



Promoting service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors in hotels: The role of high-performance human resource practices and organizational social climates

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ABSTRACT

Integrating social exchange and information processing theories, this study examines the influence of high-performance human resource (HR) practices on service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through two climates—justice climate and service climate. This field study of 1133 customer contact employees and 119 human resource managers from 119 hotels in Taiwan has shown that social climates of justice and service mediate the influence of high-performance HR practices on service-oriented OCB. The study demonstrates that high-performance HR practices affect employees' cognition on how they are treated by hotels and what service behaviors are expected, which in turn can positively influence collective service-oriented OCB.

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1. Introduction

In the hotel industry, customer heterogeneity as well as their illusive preferences, expectation, personality characteristics, attitudes, and likings altogether have created pluralistic and fast evolving customer demand (Raub, 2008). In this unpredictable service environment, service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (service-oriented OCB) has been considered as an important factor enhancing not only service quality but also customer satisfaction.

In the hotel environment, service-oriented OCB promotes a more effective service delivery procedure, provides better service quality, establishes a more friendly customer interaction, and offers more innovative thoughts about services for better serving the customers and scoring a greater customer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2009; Raub, 2008; Stamper and Van Dyne, 2001; Yen and Niehoff, 2004). Therefore, hotels have been seeking useful means to enhance service-oriented behaviors of their customer contact employees because this type of behaviors is beneficial for service delivery quality, competitive advantages, and financial performance of the hotels (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Karatepe et al., 2006; Walz and Niehoff, 2000). However, up till now only few studies have investigated antecedent factors promoting service-oriented OCB in the

hotel industry (e.g. Kim et al., 2010; Ma and Qu, 2011; Tsaur and Lin, 2004).

To ensure the highest service quality from customer contact employees, hotels have to design human resource (HR) practices to motivate employees' service-oriented OCB (Liao et al., 2009). High-performance HR practices as a system of HR practices, these practices complement and are aligned with each other, designed to increase employees' competencies, motivation, and opportunities for providing satisfying services to customers (Chuang and Liao, 2010; Combs et al., 2006; Delaney and Huselid, 1996). Although previous studies suggested that high-performance HR practices can induce OCB of employees (Sun et al., 2007; Tsaur and Lin, 2004), however, no studies from the past have further examined the mechanism of high-performance HR practices' effect on service-oriented OCB. Moreover, various researchers have indicated that when investigating impacts from high-performance HR practices on employee behavior, the focus should be placed on providing a theoretical explanation for this causality mechanism (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Evans and Davis, 2005).

The social exchange theory and the information processing perspective may provide a foundation for explaining this mechanism. The social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that employees would adopt specific behaviors based on the norm of reciprocity to express gratitude to their organizations. The social information processing theory (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978), on the other hand, claims that employees would collect various messages released by their organizations and use the information for decision making and action taking. Both theories imply that organizational practices are perceived and interpreted by employees, who subsequently

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would use the information for further actions. Furthermore, Liao and Chuang (2004), an organizational social climate study, indicated that the social climate of organizations plays a key role in motivating employees performing practices relating to organizational expectation, support, and rewards.

It can be found from the above discussion that hotels with help from human resource practices can create a climate favoring itself, which subsequently, would further elicit service-oriented OCB of employees (Liao and Chuang, 2004). Therefore, this study is interested in integrating the social exchange theory and the information processing theory for investigating the key effect of social climates on the relationship between human resource practices and employees' service-oriented OCB. The goal of this study is to develop a theoretical framework for improving our understanding on the mechanism of high-performance HR practices' impacts on service-oriented OCB.

2. Literature review and hypotheses

2.1. High-performance HR practices and organizational social climate

Service-oriented high-performance HR practices refer to a self-aligned system of HR practices designed to increase employee abilities, motivation, and opportunities for providing satisfying services to customers (Batt, 2002; Boxall and Purcell, 2002; Liao et al., 2009). In the hotel industry, the existence of HR practices is to help hotels to provide services of better quality. High-performance HR practices put stress on mutually complementary, supportive and alienating characteristics of individual HR practice (Murphy and Murrmann, 2009) for promoting service related behaviors of employees as well as improving the quality of services. The high-performance HR practices enhancing the service quality adopted by the hotel industry are selection policies, training, performance appraisals, compensation, participation and empowerment.

Selection policies and training practices put emphasis on improving employees' service competencies. Performance appraisals and compensation practices are mainly to elicit employees' motivation for enhancing their service quality. Participation and empowerment practices provide opportunities for employees to improve or promote their service quality. By linking the interests of employees to that of their hotel, high-performance HR practices integrate individual HR practices for achieving specific service quality targeted by the hotel.

Employees at a same hotel and under a same HR management practice would share their messages on how the hotel is operated and form a shared cognition on the operation mode of the hotel (Naumann and Bennett, 2000). This shared cognition created from the interactive process among organization members is the organizational social climate (Schneider and Reichers, 1983). The term climate is defined as "the shared cognition of the employees concerning the practices, procedures, and the kind of behaviors that get rewarded, supported, and expected in a setting" (Schneider, 1990, p. 384). Studies on organizational social climate have indicated that organizational social climate is a major factor regulating employees' attitudes and follow-up actions. The reason is that when employees are stimulated by the external environment, they would not take action immediately but to perceive and interpret these stimuli from the environment. After digesting these stimuli, they would then adopt follow-up actions according to their cognition and interpretations (Wallace et al., 2006). Therefore, individual employee's attitude would be affected by environmental factors of where he/she is, which subsequently could affect their behavioral expression (Lewin, 1951; Chiang and Birtch, 2011; Wallace et al., 2006).

