum (the largest in Western Uganda), Cultural Village (Itaramiro),

traditional cuisine, and the 1520 AD Biharwe Eclipse Monument with modern luxury amenities including a swimming pool, spa, gymnasium, conference facilities, and multiple restaurants.

Yet beneath this impressive institutional profile lay the persistent human resource challenges that characterised Uganda's hospitality sector: employee dissatisfaction rooted in low remuneration, limited career growth, inconsistent supervisory support, and high turnover. This study examined how these dynamics shaped work productivity at Igongo and what evidence-based interventions could sustain the institution's award-winning service quality.

Main Objective

To examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity among employees at Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel, Biharwe, Mbarara.

Problem Statement

Despite Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel's standing as a nationally acclaimed four-star hospitality institution and a recipient of international luxury awards, anecdotal evidence and sector-wide data suggested that employee job satisfaction levels remained fragile and inconsistently managed. Uganda's hospitality industry was characterised by structurally low wages, limited opportunities for career advancement, and high staff turnover rates that impeded the delivery of consistent service excellence. At Igongo, which depended on a multi-skilled workforce serving diverse departments accommodation, museum guiding, cultural performance, food and beverage, wellness, events, and administration any systemic weakness in employee motivation directly threatened service quality and organisational reputation.

National studies confirmed that Ugandan hotel employees frequently reported dissatisfaction related to inadequate compensation, poor working conditions, and insufficient recognition (Nuwagaba & Nzabona, 2021; Mukuru et al., 2025). Yet institution-specific evidence linking these satisfaction dimensions to actual productivity outcomes remained largely absent from the literature, particularly for culturally integrated tourism enterprises in Southwestern Uganda. This evidential gap limited the capacity of Igongo's management and the wider hospitality sector to design targeted, evidence-based retention and productivity enhancement strategies. The present study addressed this gap.

4. Conceptual / Structural Model

The study was guided by the following structural model, which integrated Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to map the pathways through which job satisfaction dimensions influenced work productivity at Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel.



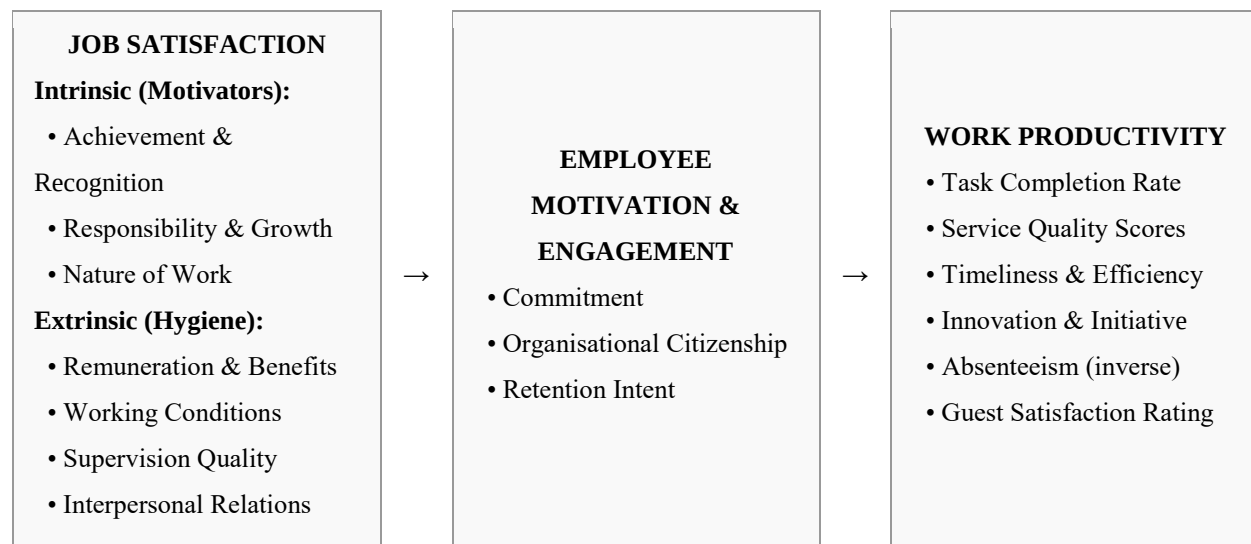


Figure 1. Structural Model: Job Satisfaction → Work Productivity at Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel
(adapted from Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1943)

The model positioned job satisfaction as the independent variable, comprising intrinsic motivators (recognition, responsibility, growth, achievement, and nature of work) and extrinsic hygiene factors (remuneration, working conditions, supervisory support, and interpersonal relations). Employee motivation and engagement functioned as a mediating construct, through which satisfaction dimensions translated into productivity outcomes. Work productivity the dependent variable was operationalised through task completion rates, service quality scores, timeliness, innovation, absenteeism, and guest satisfaction ratings. This framework was grounded in *Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory* (Herzberg et al., 1959) and aligned with the broader motivational architecture of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (Maslow, 1943), both of which remained empirically validated in developing-country hospitality settings (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020; Al-Badarneh & Malkawi, 2025).

