

**A STUDY ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP
BEHAVIOR IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS IN
SHANDONG PROVINCE OF CHINA: THE ROLES
OF REWARDS, EMPOWERMENT, JOB
SATISFACTION, AND ROLE CLARITY**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

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by

CAO SHUXIA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
COM	Compensation
EMP	Empowerment
HELP	Helping Behavior
JS	Job Satisfaction
LOY	Employee Loyalty
REC	Recognition
ROLE	Role Clarity
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CB-SEM	Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling
CMV	Common Method Variance
CR	Composite Reliability
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
IPS	Institut Pengajian Siswazah
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia

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**KAJIAN TERHADAP TINGKAH LAKU KEWARGANEGARAAN
ORGANISASI DALAM HOTEL BERTARAF LIMA BINTANG, DI
WILAYAH SHANDONG, CHINA: PERANAN GANJARAN,
PEMERKASAAN, KEPUASAN KERJA, DAN KEJELASAN PERANAN**

ABSTRAK

Hotel bertaraf lima bintang di China menghadapi dua cabaran iaitu kepuasan pelanggan yang rendah dan kadar penginapan yang berkurangan. Laporan Persatuan Hotel China 2023, menunjukkan bahawa walaupun hotel-hotel ini mempunyai kemudahan paling mewah, namun kepuasan pelanggan adalah yang terendah di antara hotel-hotel yang ditaraf bintang. Masalah ini menunjukkan kemungkinan kekurangan tingkah laku kewarganegaraan organisasi (OCB) di kalangan pekerja barisan hadapan dalam memenuhi keperluan pelanggan. Menggunakan Teori Pertukaran Sosial dan Teori Peranan, kajian ini menyelidik kesan ganjaran dan pemerksaan terhadap OCB pekerja, serta peranan perantaraan kepuasan kerja dan peranan penyesuaian kejelasan peranan sebagai pemboleh ubah penyederhana. Melalui tinjauan soal selidik terhadap 290 pekerja dari 18 hotel bertaraf lima bintang di wilayah Shandong, dan analisa data menggunakan perisian SPSS dan SmartPLS menunjukkan ganjaran dan pemerksaan dengan ketara meningkatkan kepuasan kerja, dan kepuasan kerja memainkan peranan perantaraan antara ganjaran, pemerksaan, dan OCB. Kejelasan peranan berjaya menyesuaikan hubungan antara pemerksaan dan OCB. Penemuan kajian ini memberikan panduan praktikal bagi hotel bertaraf lima bintang untuk memperbaiki kualiti perkhidmatan pekerja dan prestasi perniagaan melalui strategi pengurusan sumber manusia yang memotivasi tingkah laku proaktif pekerja. Kajian ini juga mengenal pasti beberapa limitasi kajian

serta mencadangkan arah penyelidikan masa depan, seperti menggunakan reka bentuk kajian longitudinal untuk memahami hubungan dinamik antara ganjaran, pemerksaan dan OCB dengan lebih menyeluruh.

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CLARITY**

ABSTRACT

Five-star hotels in China face two challenges: low customer satisfaction and decreased occupancy rates. According to the 2023 China Hotel Association report, despite these hotels having the most luxurious facilities, their customer satisfaction is the lowest among star-rated hotels. This issue suggests a possible lack of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among frontline employees in meeting customer needs. Utilizing Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory, this study investigates the effects of rewards and empowerment on employee OCB, as well as the mediating role of job satisfaction and the moderating role of role clarity. A survey of 290 employees from 18 five-star hotels in Shandong Province, analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS software, shows that rewards and empowerment significantly increase job satisfaction, and job satisfaction mediates the relationship between rewards, empowerment, and OCB. Role clarity successfully moderates the relationship between empowerment and OCB. The findings of this study provide practical guidance for five-star hotels to improve service quality and business performance through human resource management strategies that motivate proactive employee behavior. The study also identifies several limitations and suggests future research directions, such as using a longitudinal study design to more comprehensively understand the dynamic relationships between rewards, empowerment, and OCB.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Chapter 1

This chapter first describes the content overview, followed by an introduction to the learning background, and then introduces the problem statement. Subsequently, it presents the research questions and research objectives, followed by an introduction to the scope of study and the significance of research. Finally, it concludes with a definition of key words and organization of the thesis chapters.

1.2 Background of the Study

In the increasingly competitive market environment, exceptional service is crucial for any business, particularly in the hospitality industry where service is the primary product (Makandwa & Basera, 2020). High service quality is often discussed alongside service experiences that exceed customer expectations (Xu et al., 2022). The ability to meet and surpass customer expectations is seen as a key element in determining the success of the service sector, especially in the hospitality industry (Hwang et al., 2021; Shams et al., 2020).