Because many climates exist concurrently in a single hotel but promote distinct behavioral modes (Schneider and Reichers, 1983), researchers when carrying out investigation on the context of hotel industry, they have to focus on critical climates affecting competitive advantages of hotels. In this case, justice climate and service climate are two likely crucial mechanisms that could improve the quality of hotel services due to their ability for triggering what is sought by hotels—service oriented OCB.

Based on the work of Naumann and Bennett (2000), the justice climate is defined as a shared cognition about how all members as a whole is treated. In the hotel industry, customer interaction occupies a significant proportion of service delivery, and customer contact employees have to keep a positive attitude and behavior to attain customer satisfaction. From an organization perspective, employees act as an interface mediating between hotels and their customers through the service delivery process, and as a result, organizations should treat their employees fairly (Bowen et al., 1999) in order for the employees to have a sense of being treated fairly and become more willing to provide better services. Past studies have demonstrated that organization treating their employees justly can enhance their employees' organizational commitment, work satisfaction and OCB while reducing the turnover rate (Fulford, 2005; Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). Moreover, these effects together can act on service quality, too. From employees' perspective, employees expect their organizations to do justice to them and they would judge how fair the organizations are treating them on the basis of decisions from the organization's human resource practices (Bowen et al., 1999). Therefore, hotel managers have to consider these impacts of organizational fairness on employees and design a human resource system viewed as fair and square by the employees (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010).

Schneider et al. (1998) defined service climate as "employee cognition of the practices, procedures, and behaviors that get rewarded, supported, and expected with regard to customer service and customer service quality" (p. 151). Service climate suggests to which degree service quality is emphasized by a hotel and can act as one of the key factors enhancing customer satisfaction. As service quality becomes more valued by customers, hotels fail to increase service quality will lose their competitive advantages, and some of them may even fail to survive. Previous studies have demonstrated that a positive association exists among service climate, service quality and customer satisfaction (Kralj and Solnet, 2010; Salanova et al., 2005; Schneider and Bowen, 1985). Because human resource practices are a major means for hotels to shape their employees' personal values and attitudes, for hotels aiming to create customer value through elevated service quality, they have to design human resource management practices for creating a service climate.

2.2. The impact of high-performance HR practices on the justice climate

Previous studies considered that information regarding procedures, human interaction and results can be used as an original element for judging the overall justice climate. Moreover, comparing to assorted justice facets, the overall justice climate is a closer-end driving force of employees' behaviors (Jones and Martens, 2009). In addition, when employees are evaluating the degree of justice, their overall judgment of justice climate is mainly based on messages from HR practices. As a result, this study has investigated the effect of high-performance HR practices on the overall justice climate.

High-performance HR practices enables employees to be fairly treated by the hotel during the process for gaining service competence, enhancing service motivation, and grabbing opportunities for improving service quality. Consequently, the build up of a justice climate will be promoted among the employees. There are

several HR practices that align each other. First, high-performance HR practices invest in improving employees' service capacity through selection policies and training practices. Selection practices (including recruitment selection and internal promotion) have a specific standard and process flow to select a human capital capable of supporting the hotel in achieving service goals. Particularly, selection practices uses assorted means to verify candidates whose expertise, interpersonal skills and service attitudes qualify the requirements of the hotel as well as of the job instead of using some irrelevant characteristics such as gender and age (Harel et al., 2003). Training is another, and it should be provided based on the deficits of employees so the employees can acquire higher service performance. Furthermore, training practices assist employees to update their knowledge and attitudes, and to score better in performance appraisals. Second, when adopting performance appraisal practices to fully integrate feedbacks to service customer employees from superiors, colleagues, selves, subordinates, and customers, high-performance HR practices can provide service customer employees the most accurate performance appraisal outcomes (Snell and Dean, 1992; Ulrich and Lake, 1991). This kind of performance appraisal practice enables the service employees to recognize that regardless the size of services they provide, their efforts would not be neglected but acknowledged by hotels. Furthermore, competitive rewards would be assigned objectively according to the service performance appraisals instead of subjective factors such as the preference of a superior. By doing so, hotels not only help employees to realize that their dedication would bring them equal-weighted rewards but also reinforce their motivation to improve service quality.

Finally, high-performance HR practices offer employees opportunities to influence and to carry out service related decision making, letting employees to become a creator of organizational justice. More specifically, participation practices encourage employees to get involved in decision making and permit them to decide ways to complete their service tasks. In addition, hotels implementing empowerment practices during the service delivery process could respond more effectively toward changes as well as unforeseen customer demand (Raub, 2008). These practices create opportunities for employees to acquire better service performance.

Taken together, hotels' overall service employees under same high-performance HR practices would share their cognition on whether they are fairly treated by their hotels. Therefore, high-performance HR practices have been viewed as capable of establishing and maintaining the justice climate:

H1. The implementation of high-performance HR practices is positively related to the justice climate.

