

**The Antecedents of Employee Service Quality
in the Hospitality Industry: Service Orientation and
Organisational Justice Perspectives**

Ibrahim M. Alsini

School of Management, University of Surrey
Guildford, Surrey, UK

e-mail: I.Alsini@surrey.ac.uk

Hesham Al-Sabbahy

School of Management, University of Surrey
Guildford, Surrey, UK

e-mail: H.Al-Sabbahy@surrey.ac.uk

Andrew J. Lockwood

School of Management, University of Surrey
Guildford, Surrey, UK

e-mail: A.Lockwood@surrey.ac.uk

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Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the antecedents of employee service quality (ESQ) in the hotel industry by focusing on variables that were believed to be direct and indirect antecedents. Individual service orientation (ISO), organisational service orientation (OSO) and organisational justice (OJ) were proposed as the indirect antecedents of ESQ. Employees' attitudes towards work (job satisfaction (JS) and organisational commitment) and their behaviours at work (in-role behaviour (IRB) and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)) were proposed as mediators between the predictors and the outcome.

The relationships between these constructs were tested using a sample of front-line employees and their direct managers working in four- and five-star hotels in Saudi Arabia. Contrary to the hypothesised model, the results suggested that ISO, IRB and OCB are the direct antecedents of ESQ. In addition, OSO, OJ and JS are indirect antecedents of ESQ. However, affective organisational commitment (AOC) plays no role in predicting ESQ.

1. Introduction

Many researchers have emphasised the critical importance of customer-contact employees to delivering quality service and satisfying customers, indicating that the most important determinant of service quality is the service encounter (Johns and Mattsson, 2003). Customer-contact employees' attitudes and behaviours influence customer satisfaction and service quality (Bowen and Schneider, 1985; Parasurman, 1987; Crosby and Stephens, 1987; Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Grönroos, 1990; Schneider *et al.*, 1992; Podsakoff and Mackenzie, 1994; Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Kelley and Hoffman, 1997; Barroso *et al.*, 2004; Dean, 2004). The service predisposition of customer-contact employees, OSO and OJ has been identified by several researchers as factors influencing ESQ. Additionally, employee attitudes towards work, such as employee JS and commitment to their organisations, and employee behaviours at work, such as IRB and OCB, are studied as antecedents of ESQ.

This study examines the service orientation of customer-contact employees and hotel organisations, OJ, employee attitudes towards work and employee behaviours at work, which are all believed to be antecedents of ESQ. This investigation will help to determine the main factors that might influence ESQ.

2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

Service quality is defined as the ability of the organisation to meet or exceed customer expectations (Christopher *et al.*, 1993). The internal service quality is necessary to enhance external service quality (Varey, 1995) and service providers need to recognise these differences for a better understanding, influencing directly and improving human resources management in running service operations (Grönroos, 1981; Chang *et al.*, 1996; Frost and Kumar, 2000). The customers' overall service experience is influenced by the employees' experience with their internal service environment (Bowen *et al.*, 1989). Heskett (1987) studied the factors influencing service quality and found the problem centred on employees. Therefore, quality can never be improved beyond employees' capabilities (Kathawala and Elmuti, 1991), and the role of the employee becomes much more important to the extent that the employee is the service (Redman and Mathews, 1998).

Several researchers have contributed knowledge by modelling conceptual relationships related to achieving customer satisfaction and service quality. Heskett and his colleagues developed a sequential model called the service-profit chain from analyses of successful service organisations, which helps to develop service and satisfaction levels for maximum competitive impact (Heskett *et al.*, 1994). The service-profit chain explains relationships between profitability, customer loyalty, employee satisfaction, loyalty and productivity.

2.1 Organisational service orientation (OSO)

Service orientation is a company's strategic initiative to differentiate themselves from their competitors (Berry *et al.*, 1994). Lytle *et al.* (1998) define OSO as an "organization-wide embracement of a basic set of relatively enduring organisational policies, practices and procedures intended to support and reward service-giving behaviours that create and deliver service excellence" (p. 455). Organisational activities influence the attitude and behaviour of employees (Bowen and Schneider, 1985; Hofstede *et al.*, 1990). Hotel employees need an organisational orientation towards service that supports them in service encounters. Previous studies showed relationships between perceptions of fairness and positive organisational attitudes (Greenberg, 1990; Wang *et al.*, 2010). Hence, the following propositions are developed.

Hypothesis OSO-1: There is a positive impact of OSO on OJ.

Hypothesis OSO-2: There is a positive impact of OSO on ISO.

Kim and colleagues (2009) asserted that the three management service initiatives (rewards, training and empowerment) predict JS. González and Garazo (2006) suggested that managers should use service communicative leadership and service encounter practices to improve employee JS and OCB.