In terms of exceeding customer service expectations, the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of employees plays a critical role (Sultana & Johari, 2022). OCB refers to employee behaviors in the workplace that go beyond the requirements of their formal job roles and are not directly or explicitly recognized by formal reward systems (Teng et al., 2019). Employees who exhibit OCB often transcend their role requirements, consistently paying attention to customer needs and proactively offering assistance (Hwang et al., 2021). In fact, OCB can enhance

team collaboration and organizational cohesion, thereby ensuring a higher level of service quality (Haass et al., 2023).

To encourage employees to demonstrate OCB, organizations often implement various human resource management practices, hoping to motivate employees to take initiative and go beyond their duties. This effort has attracted extensive research interest, where Sultana & Johari (2022) noted that appropriate human resource management practices can create an environment that encourages OCB, thereby inspiring more customer-centered behaviors among employees. Investing in human resource practices holds the potential to help organizations shape and customize employee behaviors, fostering a more proactive and dedicated team (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Gavino et al., 2021). Therefore, exploring the impact of human resource management practices on employee organizational behavior is particularly crucial (Gavino et al., 2021).

1.2.1 OCB and Hotel Industry from Global Perspective

The tourism industry is recognized as a significant force for economic revitalization and job creation (Aksoy et al., 2022; Dogru & Bulut, 2018). Within this sector, the hotel industry, especially luxury hotels, plays a central role by providing guests with top-tier accommodations through personalized services and advanced amenities (Goeltom et al., 2020).

As international hotel chains continue to expand globally, the competition among luxury hotels has intensified (Su & Reynolds, 2019). The luxury hotel market is expected to grow from \$99.88 billion in 2023 to \$146.05 billion by 2028, with an annual compound growth rate of 7.90% (Mordor Intelligence, 2023). In such a rapidly developing market, delivering high-quality services that exceed customer

expectations is key and serves as a core strategy for hotels to distinguish themselves in a competitive environment (K.-N. Liu & Hu, 2022; Ivanova et al., 2016).

Moreover, customers have higher expectations for luxury hotels compared to economy hotels, due to their steep prices and luxurious brand image, prompting expectations of a flawless experience (Zeqiraj & Nimani, 2022). As Forbes Travel Guide. (2023) states, employees of five-star hotels should provide services that are "intuitive, considerate, and anticipatory." Similarly, the AA Hotel Quality Standards 2018 report by the British AA notes that employees at five-star hotels must possess "excellent social skills and the ability to anticipate guests' personalized needs, creating a unique and memorable experience" (AA, 2018, p. 12). Indeed, this sets a very high standard for service.

Given the competitive market dynamics and the high standards of service expected, the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of employees in luxury hotels becomes particularly crucial (Zeqiraj & Nimani, 2022). Hotel operators are well aware of this and consistently expect their employees to exhibit exemplary OCB to provide a quality customer service experience (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020).

However, the current state of employees in global workplaces is concerning. Gallup, a leading global polling organization headquartered in the United States, produces reports that span multiple countries and regions worldwide and are widely recognized by both industry and academia. For example, its *2023 State of the Global Workplace Report* provides crucial data on the state of employees in global workplaces. The report shows that 59% of employees are "not engaged," meaning they lack enthusiasm for their work and are neither proactive nor motivated. More troubling is that 18% of employees display an "Actively disengaged" attitude,

meaning they are dissatisfied with their jobs and may even be detrimental to the company. This lack of OCB, particularly evident in the hotel industry affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, is prominent (Seqhobane & Koko, 2021). Over the past three years, pandemic-induced stress has led many hotel employees into a "Quiet quitting" state where, although not formally resigning, they only fulfill the minimum requirements of their jobs and no longer exceed expectations (Scheyett, 2022; Hamouche et al., 2023).

Indeed, meeting or surpassing customer expectations has become a competitive key for luxury hotels (Azila-Gbetor, 2023). However, there is a significant contradiction between this ideal and the current performance of hotel staff (Dai et al., 2020). Inefficient and unenthusiastic employees can lead to a decline in service levels, thereby affecting customer satisfaction and retention (Tang & Tang, 2013). In the long run, this could have profound negative impacts on the hotel business. To ensure continued competitiveness, it is urgent for management to take measures to inspire more active and professional OCB among staff, thus meeting the competitive demands of the hotel industry, especially in the luxury hotel market (Zeqiraj & Nimani, 2022).

1.2.2 OCB and Hotel Industry from China Perspective

Since the reform and opening up in 1978, China's tourism industry has rapidly risen, driving explosive growth in the hotel sector. The number of hotels increased from 137 in 1978 to 430,000 by 2022 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China, 2022), highlighting the industry's rapid development. However, this growth has also led to oversupply and fierce market competition (Wu & Yang, 2018). In this competitive environment, service quality has become a crucial differentiator for hotels to stand out in the market (F. Ali et al., 2017; Kensbock et al., 2019).