2.3. *The impact of high-performance HR practices on the service climate*

High-performance HR practices can create a service climate by sending messages about superior service is expected, desired, supported, and rewarded in a hotel. The social information processing theory (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) indicates that employees would collect values, the judgment, and work experiences related information of HR management practices for forming their own cognition and attitudes and for guiding their behaviors in the organization. Compared to the manufacturing industry, creating a service climate emphasizing excellent service is particularly important for the service industry because service organizations meet the demand of the customers in the service delivery process through their employees (Schneider and Bowen, 1995). Because customer contact employees usually need to serve their customers via a close, face-to-face interaction, it is quite a difficult task for managers to observe and to correct their behaviors (Schneider and Bowen,

1995). As a result, it is pivotal for hotels to ensure that their employees hold a courteous attitude and positive feeling when serving customers (King and Garey, 1997). To achieve high quality services, Schneider and Bowen (1995) recommended that service climate can guide service behavior of customer contact employees during service interaction.

Through improving employees' service capabilities, motivation and opportunities, a service climate enhancing service delivery process more effective and efficient will be created (Liao and Chuang, 2004). First, through selection policies and various training practices, high-performance HR practices communicate with employees about hotels are willing to invest in enhancing employees' service capabilities to improve the service quality. Particularly, selective staffing practices can ensure that service employees hired by the hotel have a positive service orientation and empathy (Schneider, 1990). Training practices are not only means for communicating with employees on how to deliver best services to customers but also providing various resources aiding service employees to attain the hotel standard in the performance appraisals, which would lead to the formation of a service climate.

Second, high-performance HR practices that carry out performance evaluation and rewarding on the basis of service quality connect service quality to personal service performance and reward. A performance appraisal base on services would prompt the employees to be more attentive to service quality instead of service quantity, cost, or service difficulty. In addition, Rewards and public commendation not only deliver a message to employees that the hotels highly value service quality but also connect interests of employees, customers and hotels together so the employees will act upon this shared interest of themselves, their hotels, and customers, rather than upon their own alone. Consequently, employees are more motivated to provide better service, and their service value merges with the service value of the hotel (Chiang and Birtch, 2010).

Finally, empowerment and participation practices signal that comments and ideas from employees are valued. Also, they offer employees opportunities to satisfy distinctive customer demands and encourage them to provide suggestions and take necessary actions in response to customer changing demands (Batt, 2002; Liao and Chuang, 2004; Ro and Chen, 2011). That is to say that high-performance HR practices offer opportunities for employees to participate in service-related decision making and to empower them to take non-standardized, customized, adaptable services to satisfy customers' pluralistic demand immediately. In summary, high-performance HR practices can be expected to build and maintain service climate:

H2. The implementation of high-performance HR practices is positively related to the service climate.

2.4. *The impact of the justice climate on service-oriented OCB*

Those customer contact employees displaying service-oriented OCB are recognized as being capable of creating more positive service experiences from interacting with customers. Service-oriented OCB is defined as citizenship behaviors toward customers performed by service employees (Bettencourt et al., 2001). Bowen et al. (1999) argued that service-oriented OCB is "critical in service encounters because no one can specify in advance the full range of things that a service employee might have to do in response to unpredictable customer requests" (p. 19).

Service-oriented OCB includes three types of behaviors (Bettencourt et al., 2001): loyalty, service delivery and participation. Loyalty OCB reflects employees' behaviors on promoting their hotels' image and supporting their products and services. Service delivery OCB delineates conscientious, responsive, flexible, and

attentive customer service behaviors of employees. Participation OCB reflects customer contact employees' communicate with their hotels and colleagues proactively in aim of improving the service quality of the hotels, colleagues and themselves.

Because of the assorted features of service and the critical function of customer contact employees in service delivery process, Bowen and Schneider (1988) suggested that service organizations have to first ensure that their employees possess service-oriented features so the service organization can offer high quality services to customers. To overcome challenges for offering customer-satisfying service, therefore, hotels have to encourage their service employees to serve beyond what their customers expect based on the interest of the customers as well as to act as an excellent representative to these outsiders (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993; Ma and Qu, 2011).

Justice climate would affect employees' motivation for serving customers courteously. Two theories can explain this phenomenon. First, according to the norm of reciprocity from the social exchange theory (Gouldner, 1960), those employees well-treated by their hotels would serve their customers better. Prior studies have provided empirical evidence supporting this perspective. For example, Ehrhart (2004) has found that procedural justice climate has a positive influence on group-level OCB. Also, if hotels are the source of justice, employees would tend to perform behaviors prescribed by their roles as well as behaviors beyond the request of the task to pursuit the best customer outcomes (Bowen et al., 1999; Cho and Dansereau, 2010). In other words, when service employees receive benefits from a justice working environment, self-discretionary behaviors favoring the hotels would be elicited. For service contact employees, the more justly they are treated by their hotels, the more likely for them to perform beyond their official duty.

Second, service-oriented behaviors are more likely to occur if service contact employees have developed a positive affect toward their hotels (Bettencourt et al., 2005). Hotels that provide fair treatment can increase and maintain positive affects, including work satisfaction and organizational commitment, in their service contact employees. These positive affects will evoke positive attitudes and senses of responsibility in these employees toward the customers and ultimately stimulate the expression of service-oriented OCB (Meyer and Smith, 2000; Paulin et al., 2006). Accordingly, justice climate can be expected to be positively related to service-oriented OCB. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. The justice climate is positively related to service-oriented OCB.

2.5. *The impact of the service climate on service-oriented OCB*

Service climates can also trigger employees to perform service-oriented OCB to satisfy customer demand. Past studies indicated that service climates play a crucial role on determining service-related behaviors (Liao and Chuang, 2004; Schneider et al., 1998).