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction: Theoretical Foundations

The conceptual architecture of this study was anchored in two foundational theories. *Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory* (Herzberg et al., 1959) distinguished between motivators intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement that actively generated satisfaction and drove performance, and hygiene factors extrinsic conditions such as salary, working conditions, and supervisory relationships whose absence produced dissatisfaction without whose presence satisfaction was assured. This framework had been validated across hospitality settings in developing countries, including a study of Jordanian hotels by Al-Badarneh and Malkawi (2025), which

found that socio-economic dimensions of Herzberg's motivator factors significantly predicted employee performance. Complementarily, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) positioned satisfaction along a progression from basic physiological and safety needs through social belonging and esteem to self-actualisation—a framework that remained relevant for understanding the motivational dynamics of Uganda's hotel workforce, where foundational needs around compensation and job security frequently remained unmet.

Job Satisfaction and Productivity in the Hospitality Sector

Empirical evidence consistently confirmed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity in hospitality contexts. A meta-analytic review by Sulistamtama et al. (2024) demonstrated that intrinsic motivation positively and significantly predicted employee performance across service industries. Within Uganda specifically, Mukuru, Njue, and Bijurenda (2025), in a study of 198 hotel employees in Kabale District, found that management support mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and service quality, confirming that institutional factors amplified or attenuated the productivity returns on individual satisfaction. Studies across sub-Saharan Africa consistently highlighted low remuneration, inadequate training, poor working conditions, and limited career progression as the primary drivers of dissatisfaction and subsequent productivity decline (Nuwagaba & Nzabona, 2021). For culturally integrated tourism enterprises like Igongo—where employees simultaneously served as hospitality professionals and cultural ambassadors—the stakes of satisfaction were compounded: dissatisfied employees not only underperformed on service metrics but potentially compromised the authentic cultural experience that constituted the institution's primary competitive advantage.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods cross-sectional research design. The quantitative strand enabled statistical measurement of the relationship between job satisfaction dimensions and work productivity indicators, while the qualitative strand provided contextual depth through employee and management narratives. The cross-sectional design allowed data to be collected at a single point in time, offering a contemporaneous snapshot of conditions at Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel during the 2025/2026 operational period.

Study Population and Sampling

The target population comprised all 96 regular employees of Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel across its key operational departments: Accommodation and Front Office, Food and Beverage, Museum and Cultural Village, Wellness and Spa, Events and Conferencing, Grounds and Maintenance, and Administration. Using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a sample of 78 respondents was drawn. Proportionate stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation across departments, with departmental samples proportional to their share of the total workforce. This approach acknowledged the structural diversity of Igongo's workforce, where guides, chefs, receptionists, and spa therapists operated under markedly different working conditions and satisfaction drivers.

Data Collection Instruments

Primary data were collected through three instruments. A structured questionnaire incorporating a validated Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) adapted from Spector (1997) and modified for the Ugandan hospitality context was administered to the 78 sampled employees. The questionnaire comprised 45 items across nine dimensions rated on a five-point Likert scale anchored at Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (5). A complementary Work Productivity Scale operationalised productivity through eight items covering task completion, service quality, timeliness, innovation, and absenteeism. Additionally, semi-structured key informant interviews were conducted with the General Manager, three departmental heads, and two senior team leaders. Documentary sources—including guest satisfaction records, performance appraisal reports, and staff attendance data—were reviewed to triangulate self-reported productivity data.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS Version 28.0. Descriptive statistics characterised the distribution of satisfaction and productivity scores. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity. Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to determine the relative predictive power of individual satisfaction dimensions on productivity outcomes, controlling for department and years of service. Qualitative data from interviews were analysed thematically, with themes inductively derived from interview transcripts and verified against quantitative patterns. Cronbach's alpha for the combined instrument was 0.87, indicating high internal consistency.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Profile

Of the 78 questionnaires distributed, 76 were returned and found usable, yielding a response rate of 97.4%. Table 1 presents the demographic and departmental profile of respondents.