According to the "2023 China Accommodation Industry Online Reputation Report" published by the China Hotel Association, among all star-rated hotels, five-star hotels have the lowest customer satisfaction with their stay experiences. The report notes that due to the high positioning and pricing of five-star hotels, consumer expectations are significantly higher compared to other star levels, leading to dissatisfaction and complaints about any issues during their stay. The China Tourist Hotel Star-rating Committee announced that 23 five-star hotels were stripped of their rating in the national star-rated hotel review of 2023, some due to declines in service standards and quality (China Tourist Hotel Star-rating Committee, 2023).

Meanwhile, the Asian Hospitality Data Institute (ABN Data) in its "2022 China Hotel Review Report" conducted a joint analysis of service data for five-star and four-star hotels. The report highlights that in luxury hotels, customer focus on service is the highest (see Figure 1.1; ABN Data,2022). A detailed analysis of the factors affecting service revealed that front office services had a negative review rate of 21.87%, and concierge services had a negative review rate of 28.26%. While free laundry, ironing, and drying services generally received positive reviews, there were still 11.54% negative reviews. These data indicate significant issues with service quality in some of China's high-end hotels, urgently requiring improvement.

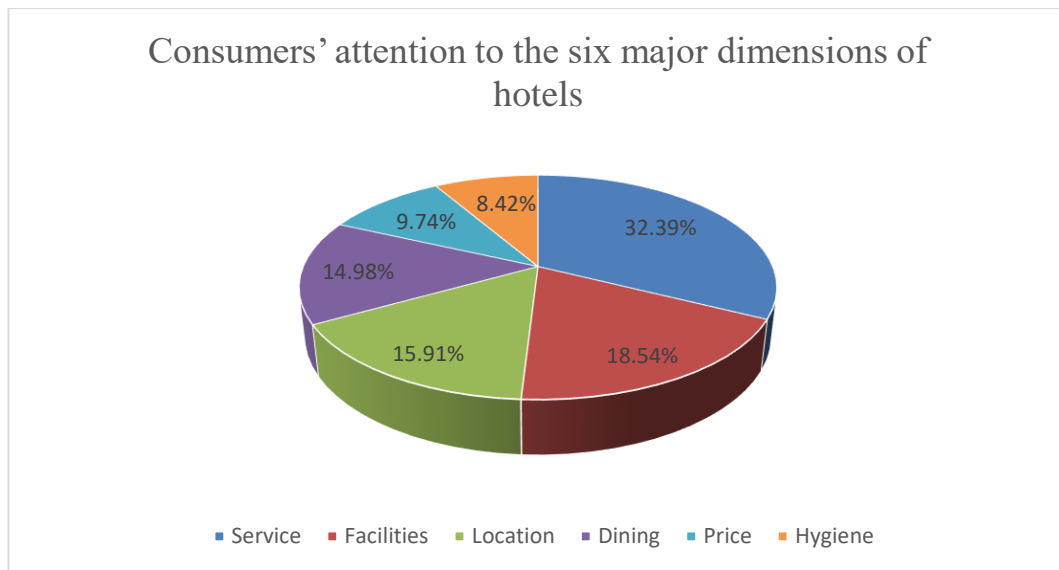


Figure 1.1 Consumers' attention to the six major dimensions of hotels
 Note. Source: Asia Travel and Accommodation Big Data Research Institute (ABN Data),2022

The quality of hotel service is closely linked to the performance of frontline staff, as their direct interactions with customers determine the overall guest experience (Ma & Qu, 2011). The ABN Data report highlights that many negative reviews stem from employees' lack of enthusiasm and inefficiency. This deficiency is often a result of insufficient organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which is crucial for spontaneous and positive guest interactions, particularly in environments lacking direct supervision or camera monitoring (Koo et al., 2020). Employees who exhibit high levels of OCB are able to independently provide excellent service, which is critical for ensuring customer satisfaction and the overall success of the hotel (Chen et al., 2018).

Therefore, the success of luxury hotels is inseparable from the OCB of their frontline staff. Given the high pricing of luxury hotels and the high expectations of their clients, management must focus on enhancing employees' OCB to ensure they can consistently meet and exceed customer expectations. In a competitive market,

enhancing OCB is key for luxury hotels to stand out. Thus, the issue of OCB among employees in China's luxury hotels warrants further investigation to secure a stronger competitive edge in future markets.

1.2.3 OCB and Hotel Industry from Shandong Province Perspective

This study selects Shandong Province as its research setting, primarily based on the region's profound cultural background and economic status. Shandong, the birthplace of Confucius and the cradle of Confucian thought, has influenced Chinese society for thousands of years with its cultural traits (China Culture, 2014). These cultural characteristics not only shape local social interactions but also deeply impact the behavior patterns of hotel industry employees (Shandong Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, 2022). Economically, Shandong ranks third in GDP nationwide, making it the largest economy in Northern China. In 2024, Shandong welcomed nearly 900 million domestic tourists, generating over 1 trillion RMB in tourism revenue, highlighting the significant contribution of the tourism sector to the provincial economy (CCTV, 2024). Figure 1.2 illustrates the location of Shandong Province in China, the hometown of Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, along with his famous sayings.