According to the information processing theory (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978), customer contact employees tend to perform service-oriented OCB if they sense high quality services are supported, encouraged, and rewarded by their hotels. Most significantly, service climates would spur customer contact employees to prioritize excellent service, which subsequently would encourage them to exhibit service-oriented OCB benefiting service quality and improving customer satisfaction (Chuang and Liao, 2010; Schneider et al., 2005). Therefore, service climate can promote employees' loyalty behavior, participation in service-oriented decision-making behavior, and display of attentive and friendly attitudes during the service delivery process. To stimulate the employees to deliver positive messages from hotels to friends and family, to maintain a positive attitude while serving customers, and to proactively

provide recommendations for improving service quality, hotels have to create a shared cognition on "dedication for providing quality services satisfying customer needs" among the customer contact members firstly. In summary, service-oriented OCB can be encouraged by a service climate and thus the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. The service climate is positively related to service-oriented OCB.

2.6. *The mediated effect of a justice climate on service-oriented OCB*

In line with a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), employees will develop social exchange relationships with their hotels (Masterson et al., 2000). High-performance HR practices can be used as a tool assisting hotels to develop a better social exchange relationship with their employees (Takeuchi et al., 2007) because high-performance HR practices deliver consistent messages to employees that hotels not only provide the required resources to support employees serving customers but also fairly reciprocate for courteous services displayed by them. This viewpoint agrees with the research finding by Takeuchi et al. (2007). They found that high-performance HR practices can improve the quality of the social exchange relationships between the organization and their employees.

HR practices possess a critical influence on the development of the relationship between hotels and their service employees. Hotels implementing high-performance HR practices would provide sufficient support to employees so they can do their best to satisfy customers and to successfully carry out their tasks. Moreover, a feeling of being treated fairly would be elicited among the employees, generating a justice climate. According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), service employees in these hotels would sense that it is their responsibility to adopt actions satisfying variety kinds of needs of their customers as well as to deliver behaviors beyond the boundary defining their service duties in respond to and return the fair treatment they have received from the hotels. High-performance HR practices create and maintain this justice climate in hotels, encourage employees and hotel managers to cultivate a more concordant exchange relationship. Eventually employees will be led to exhibit more service-oriented OCB proactively and automatically without requests from their hotels.

By establishing a shared cognition that the hotels justly treat every employee, high-performance HR practices encourage employees to act loyally, to display their loyalty, and to be engaged in behaviors delivering quality service or are involved in decision making processes to support their hotels in the quest for service quality. In other words, employees in the same hotel would share a common cognition regarding whether they are treated fairly by high-performance HR practices, which in turn encourages a collective service-oriented OCB of all the employees. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5. The justice climate mediates the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB.

2.7. *The mediated effect of a service climate on service-oriented OCB*

In the service climate literature, Schneider and Bowen (1993) pointed out that when service work is managed and promoted by adequate resources and supportive supervision, employees would do their best to satisfy customer requests and demands. On the other hand, if service employees have to put all their efforts in fighting against their hotels' policies to offer suitable services to customers, their customer satisfying capabilities, motivation and

opportunities would be greatly confined, making service climates stressing putting customer demand onto the top of the list impossible to come true (Schneider et al., 1998). In addition, Salanova et al. (2005) took employees from the hotel and restaurant industry as a sample to study the key role of service climates in the hotel and restaurant industry. They discovered that HR practices could positively predict service climates while service climate predicts performance and customer loyalty of the employees. When service employees working in the hotel industry realize that HR practices, for example, providing training support, promoting excellent service delivery as well as empowering employees to take necessary action according to the condition of the moment, can remove impediments hindering service delivery, they would recognize that offering superb service is an indispensable for hotels to get competitive advantage. Thereafter, the likelihood of customer contact employees to display service-oriented OCB would be increased as a consequence (Chiang and Birtch, 2011; Salanova et al., 2005).

These viewpoints implied that HR practices cannot directly enable employees to proactively share positive events with their acquaintance, to participate in service improving decision making process, and to exhibit courteous and friendly service attitudes during service delivery process because these behaviors are mainly determined by employees' commitment toward their hotels and services. Therefore, the important ways to achieve the condition is to trigger indirectly through establishing a shared cognition for pursuing service excellence. During the process of increasing employees' capacities, motivation and opportunities for implementing service-oriented OCB, high-performance HR practices would generate a service climate in the hotel to support service quality goals expected by the hotel. According to the above theoretical view and the customer-focused nature of service delivery, this study expects service climates to be a mechanism through which high-performance HR practices affect service-oriented OCB in hotels. Therefore, the following hypothesis is synthesized:

H6. The service climate mediates the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB.

In summary, the hypothesis model shown in Fig. 1 suggests a mediating relationship predicting that the justice climate and service climate are mediating the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and data collection

The participants of this study were HR managers and customer contact employees from hotels in Taiwan. The author contacted the HR managers of many hotels and 127 agreed to participate. Questionnaire packets were mailed to each participating hotel. Each packet contained one HR survey and 5–15 customer contact employee surveys.

A cover letter attached to each questionnaire explained the objective of the survey. Each respondent group was surveyed regarding the issues on which they would be most knowledgeable. The HR questionnaire asked HR managers to provide information about HR practices. The employee questionnaire asked the customer contact employees to assess the justice climate, service climate and their own service-oriented OCB. Employees were excluded if they were not in regular contact with customers. Completed surveys were returned directly to the researchers in sealed and pre-addressed envelopes.