Service-oriented practices affect employee JS and IRB (Lytle, 1994; Sparrowe, 1994; Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Lee *et al.*, 2001; Dean, 2004). Lee *et al.* (1999) concluded that developing positive service orientation is a prerequisite to increasing employee JS and organisational commitment. Little and Dean (2006) found a positive relationship between

the global service climate and employees' service quality capabilities, with partial mediation by employee commitment. Consequently, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis OSO-3: There is a positive impact of OSO on JS.

Hypothesis OSO-4: There is a positive impact of OSO on AOC.

Hypothesis OSO-5: There is a positive impact of OSO on IRB.

Hypothesis OSO-6: There is a positive impact of OSO on OCB.

Hypothesis OSO-7: There is a positive impact of OSO on ESQ.

2.2 Individual service orientation (ISO)

ISO is a set of basic individual predispositions and an inclination to provide service, as well as to deal with customers and associates in a courteous and helpful way (Hogan *et al.*, 1984). The ISO is defined as "employee attitudes towards service provision, which enables the customer-contact employee to be helpful, thoughtful, and considerate to customers" (Alsini *et al.*, 2008, p. 4).

In the hospitality industry, the attributes of frontline employees and their personal interactions with customers are crucial to achieve high quality service. Service-oriented employees are likely to show friendly, helpful, and thoughtful characteristics to meet customer needs; hence, they will have better job performance (Kim *et al.*, 2005). Highly service-oriented employees are more organisationally effective than other employees because of their dispositional characteristics (Cran, 1994).

Donavan *et al.* (2004) argue that service-oriented employees show more satisfaction and commitment when placed in high customer-contact positions. Individual service orientation is associated with good performance (Frei and McDaniel, 1998; Harris and Fleming, 2005), and the attitudes and behaviours of frontline employees are connected to guest satisfaction (Susskind *et al.*, 2007) and commitment to the organisation (Donavan and Hocutt, 2001). "The [employee's] service orientation has a significant impact on the customer's perception of overall service quality" (Teng and Barrows, 2009, p. 1422). As a result, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis ISO-1: There is a positive impact of ISO on JS.

Hypothesis ISO-2: There is a positive impact of ISO on AOC.

Hypothesis ISO-3: There is a positive impact of ISO on IRB.

Hypothesis ISO-4: There is a positive impact of ISO on OCB.

Hypothesis ISO-5: There is a positive impact of ISO on ESQ.

2.3 Organisational justice (OJ)

In any organisation, employees are concerned with OJ - either the fairness of the outcomes they receive or the fairness of the decision processes made to assign suitable rewards (Williams, 1999). OJ has three components: distributive (justice of outcomes), procedural (the justice of the formal allocation process) and interactional justice (the justice of interpersonal transactions they encounter with others) (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997; Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). Several studies have found that justly treated employees are more likely to comply with workplace policies, show extra conscientiousness, and behave altruistically toward others (Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001). Workplace justice predicts the effectiveness with which workers discharge their job duties (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). OJ is important in general terms because perceptions of OJ have been found to affect a number of attitudes and behaviours including organisational commitment (Ball *et al.*, 1994; Konovsky *et al.*, 1987; McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992), JS and intent to leave (Alexander and Ruderman, 1987; Ball *et al.*, 1994). Rifai (2005) concluded his study with three main findings: both procedural and distributive justice have positive effects on JS; JS has a positive and strong influence over affective commitment; and affective commitment has a direct impact on OCB.

The study conducted by Bettencourt and Brown (1997) showed the importance of workplace fairness for frontline employee JS and they also concluded that workplace fairness is a better predictor of extra-role and role-prescribed behaviours and cooperation than JS. However, Dubinsky and Levy (1989) reported that fairness perceptions were not significantly related to performance. Moorman *et al.* (1993) suggested that perhaps it is better to think of organisational commitment, JS and OCB all as consequences of the positive impressions resulting from fair processes. Hence, this study proposes the followings:

Hypothesis OJ-1: There is a positive impact of OJ on ISO.

Hypothesis OJ-2: There is a positive impact of OJ on JS.

Hypothesis OJ-3: There is a positive impact of OJ on AOC.

Hypothesis OJ-4: There is a positive impact of OJ on IRB.

Hypothesis OJ-5: There is a positive impact of OJ on OCB.

Hypothesis OJ-6: There is a positive impact of OJ on ESQ.