Figure 1.2 Shandong Province, China – Hometown of Confucius, Founder of Confucianism, and His Famous Quote.

Note. Source: Original map sourced from Google, with modifications by the author.

The service performance of luxury hotels is an important reflection of regional tourism development and city image. To gain an in-depth understanding of the service quality of luxury hotels in Shandong Province, this study evaluates the performance of these hotels by analyzing online reviews from Dianping. Dianping, an online review app operated by Meituan Dianping, is widely used in China across various industries, including dining, hotels, entertainment, and shopping, and holds significant influence in the Chinese market. The platform is known for the authenticity and comprehensiveness of its user-generated content, making it an essential reference for consumers when making decisions (Dianping, 2023). Studies show that, compared to traditional media, consumers are more likely to rely on online reviews to make decisions (Blal & Sturman, 2014). This study focuses on the

analysis of online review data from the three cities in Shandong with the largest number of five-star hotels: Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai. A total of 46,335 reviews from 24 five-star hotels were examined. These reviews, based on the real experiences of numerous consumers, are highly valuable.

Figure 1.3 presents the comparison of the negative review rates of five-star hotels in Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai with industry benchmarks. The negative review rate is the percentage of negative reviews relative to total reviews, a critical metric for measuring hotel service quality (Zhang et al., 2022). According to Trip Advisor's "Top Service Awards" criteria, award-winning five-star hotels generally maintain a positive review rate above 95%, implying a negative review rate below 5% (Trip Advisor, 2023). Reports from Review Pro and Trust You also show that five-star hotels typically keep their negative review rates below 5% to ensure high customer satisfaction and a strong online reputation (Review Pro, 2022; Trust You, 2022). However, the study finds that among the 24 hotels from these three cities, 16 exceed this industry reference value for negative reviews, indicating significant issues in service quality.

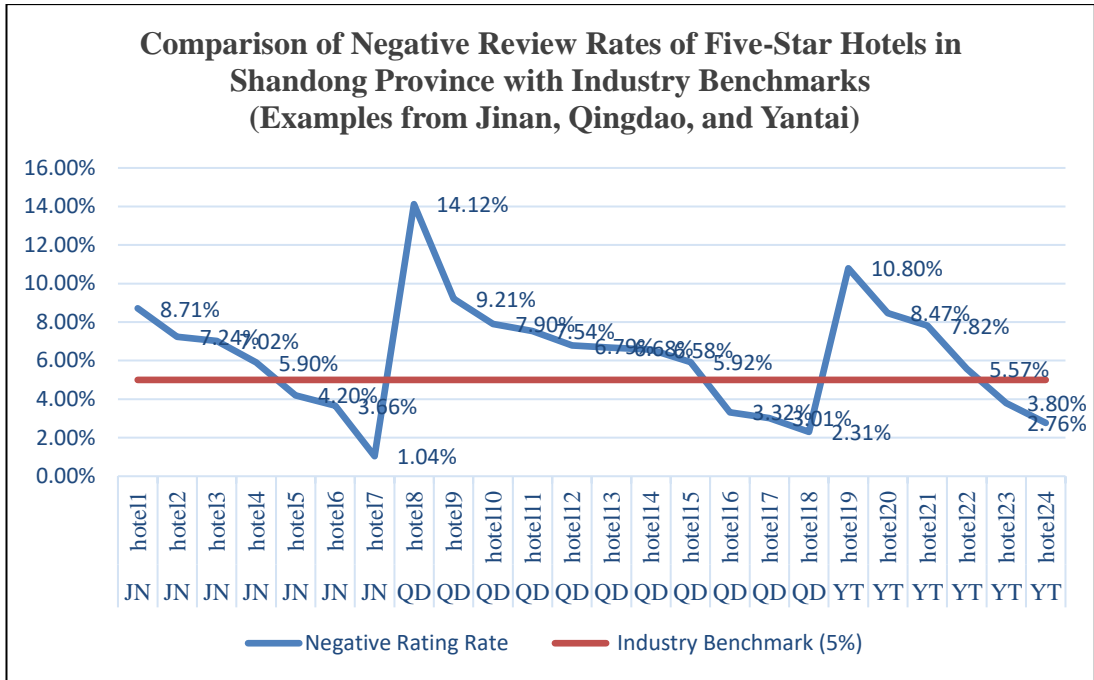


Figure 1.3 Comparison of Negative Review Rates of Five-Star Hotels in Shandong Province with Industry Benchmarks

Note. Data source: "Dianping" APP. Query deadline: June 17, 2024.