Of the total sample, 119 different hotels responded by returning at least one questionnaire from a HR manager and five customer contact employees. Valid questionnaires were returned by 119 hotel HR managers (93.7% response rate) and 1133

customer contact employees (90.64% response rate; 1133 out of 1250 employees). The number of responses per hotel ranged from 5 to 15 with an average of 9.6 responses per hotel.

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. High-performance HR practices

In the hospitality industry, few studies have investigated facets of high-performance HR practices or developed a high-performance HR practices scale suitable for the hospitality industry (Murphy and Murrmann, 2009). This study has not only confirmed six major human resources practices improving hotel service quality but also integrated these practices into service-oriented high-performance HR practices. This study also develops a measure of high-performance HR practices based on reviews of relevant literature, especially the empirical work, of Collins and Smith (2006), Lepak and Snell (2002), and Sun et al. (2007). The high-performance HR practices score of each hotel was rated by a HR manager. All of these statements were measured by a five-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the high-performance HR practices was .88. All items included in this study are listed in Appendix A.

3.2.2. Justice climate

To measure the justice climate, a 3-item scale of justice climate from Ambrose and Schminke (2009) was selected and a five-point Likert response scale was designed. The justice climate was rated by customer contact employees. The coefficient alpha for the justice climate scale in this study was .93.

3.2.3. Service climate

The service climate was rated by customer contact employees using a seven-item scale developed by Schneider et al. (1998). This measurement employs a five-point Likert response scale. The coefficient alpha for service climate in this study was .83.

3.2.4. Service-oriented OCB

Service-oriented OCB was measured by using 16-item scale proposed by Bettencourt et al. (2001). This scale includes three service-oriented OCB dimensions: loyalty (five items), participation (five items) and service delivery (six items). Service-oriented OCB scale is rated by employees because in contrast to managers and customer, they have more complete knowledge for evaluating service-oriented COB. For example, when employees provide service improvement advice for their hotel, this participation behavior is observed by managers but not customers. On the other hand, customers can directly experience employee service delivery behavior while managers have little or no chance to observe that. Also, managers and customers would have little idea about employees' hotel loyalty behaviors, for example, telling outsiders that working for this hotel is great, which, in this case, is known by the employees themselves, and even their colleagues may be excluded. Past studies also indicated that it is difficulty for managers to observe employees' citizenship behavior and thus bias may exist while rating employees' service performance; for example, the halo or deficient effect (Schnake, 1991). Also, comparing to managers and customers, employees possess a more comprehensive knowledge concerning the progress of service-oriented OCB, even if discrepancy may be presented if employees spread this message to others. Therefore, the rating of service-oriented OCB should be conducted by employees. In this study, customer contact employees were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement about their service-related behaviors. All of these statements were measured by a five-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha for service-oriented OCB was .92.

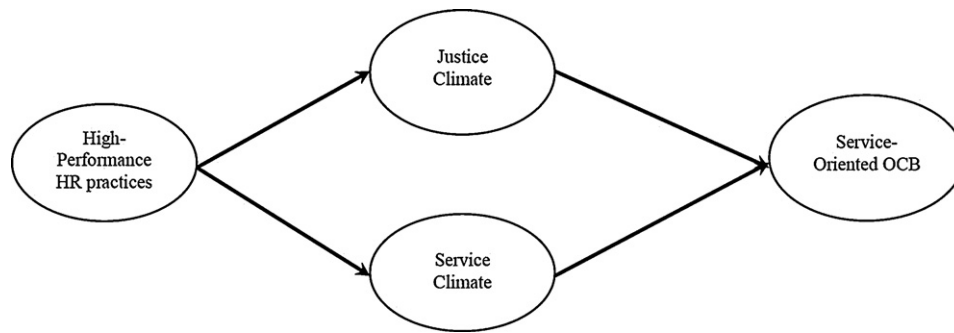


Fig. 1. Theoretical model linking high-performance HR practices to service-oriented OCB.

3.2.5. Control variable

Hotels might be better at building more sophisticated human resource practices if they hire a large number of employees. To well employ the human resource, a greater number of employees may lead to a more comprehensive human resource system. Thus, the number of full-time employees was used to measure hotel size, which was treated as a control variable in the regression analysis.

3.3. Data aggregate

Because justice climate and service climate were measured at an individual level, before aggregating individual-level variables to hotel-level variables, aggregation appropriateness has to be assessed. Therefore, intraclass correlation (ICC) analysis was used to assess the between-hotel variation, while interrater agreement (r_{wg}) analysis was used to assess the within-hotel homogeneity, respectively.

ICC(1), which indicates the interrater reliability for the justice climate was .15, and for the service climate was .17. The average and median values of r_{wg} were .85 and .87 for the justice climate, .73 and .75 for the service climate. The r_{wg} values of all the variables were above the .70 cut-off value suggested by James (1982), showing high ratings consistency among employees of each hotel. Together, these results from the ICC(1) and r_{wg} analysis suggested a significantly high within-hotel homogeneity and between-hotel variance and thus supported aggregating the individual-level variables, including the justice climate and service climate, to become a hotel-level variable for further analysis.