2.4 Job satisfaction (JS)

Job satisfaction is frequently thought of as an attitude (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). “Job satisfaction is based partially on what one feels and partially on what one thinks” (Wright and Cropanzano, 2000, p. 85). JS is defined as the extent to which an employee views his or her job either positively or negatively (Odom *et al.*, 1990). JS is considered by some studies as an overall variable, whereas others consider it as different dimensions –

satisfaction with the work, supervisor, pay, opportunities for promotion, workmates and customers – and examine them separately (Brown and Peterson, 1993). Motowidlo (1996) suggested that JS is a judgement about the favourability of one's work environment. "There is concrete evidence that satisfied employees make for satisfied customers" (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000, p. 287).

JS is known as the essential antecedent of organisational commitment (Williams and Hazer, 1986; Harrison and Hubbard, 1998; Sagar, 1994; DeCotiis and Summers, 1987). Consequently, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis JS-1: There is a positive impact of JS on AOC.

It is probable that employees who feel satisfied and secure in the workplace will develop OCB (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Netemeyer *et al.*, 1997; Mackenzie *et al.*, 1998; Bettencourt *et al.*, 2001). However, the empirical study of Lee *et al.* (2006) showed that JS does not affect extra-role customer service. The following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis JS-2: There is a positive impact of JS on IRB.

Hypothesis JS-3: There is a positive impact of JS on OCB.

Rogers *et al.* (1994) argue that it is very unlikely that employees will deliver exceptional service when they are not satisfied with their work. The JS of employees has a significant positive influence on the service quality of customer-contact employees (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004). Thus this study proposes that:

Hypothesis JS-4: There is a positive impact of JS on ESQ.

2.5 Affective organisational commitment (AOC)

Organisational commitment (OC) is defined as the extent to which an individual identifies and is involved with his or her organisation and is willing to leave it (Greenberg and Baron, 1997). OC deals with attitudes of the people towards their organisation (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004). Many researchers contributed to defining commitment, and Meyer and Allen (1991) have classified these definitions into three broad themes: an affective orientation toward the organisation, recognition of costs associated with leaving the organisation and a moral obligation to remain with the organisation.

Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that the three components of commitment (affective, normative and continuance) have different consequences for other work-related behaviour, such as attendance, in-role performance, and OCB due to the differences in the nature of each form of commitment. They suggested that employees with strong affective commitment have a greater motivation or desire to contribute meaningfully to the organisation, work harder at their jobs and perform better than those with weak commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991). A high level of AOC has been found to be related to low employee turnover, low absenteeism, and improved JS (Meyer *et al.*, 2002). In addition, several studies have observed significant relationships between AOC and citizenship behaviour involving both self-reports of behaviour (Meyer *et al.*, 1993; Pearce,

1993) and independent assessment of behaviour (Gregerson, 1993; Moorman *et al.*, 1993). Moreover, significant positive relationships have been reported between employees' affective commitment and their supervisors' ratings of their potential for promotion (Meyer *et al.*, 1989) and their overall performance on the job (Konovsky and Cropanzano, 1991; Meyer and Schoorman, 1992; Meyer *et al.*, 1989; Moorman *et al.*, 1993; Sagar and Johnston, 1989). However, some other studies have shown that affective commitment and performance indicators are not related (Ganster and Dwyer, 1995; Williams and Anderson, 1991).

A study by Felfe *et al.* (2008) found that there is no significant difference between the effects of affective and normative commitment on organisational outcomes. Less research attention has been given to studying the relationship between normative commitment and citizenship behaviour. It seems that this relationship is weaker than that between affective commitment and citizenship behaviour (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

On the other hand, continuance commitment has a significant negative relationship to OCB. Continuance commitment will be either unrelated or negatively related to performance indicators (Meyer *et al.*, 1993; Meyer and Allen, 1997). Consequently, continuance and normative commitment was excluded from this study and the study of employee commitment is focused on affective commitment only. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis AOC-1: There is a positive impact of AOC on IRB.

Hypothesis AOC-2: There is a positive impact of AOC on OCB.

The quality of service received by customers is partially due to the commitment that employees have towards their employer (Unzicker *et al.*, 2000). Long-term customer relationships can be built with a long term committed workforce (Boshoff and Allen, 2000). Hence, the organisational commitment of frontline employees has an important role to play in determining the level of service quality delivered to customers (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004).

Hypothesis AOC-3: There is a positive impact of AOC on ESQ.