Figure 1.4 further showcases the specific customer rating data for five-star hotels in these three cities, covering four key dimensions: location, facilities, service, and cleanliness. The data indicate (on a 5-point scale) that service ratings are generally lower than other dimensions. This discrepancy clearly demonstrates customer dissatisfaction with the service quality of these luxury hotels, particularly where expectations in service were not adequately met. In addition to ratings, customer online reviews highlight several service issues, such as arrogant attitudes, inefficiency, lack of dedication, shirking responsibilities, and laziness among frontline hotel staff (Dianping, 2024)—issues that should not occur in five-star hotels, which advocate for "providing an ultimate service experience."

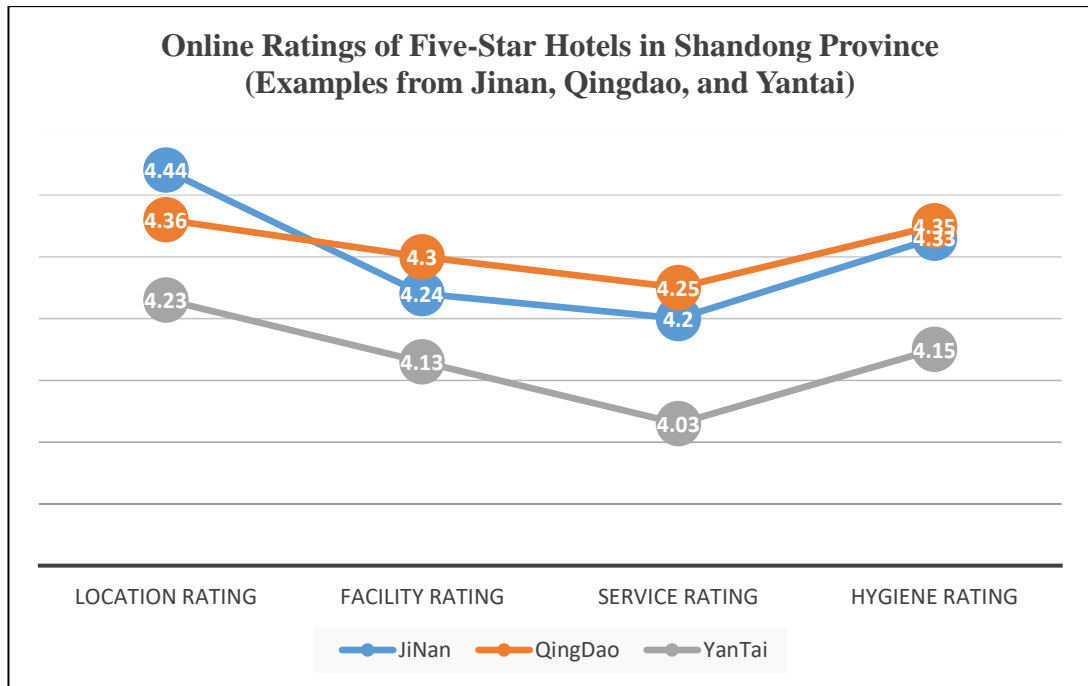


Figure 1.4 Online Ratings of Five-Star Hotels in Shandong Province (Examples from Jinan, Qingdao, and Yantai City)

Note. Data source: "Dianping" APP. Query deadline: June 17, 2024.

According to research by Viglia et al. (2016), even minor service issues can have a significant impact on hotel performance. Mathwick and Mosteller (2017) report that a 1% improvement in online reputation can increase revenue per hotel room by 1.4%. From the above data, it is evident that while some of Shandong Province's five-star hotels perform well overall, most still have considerable room for improvement in service quality. High negative review rates and lower scores in the service dimension reveal a deficiency in Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among frontline hotel staff, especially in departments that directly interact with customers and create significant impressions, such as front office, dining, and room service. OCB refers to voluntary behaviors that go beyond formal job responsibilities, such as helping colleagues, treating guests courteously, and proactively solving problems. To enhance service quality and customer satisfaction, luxury hotels in

Shandong must focus on and promote employee OCB. This requires not only establishing a culture that encourages employees to go beyond their duties but also implementing motivational mechanisms within the organization to make employees feel valued and driven to provide exceptional service.

1.3 Problem Statement

In China, five-star hotels play a critical role in the tourism industry, not only attracting high-end clientele but also shaping the image of cities (China Hotel Association, 2023). Despite their luxury positioning, these hotels have customer satisfaction levels significantly lower than those of mid-tier hotels. According to the "2023 China Hospitality Market Online Reputation Report" by the China Hotel Association, the customer satisfaction rate for five-star hotels stands at only 92.15%, compared to 95.15% for mid-tier hotels. This discrepancy indicates a substantial gap in meeting the high expectations of customers. To delve deeper into this issue, this study analyzed 46,335 online reviews from 24 five-star hotels in Shandong Province (Dianping, 2023). The analysis revealed widespread customer dissatisfaction, particularly with staff attitudes, efficiency, and proactivity. These feedbacks suggest significant deficiencies in the organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) of frontline hotel employees, directly contributing to lower customer satisfaction.