4. Results

4.1. Sample profile

All of the participating hotels are independent. Hotel size had a mean of 83 employees, with a standard deviation of 87, and it ranged from 40 to 370 employees. These 119 hotels had an average of 160 rooms, and it ranged from 15 to 730 rooms. In the sample of 1133 customer contacted employees, 30.9% were male, the mean age was 32.4 years, and the mean organizational tenure was 4.9 years. Most customer contact employees were college or university graduates (42.2%). Among the HR managers, 41.5% were male, the average age was 47.7 years, and the average organizational tenure was 15.3 years. Most managers were college or university graduates (43.9%).

4.2. Descriptive statistics and confirmatory factor analyses

The correlation matrix and descriptive statistics of all research variables of this study are presented in Table 1. The result indicates significant correlations between dependent, mediating and independent variables. More specifically, there was a high correlation

between service climate and service-oriented OCB. Nonetheless, there was no significant correlation among hotel size, high-performance HR practices, justice climate, service climate, and service-oriented OCB.

Because of the high correlation between service climate and service-oriented OCB, this study carried out a confirmatory factor analysis for the studied variables. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to evaluate the fit of theorized four-factor model in Table 2. The results indicated that the four-factor model yielded a good fit (χ^2/df (298) = 2.14; IFI = .91; TLI = .90; CFI = .91). Furthermore, this study provides additional evidences to confirm discriminant validity where we compared the four-factor model with three alternative models, from Model 2 to Model 4. The results in Table 2 showed that four-factor model was superior to the other three alternative models and the single-factor model had a poor fit (χ^2/df (298) = 6.1; IFI = .60; TLI = .56; CFI = .60). The fit indexes supported four-factor model and confirmed four distinct constructs of high-performance HR practices, justice climate, service climate, and service-oriented OCB.

Table 3 shows the results of CFA of the theorized four-factor model, including factor loadings, composite reliability and variance-extracted estimates. The factor loadings of indicators associated with each variable were greater than .70, indicating adequate reliability. The composite reliabilities of high-performance HR practices, justice climate, service climate, and service-oriented OCB were .93, .98, .96 and .91, respectively. It was shown that the composite reliability of each research variable was greater than the criterion of .60 recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The variance-extracted estimate of each variable exceeded the recommended criterion of .50 recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). These statistics, together with the CFA results, support the view that service climate and service-oriented OCB are distinguishable constructs.

4.3. Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted that high-performance HR practices would positively influence organizational social climates in terms of justice climate and service climate. We present the regression analysis of social climates as the dependent variables in Table 4. It was found that the measure of high-performance HR practices was significantly and positively related to justice climate ($\beta = .26, p < .01$) and service climate ($\beta = .27, p < .001$), after controlling for the hotel size. Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported. It appeared that customer contact employees are more likely to perceive two types of shared climates—justice climate and service climate—when high-performance HR practices was implemented by a hotel.

Regarding organizational social climates, Hypotheses 3 and 4 suggested that justice climate and service climate, respectively, are positively associated with service-oriented OCB. We present

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Hotel size	128.87	68.92				
2. High-performance HR practices	3.74	.49	.02			
3. Justice climate	3.42	.55	.02	.27***		
4. Service climate	3.67	.39	-.03	.29***	.57***	
5. Service-oriented OCB	3.80	.41	-.03	.28***	.63***	.80***

*** $p < .001$.**Table 2**
Comparison of measurement models.

Model	Factors	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	$\Delta\chi^2$	IFI	TLI	CFI
Model 1	Four-factor model	639.20	298	2.14		.91	.90	.91
Model 2	Three-factor model: justice climate and service climate were combined into a single factor.	1356.28	298	4.55	717.08***	.72	.69	.72
Model 3	Two-factor model: justice climate, service climate, and service-oriented OCBs were combined into a single factor	1462.73	298	4.91	823.53***	.69	.69	.70
Model 4	Single-factor model: all variables were combined into one factor	1818.15	298	6.10	1178.95***	.60	.56	.60

Baseline model.

*** $p < .001$.**Table 3**
Measurement properties.

Constructs and indicators	Completely standardized loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability CR	Average variance extracted AVE
High-performance HR practices		.88	.93	.68
Selection policies	.89			
Participation	.78			
Training	.80			
Performance appraisals	.80			
Empowerment	.78			
Compensation	.88			
Justice climate		.93	.98	.81
JC1	.84			
JC2	.88			
JC3	.87			
JC4	.91			
JC5	.92			
JC6	.94			
JC7	.95			
JC8	.90			
JC9	.93			
JC10	.90			
Service climate		.83	.96	.79
SC1	.83			
SC2	.88			
SC3	.91			
SC4	.94			
SC5	.92			
SC6	.82			
SC7	.91			
Service-oriented OCB		.92	.91	.77
Loyalty	.94			
Service delivery	.85			
Participation	.84			

Table 4
Results of regression analyses predicting social climates.

	Justice climate Model 1	Service climate Model 2
Size	.02	-.10
High-performance HR practices	.26**	.27**
F	4.03**	4.60***
R ²	.07	.07
Adj R ²	.06	.06

** $p < .01$.*** $p < .001$.

the regression analysis of service-oriented OCB as the dependent variables in Table 5. As shown in model 3 of Table 5, both justice climate ($\beta = .26, p < .01$) and service climate ($\beta = .65, p < .001$) were significantly and positively related to service-oriented OCB. Thus, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were supported. It appeared that customer contact employees are more likely to exhibit service-oriented OCB when they feel being treated fairly by their hotel and that high-quality services are encouraged, supported and rewarded.