Category	n	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	47	61.8
Female	29	38.2
Years of Service		
Less than 1 year	19	25.0

1–5 years	41	53.9
More than 5 years	16	21.1
Department		
Food & Beverage	24	31.6
Accommodation & Front Office	18	23.7
Museum & Cultural Village	14	18.4
Wellness & Spa	8	10.5
Events & Conferencing	7	9.2
Administration	5	6.6
Total	76	100.0

Table 1: Profile of Respondents (n = 76)

As shown in Table 1, male respondents constituted the majority of the sample (61.8%), reflecting the gender composition of Igongo's operational workforce. The largest proportion of employees (53.9%) had served between one and five years, suggesting a workforce with moderate institutional memory but not yet deep tenure. A notable 25.0% were in their first year of employment, underscoring the turnover pressure that the General Manager identified as a recurring productivity challenge. The Food and Beverage department accounted for the largest departmental share (31.6%), followed by Accommodation and Front Office (23.7%) and Museum and Cultural Village (18.4%)—collectively representing 73.7% of the sampled workforce and the departments most directly exposed to guest-facing service demands.

Levels of Job Satisfaction

Descriptive statistics were computed for each of the nine satisfaction dimensions measured by the adapted Job Satisfaction Survey. Table 2 presents mean scores and standard deviations for each dimension, alongside an overall satisfaction score.

Satisfaction Dimension	Mean (M)	Std Dev (SD)	Level
Nature of Work	3.81	0.61	High
Co-worker Relationships	3.67	0.58	High

Supervision Quality	3.22	0.74	Moderate
Operating Conditions	3.15	0.69	Moderate
Communication	3.08	0.72	Moderate
Contingent Rewards	2.87	0.81	Low
Benefits	2.66	0.79	Low
Promotion & Career Advancement	2.44	0.83	Low
Pay & Remuneration	2.31	0.92	Low
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.12	0.74	Moderate

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Job Satisfaction Dimensions (n = 76; Scale: 1 = Very Low to 5 = Very High)

Table 2 revealed that overall job satisfaction at Igongo was moderate (M = 3.12, SD = 0.74). The highest satisfaction scores were recorded on the dimensions of *nature of work* (M = 3.81) and *co-worker relationships* (M = 3.67), both rated as high. These results indicated that employees derived genuine intrinsic value from their roles, particularly those involving cultural stewardship and guest engagement—a finding consistent with the institution's unique identity as a heritage tourism enterprise. Qualitative interviews reinforced this pattern: museum guides and cultural performers expressed deep pride in their roles as custodians of Ankole heritage, which sustained their engagement even amid compensation concerns.

Conversely, the lowest satisfaction scores were recorded on *pay and remuneration* (M = 2.31, SD = 0.92) and *promotion and career advancement* (M = 2.44, SD = 0.83), both rated low. These findings corroborated national evidence that remuneration and career growth represented the most persistent sources of dissatisfaction in Uganda's hotel workforce (Mukuru et al., 2025; Nuwagaba & Nzabona, 2021). The wide standard deviation on pay (SD = 0.92) further indicated that dissatisfaction on this dimension was not uniform but varied across departments—with lower-grade operational staff reporting more acute dissatisfaction than supervisory employees.

Correlation Between Job Satisfaction and Work Productivity

To examine the direction and strength of the relationship between job satisfaction dimensions and work productivity, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. Table 3 presents the results.

Variable	Work Productivity (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Overall Job Satisfaction	0.71**	< 0.001	Strong positive

Nature of Work (intrinsic)	0.68**	< 0.001	Strong positive
Recognition & Achievement	0.65**	< 0.001	Strong positive
Responsibility & Growth	0.61**	< 0.001	Strong positive
Supervision Quality	0.48**	< 0.01	Moderate positive
Pay & Remuneration (hygiene)	0.34*	< 0.05	Weak positive
Absenteeism (inverse proxy)	-0.58**	< 0.01	Moderate negative

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Between Job Satisfaction Dimensions and Work Productivity ($n = 76$) ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ns = not significant

Table 3 confirmed a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between overall job satisfaction and work productivity ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.001$). This finding validated the central hypothesis of the study and was consistent with the structural model's prediction that satisfaction, mediated by motivation and engagement, would translate into measurable productivity outcomes. Among the satisfaction dimensions, *nature of work* ($r = 0.68$), *recognition and achievement* ($r = 0.65$), and *responsibility and growth* ($r = 0.61$) recorded the strongest correlations with productivity—all significant at $p < 0.001$. These intrinsic dimensions aligned with Herzberg's motivator factors and confirmed that employees who found their work meaningful, felt recognised, and perceived opportunities for growth tended to demonstrate higher productivity levels.