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), especially loyalty and helping behavior, significantly impact the service quality of five-star hotels (Rishipal, 2019). Research shows that employees who exhibit OCB are willing to go beyond their job duties to cater to customers' immediate and personalized needs, thereby providing service that exceeds expectations (Hwang et al., 2022). Specifically, employees with high loyalty are more likely to fulfill their responsibilities and make greater efforts to

improve company service quality (Darmawan, 2020). Moreover, collaboration and proactive helping behaviors among employees can create a welcoming hotel atmosphere and enhance overall service quality (Wang, Y.-C. et al., 2021). However, despite extensive research on OCB across many industries, studies focusing on employee loyalty and helping behavior are scarce in China's hotel sector, particularly in five-star hotels (Lee, J. & Shin, H., 2024). This is the focus of the present study.

Grounded in Social Exchange Theory (SET), this research explores how rewards and empowerment influence employees' job satisfaction and subsequently their loyalty and helping behaviors. SET emphasizes the reciprocal exchange of resources (Cropanzano, R., Anthony, E. L., Daniels, S. R., & Hall, A. V., 2016; Srivastava, S. & Madan, P., 2023), where rewards and empowerment represent organizational investments that inspire employee support and trust, which in return, are reflected through enhanced job satisfaction and OCB.

Rewards have always been considered a central factor in eliciting positive employee behaviors and are widely integrated into human resource management policies (Raja et al., 2018; Beqiri & Aziri, 2022). Yet, the role of rewards in fostering OCB is often overlooked. Most existing studies view rewards as part of high-performance or high-involvement work practices rather than as a primary variable to explore their impact on OCB (Yang, Y.-C., 2012; Sultana & Johari, 2022). The effect of different types of rewards (tangible and intangible) on various dimensions of OCB, such as loyalty and helping behaviors, remains under-researched. The relationship between empowerment strategies and OCB has gained attention in recent years, yet the combination of rewards and empowerment is less studied. Extensive academic research indicates that job satisfaction is a crucial antecedent of OCB (webmaster,

2022). From the perspective of independent variables like rewards and empowerment, these factors' most significant impact is the enhancement of job satisfaction (Younies & Al-Tawil, 2020). Therefore, this study employs job satisfaction as a mediating variable to validate its bridging role between rewards, empowerment, and employee OCB.

Furthermore, previous research has shown that role clarity and empowerment can independently affect employee OCB (Robinson & Judge, 2007). However, the interplay between empowerment and role clarity and its impact on OCB have not been thoroughly explored. Especially in the context of five-star hotels, where roles are clearly defined, the interaction between these two factors may further influence employee OCB. Thus, this study introduces role clarity as a moderating variable to examine its effect on the relationship between empowerment and OCB.

This research aims to investigate how rewards (both tangible remuneration and intangible recognition) and empowerment affect organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), examining the roles of job satisfaction as a mediating variable and role clarity as a moderating variable. These analyses are intended to provide new insights for the academic community and practical guidance for HR and service management practices in five-star hotels, ultimately aiding in enhancing customer service quality and overall business performance.

1.4 Research Objectives

The present study aims:

1. To assess the relationship between rewards (compensation, recognition) and empowerment on job satisfaction among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China.

2. To assess the relationship between job satisfaction and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China.

3. To investigate the direct relationship between rewards (compensation, recognition), empowerment, and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China.

4. To examine the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between rewards (compensation, recognition), empowerment, and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China.

5. To examine the moderating role of role clarity in the relationship between empowerment and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the problem statement and research objectives, this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. Do rewards (compensation and recognition) and empowerment have a relationship with job satisfaction among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China?

2. Does job satisfaction have a relationship with OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China?

3. Do rewards (compensation and recognition) and empowerment have a direct relationship with OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China?

4. Does job satisfaction mediate the relationship between rewards (compensation and recognition), empowerment, and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China?

5. Does role clarity moderate the relationship between empowerment and OCB (employee loyalty and helping behavior) among employees in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China?

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study investigates whether rewards, including tangible compensation and intangible recognition, along with empowerment, affect Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) through job satisfaction. It also verifies the moderating role of role clarity, thereby broadening the application of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Role Theory.

In terms of Social Exchange Theory, this study delves into two fundamental concepts: "obligation to reciprocate" and "expectation of reciprocity," thereby enhancing understanding of employee attitudes and behaviors. These concepts illustrate how employees react to the rewards and empowerment provided by the organization, with the expectation of reciprocating the organization's investment through additional Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB). By empirically testing job satisfaction as a mediating variable, this research reveals how rewards and

empowerment translate into actions that enhance OCB, aiding in a deeper comprehension of how these social exchange processes operate within contemporary organizations.