Hypotheses 5 and 6 suggested that justice climate and service climate mediate the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB. According to the recommendation of Baron and Kenny (1986), the relationship between the

Table 5
Results of regression analyses predicting service-oriented OCB.

	Service-oriented OCB			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Size	-.03	-.03	-.01	-.01
High-performance HR practices		.29**		.05
Justice climate			.26***	.25**
Service climate			.65***	.64***
F	.08	5.19**	82.85***	62.14***
R ²	.02	.08	.69	.69
Adj R ²	.01	.07	.68	.68

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB was first examined. In Table 5, the results of Model 2 indicated that there was a significant positive relation between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), after controlling for the size of the hotels. In the second of the four criteria, the relationship among high-performance HR practices, justice climate and service climate were examined and found that the measure of high-performance HR practices was significantly and positively related to justice climate and service climate from Hypotheses 1 and 2 testing. In the third criteria for mediation, there was positive relationship among justice climate and service climate and service-oriented OCB. Results from Hypotheses 3 and 4 testing supported these two relationships. Thus, three preconditions for mediation were met for both justice climate (Hypothesis 5) and service climate (Hypothesis 6). Finally, the authors tested the mediation effect of both justice climate and service climate by examining changes in the effect of high-performance HR practices when both justice climate and service climate were added to the regression model predicting service-oriented OCB. As expected, in Table 5, the results of Model 4 has shown that the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB was no longer significant ($\beta = .05, p > .05$) when justice climate and service climate were added to the regression equation. Thus, Hypotheses 5 and 6 were supported.

In conclusion, the empirical evidence supports the hypotheses that justice climate and service climate fully mediated the relationships between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB. These empirical results suggest that high-performance HR practices cannot directly increase service-oriented OCB but through the mediating effect of certain important social climates, such as justice climate and service climate.

5. Discussion

The key purpose of this research is to propose a framework for exploring the impacts from human resource practices on service-oriented OCB in the hotel industry. Although prior studies have indicated that human resource practices have a positive effect on service-oriented OCB, but researchers have not yet clear understood how this mechanism is operated. This study has extended findings of prior studies by integrating the social exchange theory and the information processing perspective for explaining the effect of high-performance HR practices on service-oriented OCB. This study adopted data collected from hotels in Taiwan and demonstrated that high-performance HR practices can create dual climates benefiting service delivery and ultimately encourage employees to carry out service-oriented behaviors. Specifically, through delivering coherent and clear messages to employees disseminating that their hotels treat employees justly during the

service delivery process and that the hotels value high quality services, high-performance HR practices can significantly improve customer contact employees' capabilities, motivation and opportunities for performing service-oriented OCB. And because of high-performance HR practices, hotels are able to encourage the employees to promote hotel services to their acquaintance, to serve customers courteously with respect at any situation, and to offer innovative means for helping colleagues solving customer problems.

This study has provided significant contributions to researchers as well as managers. First, the main contribution of this study is its demonstration and explanation of the mechanism of how high-performance HR practices enhance customer contact employees' service-oriented OCB. The reason is that these HR practices can create a social environment favoring the service quality of the hotel internally. By indicating that organizational social climates are a critical mechanism linking high-performance HR practice to service-oriented OCB, this research has extended the literature on strategic human resource management. There is a notion considering that instead of directly responding to HR practices, employees would take actions according to what they have perceived and interpreted previously about HR practices (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Wallace et al., 2006). This study provided empirical evidence supporting this stance by revealing that the dual climates mediate the relationship between high-performance HR practices and service-oriented OCB. The study result has indeed verified two approaches for high-performance HR practices to promote service-oriented OCB—service climate and justice climate. The study finding suggests that high-performance HR practices can motivate employees' discretionary behaviors via establishing and maintaining the desired social climates.

By revealing the mediating effect of organizational social climates, the results of this study also extended the previous research finding by Sun et al. (2007) on the relationship between high-performance HR practices and employee OCB in the hotel context. This finding has shown that HR management practices can affect employees' perception and interpretation on hotel operation mode and service and ultimately govern employees' service-related OCB benefiting hotels, colleagues, and customers. The finding of this study has also broadened the main knowledge of strategic human resource management and increased researchers' understanding on influences of high-performance HR practices on service-oriented OCB.

Second, this study has contribution to the understanding of organizational climates that benefit hotel operation, which is an important issue in the service management literature of hotel industry never discussed. This study has confirmed two important climates driving service-related behaviors in the hotel industry. Our finding suggests that to prompt employees performing service behaviors benefiting their hotels, these hotels have to treat

these employees justly and make them understand the emphasis on service quality.

Third, through investigating whether high-performance HR practice is the source of the major force for climate forming, this study provides contribution to the development of organizational social climate. Although prior studies on climate research suggested that organizational social climate has a significant positive impact on organization operation, however, only few studies investigated factors influencing the development of organizational climates. This study investigated and discovered that an organization's human resource practices are an important factor shaping its organizational social climates. High-performance HR practices can use various HR practices to deliver messages favoring hotels to employees and ultimately construct a desired social climate inside these hotels that guides the behaviors of the employees. Especially, high-performance HR practices can change the relationship between hotel and customer contact employees as well as the service interaction mode of customer contact employees and customers. However, during the message delivery process, hotels have to pay attention on the internal operation quality of these assorted human resource practices; these human resource practices have to act in co-ordination and to deliver consistent and clear messages to the employees. Incoherent and contraindicated messages would confuse the employees and are disadvantageous for shaping the social climates for hotels.