Pay and remuneration, as an extrinsic hygiene factor, recorded a comparatively weaker positive correlation with productivity ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$), consistent with Herzberg's theoretical proposition that hygiene factors prevented dissatisfaction but were less potent drivers of active productivity. Absenteeism recorded a moderate negative correlation with satisfaction ($r = -0.58$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that dissatisfied employees missed more workdays—an indirect but quantifiable productivity cost that the General Manager corroborated, noting that high-dissatisfaction periods coincided with elevated unplanned absenteeism in the Food and Beverage and Accommodation departments.

Multiple Regression Analysis: Predictors of Work Productivity

To determine the relative predictive power of individual satisfaction dimensions on work productivity, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. Table 4 presents the standardised regression coefficients and model fit statistics.

Predictor (Satisfaction Dimension)	β	Std Error	t-value	p-value
------------------------------------	---------	-----------	---------	---------

Recognition & Achievement	0.42	0.071	5.91	< 0.001
Responsibility & Growth	0.38	0.068	5.59	< 0.001
Nature of Work	0.31	0.073	4.25	< 0.01
Supervision Quality	0.26	0.079	3.29	< 0.01
Operating Conditions	0.22	0.081	2.72	< 0.05
Pay & Remuneration	0.19	0.085	2.24	< 0.05
Benefits	0.14	0.088	1.59	0.116 (ns)
<i>Model fit: $R^2 = 0.583$ (intrinsic predictors); $R^2 = 0.347$ (extrinsic predictors); $F(7, 68) = 21.46, p < 0.001$</i>				

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis — Job Satisfaction Dimensions as Predictors of Work Productivity ($n = 76$)

As shown in Table 4, the regression model was statistically significant and explained a substantial proportion of variance in work productivity. Intrinsic satisfaction dimensions collectively accounted for 58.3% of the variance in work productivity ($R^2 = 0.583$), while extrinsic hygiene factors explained 34.7%. Among individual predictors, *recognition and achievement* emerged as the strongest predictor of work productivity ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$), followed by *responsibility and growth* ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$) and *nature of work* ($\beta = 0.31, p < 0.01$). These findings were consistent with Herzberg's prediction that motivator factors exerted stronger influence on active performance than hygiene factors alone. Pay and remuneration, although statistically significant ($\beta = 0.19, p < 0.05$), was the weakest predictor among the significant variables. The benefits dimension did not reach statistical significance ($\beta = 0.14, p = 0.116$), suggesting that non-monetary benefits in their current form did not independently predict productivity variation at Igongo.

These results confirmed the structural model posited in Section 4: intrinsic motivators constituted the primary pathway through which satisfaction influenced productivity, with extrinsic hygiene factors playing a necessary but secondary and supporting role. The implication for Igongo's management was direct—investments in recognition, growth opportunities, and role enrichment were likely to yield higher productivity returns per shilling spent than equivalent investment in non-monetary benefits alone.

Qualitative Findings: Thematic Analysis

Key informant interviews with the General Manager, three departmental heads, and two senior team leaders generated rich contextual data that complemented and extended the quantitative findings. Table 5 presents the five principal themes identified through inductive thematic analysis, alongside representative excerpts and their implications.

Theme	Representative Excerpt	Implication
Cultural Pride as Intrinsic Motivator	"Working here feels like being part of something bigger than a hotel." (Museum Guide, 4 yrs)	Cultural identity sustained engagement beyond compensation
Compensation as Primary Dissatisfier	"The pay has not changed in two years. It discourages you from giving your best." (F&B Staff, 3 yrs)	Pay stagnation directly undermined productivity motivation
Seasonal Productivity Variation	"Staff morale was visibly higher during peak tourist season." (Departmental Head)	Work volume and variety functioned as intrinsic motivators
Lack of Structured Career Pathways	"There was no clear route to a higher position." (Receptionist, 2 yrs)	Ambiguity of advancement eroded long-term commitment
Turnover as Productivity Cost	"Replacing experienced staff cost time and service quality." (General Manager)	~22% annual turnover rate translated to measurable quality gaps

Table 5: Key Themes from Qualitative Key Informant Interviews

The qualitative data revealed that Igongo's cultural identity served as a powerful but fragile intrinsic motivator. Several museum guides and cultural performers expressed deep pride in their roles as custodians of Ankole heritage, which sustained their engagement even amid compensation concerns. However, the General Manager acknowledged that without structured salary progression and formalised recognition mechanisms, this cultural attachment alone was insufficient to retain experienced employees in the long term. Staff turnover, estimated at approximately 22% annually across operational departments, was identified as the most tangible productivity cost of sustained dissatisfaction, as the continuous replacement of experienced staff consumed supervisory time and depressed service consistency during induction periods.