In terms of Role Theory, this research focuses on how role clarity moderates the impact of empowerment on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). By analyzing the relationship between empowerment and OCB at different levels of role clarity, this study deepens the understanding of Role Theory, revealing how the precision of role definitions affects the effectiveness of empowerment strategies. This research provides new insights on optimizing the implementation of empowerment by adjusting role clarity, thereby enhancing employees' OCB and supporting the efficacy of Role Theory in modern organizational management.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

This research provides practical guidance for the Chinese hotel industry on how to enhance employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) through reward and empowerment strategies. It examines how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between these strategies and OCB, and how role clarity moderates the impact of empowerment on OCB, thereby assisting managers in more effectively designing human resource policies.

The applicability of this research extends beyond the hotel industry, encompassing other tourism-related organizations requiring high levels of service and Chinese workplaces seeking to enhance Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among employees. In these settings, employees' OCB is crucial for increasing customer satisfaction and maintaining high service standards. Specifically, the findings of this study will aid managers in understanding how to utilize rewards such

as compensation and recognition, as well as empowerment practices, to motivate employees to go beyond their routine duties. Additionally, the research assists managers in adjusting empowerment strategies based on different levels of role clarity, thus reducing role conflict and stress among employees, which in turn enhances job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

Globally, according to Gallup research, the pandemic has led to increased rates of "disengagement" and "quiet quitting" across workplaces, impacting various regions to different extents. The findings of this study also offer strategies for managers to address these challenges, particularly on how to effectively deal with low employee engagement in diverse cultural contexts.

Overall, this study provides strategic guidance aimed at helping organizations foster a positive and committed work environment, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in five-star hotels in Shandong Province, China, focusing on frontline staff in the front office, housekeeping, and Food and Beverage (F&B) departments, including only those who had been employed for more than six months. This choice was based on several reasons: Shandong Province, as the birthplace of Confucian culture, embodies core traits of Chinese culture, and the Confucian emphasis on harmony and propriety undoubtedly influences employee service behaviors. Therefore, choosing Shandong provided a representative perspective for studying employee behaviors in this cultural context. Five-star hotels, with their high service standards and customer expectations, had a particularly high demand for employees' OCB, making them ideal venues for studying OCB. The front

office, housekeeping, and Food and Beverage (F&B) departments are areas of frequent interaction between the hotel and its customers, specifically including front office staff such as receptionists and concierge staff, housekeeping staff such as room attendants and housekeepers, and Food and Beverage (F&B) staff such as servers and supervisors. As these departments are directly involved in shaping the customer experience and satisfaction, the behavior of employees in these areas plays a critical role in enhancing the service capabilities of the hotel, which is the main focus of this research.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Table 1.1 Definitions of Key Terms

Terms	Definitions
Rewards	Rewards are defined as various forms of return provided by an organization to its employees, in recognition of their work performance and contributions. Rewards are categorized into two types: tangible and intangible. Tangible rewards have a definite monetary value, such as salary, bonuses, and benefits. Intangible rewards, without direct monetary value, include recognition, career development opportunities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making (Bratton & Gold, 2003; Armstrong & Murlis 2007; Madhani, 2021).
Compensation	This study defines compensation as a tangible reward that includes salary and other benefits. Compensation is seen as a primary reason for work and a powerful motivator in the workplace (White, 2000; Kulchmanov & Kaliannan, 2014; Rynes et al., 2004).
Recognition	Recognition, as an intangible reward, is the appreciation and valuation of employee efforts and achievements. Recognition can be formal, such as through organizational reward systems to honor employee service and contributions; it can also be informal, such as through words of thanks or other forms of verbal or written praise to express acknowledgment of employees (Armstrong, 2014; Madhani, 2021).
Empowerment	This study defines empowerment as a practice or set of practices involving the delegation of responsibility downward, thereby granting employees greater decision-making authority in executing primary work tasks. These practices impact employees' attitudes and behaviors, subsequently affecting their performance (Klidas, 2002; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013).
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Combining Organ's (1997) revised definition of OCB and N. P. Podsakoff et al.'s (2009) analytical evaluation of this definition, OCB in this study refers to behaviors exhibited by employees in an organization that go beyond formal job requirements, aiming to support and improve the social and psychological environment in which work tasks are executed.
Employee loyalty	This study defines employee loyalty as a multidimensional construct that encompasses both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions. This implies that loyalty is not only an emotional attitude of employees towards the organization (such as identification, attachment, commitment, and trust) as per Guillon and Cezanne (2014), but also a behavior characterized by dedication (such as going beyond daily duties and proactively advocating and defending the organization) as noted by Waqas et al. (2014).