Finally, because past studies on service-oriented OCB were mostly focused on discussing either individual-level or group-level antecedent factors, this study identified and investigated the influences of hotel-level driving variables on service-oriented OCB. This study has successfully picked out that both high-performance HR practices and organizational social climates are critical hotel-level antecedent factors promoting employees' service-oriented OCB.

5.1. Limitations and future research suggestions

The theoretical contributions discussed above should be interpreted in light of this study's limitations. This research has four major limitations.

First, since the rating of service climate and service-oriented OCB are all provided by employees, common source error may exist even if employees are the best choice for answering these questionnaires. Although common source error was found to be insignificant based on the CFA assessment conducted by the authors, it is still important to avoid any possible common source error and to acquire more reliable data for testing the study hypotheses. In this case, future research can carry out data collection twice at two different time point. To provide more solid evidence demonstrating the causality of the study variables, future studies could conduct longitudinal research to verify the causality of the variables of this study.

Second, evaluation of HR practices is a commonly discussed topic in strategic human resource management research. To understand organizations' HR policies and the implementing conditions, this study collected comments from HR managers for evaluation. Yet this measure is only to assess HR managers' perspective, while actual experiences from the employees of HR practices may be neglected. To conduct a more complete evaluation for reflecting the real situation, future studies need to collect data from multiple sources to accurately reflect the implementation of HR practices. For example, when assessing HR practices, the researchers could invite the hotel's HR managers to rate to which extent the HR practices are implemented in the hotel and to have employees to rate their actual experiences of their hotel's HR practices.

Third, in the hospitality industry literature, few studies have investigated the facets of high-performance HR practices (Murphy and Murrmann, 2009), and consequently, the facets and content

of high-performance HR practices are not well understood. This study integrated prior studies on high-performance HR practices and developed a high-performance HR practices scale suitable for the hotel industry. Future research could verify the scale developed by this study using samples from different industries or use it to conduct studies relevant to the hotel industry.

Finally, this study concentrates specifically on the effects of high-performance HR practices, an organization-level factor, on organizational social climates. The authors encourage future research to further investigate impacts of other organizational factors such as hotel's values on the development of organizational social environment.

5.2. Management implications

With the booming of service economy, customized services have been much more valued than before. Under this circumstance, which strategic practices should be adopted by hotels to stimulate service-oriented behaviors is quite a challenge for the hotel industry. In addition, those massive and frequent changes happening in the business environment have caused many hotels to search for new methods to respond to customer demand more efficiently as well as effectively. This study's finding has revealed that for managers, methods for understanding how HR practices are perceived by employees are extremely important because there is a significant positive association between the shared perception and service-oriented OCB. More specifically, the more thoroughly a hotel implements high-performance HR practices promoting justice and service climates, the more willing, the better capabilities, and the more opportunities for service contact employees to exhibit service-oriented OCB enhancing the service quality of the hotels.

Therefore, hotels should deploy service-oriented high-performance HR practices. These HR practices have to complement and align with each other to successfully elicit indispensable service-oriented OCB from employees for achieving hotels' strategic service goals. However, if the human resource practices of a hotel deliver inconsistent messages to the employees, it would not only confuse the employees about what to follow, but also reduce the efficacy generated from the human resource system. For example, if a hotel provides service rewards but with neither training nor authorization for employees to cope with accidental conditions, the employees would lack the capabilities as well as opportunities to exhibit their service-oriented OCB. To maximize the efficacy of human resource practices and thus achieve the goal of offering high quality services to customers, all the HR practices have to complement and to align with each other to avoid contradiction or conflicts among each other.

To conclude, this study has demonstrated that high-performance HR practices can affect employees' cognition on how they are justly treated by their hotels and which service behaviors should be exhibited. These climates enable customer contact employees to engage in service-oriented OCB promoting high quality services. Therefore, high-performance HR practices should be well employed by hotels to establish an organizational social environment cultivating service-oriented OCB.

Appendix A. Items from the questionnaire

Items in the high-performance HR practices scale

Selection policies

1. Internal candidates are given consideration over external candidates for job opinions.
2. We select employees based on an overall fit to the company.
3. Our selection system focuses on the potential of the candidate to learn and grow with the organization.
4. We ensure that all employees in these positions are made aware of internal promotion opportunities.

Training

1. Our training activities for these employees are comprehensive.
2. Our training activities for these employees are continuous.
3. Our training activities for these employees require extensive investments of time/money.

Performance appraisals

1. Performance appraisals for these employees are based on input from multiple sources (peers, subordinates, etc.).
2. Performance appraisals for these employees include developmental feedback.
3. Performance appraisals for these employees are based on objective, quantifiable results.

Compensation

1. Compensation/rewards for these employees include an extensive benefits package.
2. Compensation/rewards for these employees provide incentives for new ideas.
3. Employee bonuses or incentive plans are based primarily on the performance of the organization.
4. Salaries for employees in these positions are higher than those of our competitors.

Participation

1. Employees in this job are often asked by their supervisor to participate in decisions.
2. Individuals in this job are allowed to make decisions.
3. Employees are provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done.
4. Supervisors keep open communications with employees in this job.

Empowerment

1. These employees perform jobs that allow them to routinely make changes in the way they perform their jobs.
2. These employees perform jobs that empower them to make decisions.
3. Employees were empowered to resolve customer complaints on their own.
4. Employees in this job are allowed to make many decisions.

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