The seasonal productivity variation observed by departmental heads was particularly instructive. Productivity levels were reported as visibly higher during peak tourist seasons October to December and June to August when the volume and variety of work were greatest. This confirmed that work volume itself functioned as an intrinsic motivator in Herzberg's framework, suggesting that strategies to sustain employee engagement during off-peak periods required deliberate management attention.

Conclusions

This study confirmed a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and work productivity at Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.001$). Intrinsic motivators recognition, responsibility, growth, and the culturally meaningful nature of work were identified as the primary drivers of productivity, explaining 58.3% of the variance in productivity outcomes. Extrinsic hygiene deficits in pay and career advancement undermined sustained engagement, with pay and remuneration recording the lowest satisfaction scores across the sample. The institution's cultural identity functioned as a distinctive but insufficient buffer against systemic compensation inadequacies. Effective productivity management at Igongo therefore demanded a dual strategy: deepening the intrinsic satisfaction derived from the institution's unique cultural mission while simultaneously addressing the structural hygiene deficiencies that eroded long-term employee commitment and retention. Annual staff turnover of approximately 22% represented the most quantifiable productivity cost of sustained dissatisfaction.

Recommendations

To Igongo Management

Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel was recommended to urgently review and restructure its employee compensation framework to align with the Uganda Hotel Owners Association recommended salary bands for four-star establishments. Incremental pay progression tied to tenure and performance appraisal outcomes was recommended to be formalised and transparently communicated to all staff. A formalised Employee Recognition Programme was recommended to be established, incorporating monthly and quarterly awards for exceptional service, cultural stewardship, and innovation. Structured career pathways were recommended to be developed and made visible to all employees at the point of recruitment and induction. Investment in continuous professional development—including hospitality management short courses, cultural heritage interpretation training, and digital tourism skills—was recommended to be budgeted annually and treated as a strategic, not discretionary, expenditure.

To the Uganda Tourism Board and Ministry of Tourism

The Uganda Tourism Board was recommended to incorporate employee satisfaction and retention indicators into the hotel star-rating and quality assurance inspection framework, thereby incentivising hotel operators to invest in human resource management as a direct component of institutional quality. Subsidised training programmes for hotel employees in culturally integrated tourism establishments were recommended to be developed and scaled through UTB's regional training networks.

For Future Research

Future research was recommended to employ longitudinal designs to track the evolution of satisfaction-productivity dynamics at Igongo over successive operational periods, enabling causal inference beyond the correlational findings of this cross-sectional study. Comparative studies encompassing other tourism establishments in Mbarara City and the wider Southwestern Uganda region were recommended to provide a richer evidence base for regional human resource policy development.

References

Received: 18.03.2026

Accepted: 21.03.2026

Published on: 30.03.2026

Al-Badarneh, M. B., & Malkawi, S. A. (2025). Hotel employees' job satisfaction and performance: A developed Herzberg's theory-based model. *SDGsReview*, 5, e03677. <https://sdgsreview.org/LifestyleJournal/article/download/3677/2874/17599>

Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Igongo Cultural Center and Country Hotel. (2024). About us. <https://igongo.co.ug/about-us/>

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>

Mbarara City Local Government. (2023). Igongo Cultural Center. <https://mbararacity.go.ug/tourism/igongo-cultural-center>

Mukuru, G., Njue, M. M., & Bijurenda, J. A. (2025). Job satisfaction and service quality in Uganda's hospitality sector: Mediating role of management support. *Journal of Modern Hospitality*, 4(1), 10–22. <https://doi.org/10.47941/jmh.3211>

Nuwagaba, A., & Nzabona, A. (2021). Determinants of employee satisfaction in Uganda's hotel industry. *East African Journal of Business and Economics*, 3(2), 15–29.

Sobaih, A. E. E., & Hasanein, A. M. (2020). Herzberg's theory of motivation and job satisfaction: Does it work for hotel industry in developing countries? *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 19(3), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332845.2020.1763552>

Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. SAGE Publications.

Sulistamtama, M. F., Setiawan, R., & Yuniawan, A. (2024). The effect of intrinsic motivation on employee performance: A systematic literature review. *Research Horizon*, 4(6), 195–202.

Uganda Tourism Board. (2023). Annual tourism performance report 2022/2023. UTB.

Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.