Helping behavior	Helping behavior is defined as voluntary actions to assist others in solving or preventing work-related problems, and it is divided into two dimensions: help directed towards colleagues and help directed towards customers (N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2011; Yue et al., 2017).
Job satisfaction	Job satisfaction is a feeling that represents an individual's attitude and perceptions towards their work. A positive and favorable attitude towards work indicates job satisfaction, while a negative and unfavorable attitude towards work signifies job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2006) (Aziri, 2011).
Role clarity	Role clarity is a concept opposed to role ambiguity, referring to an individual's clear understanding of their job responsibilities, tasks, goals, and expectations (Rizzo et al., 1970; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008).

1.9 Organization of Chapters

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research background, problem statement, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, and definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 focuses on a comprehensive review of the variables involved in this study, including Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) with its dimensions like employee loyalty and helping behavior, rewards (compensation and recognition), empowerment, job satisfaction, and role clarity. This chapter also includes the theoretical framework and hypotheses of the study. Chapter 3 details the methodology used in the research, covering research methods, target population and sampling, questionnaire design, pilot testing, data collection procedures, and the software and methods used for data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results of data analysis, showing descriptive statistics, reliability and validity, and the results of hypothesis testing. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the entire study, offers an in-depth discussion of the data analysis results, and outlines the theoretical and practical implications. It also addresses the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Chapter 2

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the entire chapter, laying the groundwork for in-depth exploration. It starts with a comprehensive literature review of the core variable, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and its sub-dimensions: employee loyalty and helping behavior. It then delves into the variables of rewards (both tangible rewards like compensation and intangible rewards like recognition), empowerment, role clarity, and job satisfaction. Through extensive and deep literature analysis, this chapter identifies gaps in the research and discusses Social Exchange Theory and Role Theory, laying the theoretical foundation for the proposed research framework. Subsequently, the chapter presents the research framework and develops hypotheses, including the relationships between rewards, empowerment and OCB, as well as the mediating role of job satisfaction and the moderating role of role clarity. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main content and structure of the chapter.

2.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

2.2.1 Conceptualization, Dimensions, and Previous Studies

2.2.1(a) Conceptualization of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) can be traced back to Katz's pioneering framework, where he described employees' innovative and spontaneous activities that go beyond formal role requirements as "extra-role behaviors" (Katz, 1964). Dennis Organ and his colleagues further developed this

concept, coining the term "Organizational Citizenship Behavior" (OCB) for the first time (Bateman & Organ, 1983). Organ (1988) later defined OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward systems, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (p. 4). This definition emphasized the voluntary and informal nature of such behaviors and their importance to the overall benefit of the organization (P. M. Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Following Organ's 1988 definition, Graham (1991) offered a different perspective on OCB. She criticized the practice of defining OCB merely as organizationally functional and beyond role requirements, proposing a new definition based on the concept of political citizenship. She suggested incorporating the political dimension of the term "citizen" into OCB research, positioning OCB as an equivalent of civic duty within organizations (Graham, 1991).

Organ revised his original definition of OCB in 1997, describing it as "performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place" (Organ, 1997, p. 95). This new definition not only clarified the distinction between task performance and OCB (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1991; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002) but also avoided viewing OCB as discretionary behaviors that might not receive formal rewards (N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2009). Regardless of the definition, OCB is expected to correlate positively with measures of organizational effectiveness, which is a major reason for the academic community's continued interest.

Over time, subsequent definitions have generally deepened and expanded upon Organ's propositions. For instance, Fernández-Sabiote & Román (2005) defined OCB

from the perspective of customer service as voluntary personal behavior by service providers that is perceived by customers and exceeds role requirements, not directly or explicitly recognized by formal reward systems but generally enhances organizational efficiency. Teng et al. (2019) viewed OCB as individual contributions in the workplace that exceed specific role requirements and are not directly or explicitly recognized by formal reward systems. Gahlawat & Kundu (2020) emphasized that OCB refers to ways employees choose to exhibit constructive and cooperative postures beyond their formal role obligations, accumulating over time to enhance organizational effectiveness. Ali et al. (2022) described OCB as employees' discretionary behaviors outside their formal job duties that support the effective operation of the organization. Meniado (2020) considered OCB to be discretionary, beyond-role behaviors and postures that are not formally recognized by reward systems but are deemed important for promoting organizational effectiveness.

Some scholars have directly adopted Organ's definition. For instance, Yoon & Suh (2003), Farid et al. (2019), de Geus et al. (2020), and Fan et al. (2023) have all used Organ's (1988) definition of OCB to varying extents, emphasizing that OCB is a voluntary individual behavior that, although not formally recognized by the reward system, promotes the overall effectiveness of the organization. Table 2.1 summarizes the various definitions of OCB.

Table 2.1 Definition Summary of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Items	Year	Author	Definition
1	1988	Organ	Discretionary personal behavior that is not directly or explicitly recognized by formal reward systems, yet overall facilitates the effective functioning of the organization.