2.6 Employee in-role behaviour (IRB)

In service industries, IRB is a service provider's expected behaviour originated from implicit norms in the workplace or from explicit obligations as specified in organisational records, such as job descriptions and performance evaluation forms (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986). IRB improves customer satisfaction, service quality perception, loyalty, and sales performance (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; George, 1991; Keaveney, 1995). According to Bettencourt and Brown (1997), marketing studies support the importance of role-prescribed behaviour, such as exhibiting common courtesy and demonstrating accurate knowledge of policies and products, on customer satisfaction and service quality perceptions. "Service quality suffers when employees are unwilling or unable to perform a service at the level required" (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1990, p. 89). In-role behaviour and the two forms of OCB that were identified by Williams and Anderson (1991) are positively

correlated (Williams and Anderson, 1991). Consequently, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis IRB-1: There is a positive impact of IRB on OCB.

Hypothesis IRB-2: There is a positive impact of IRB on ESQ.

2.7 Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)

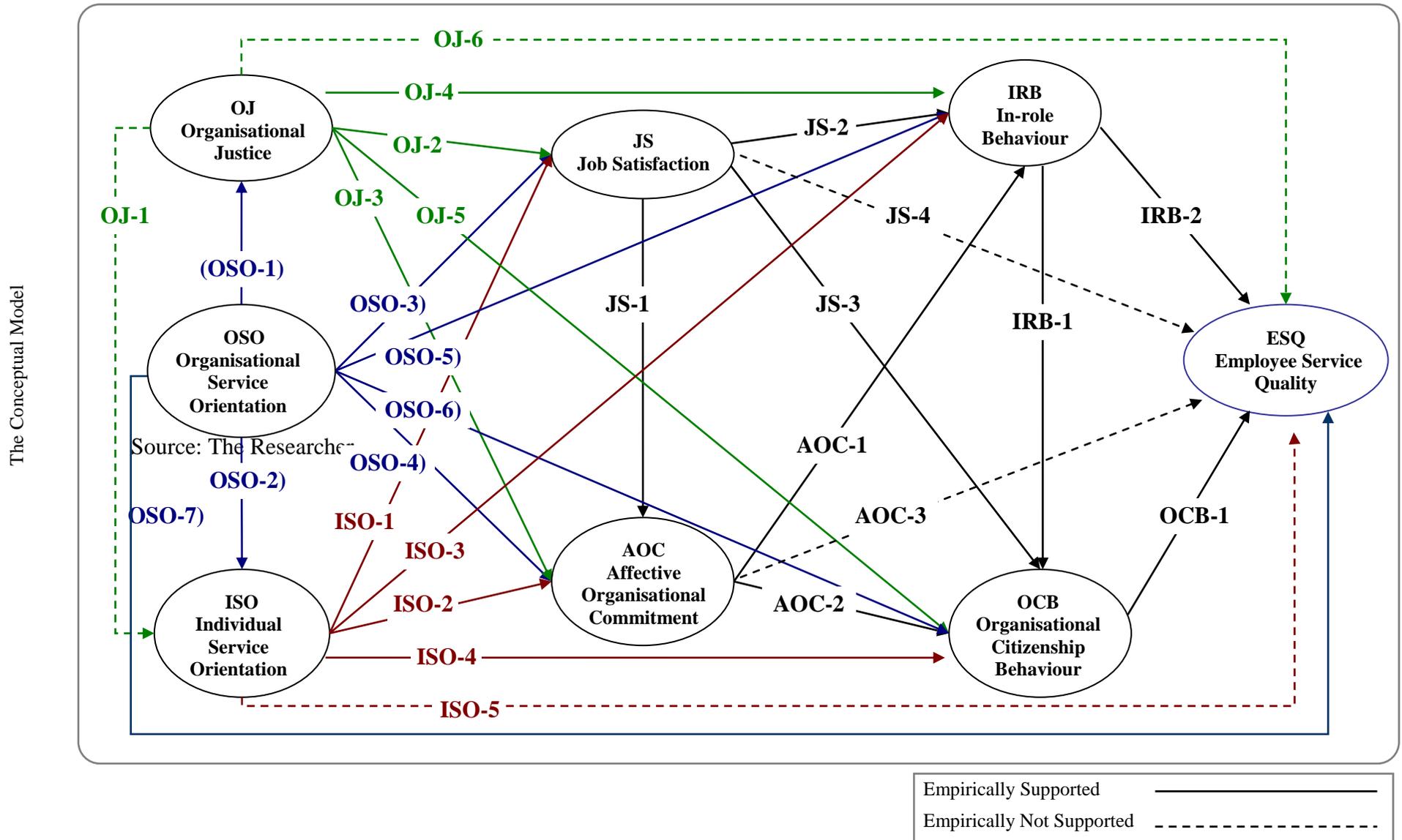
Organisational citizenship behaviours are discretionary behaviours that are not included in employees' job description but which contribute to the effective functioning of an organisation (Organ, 1988). Morrison (1996) and Bienstock *et al.* (2003) indicate that customer-contact personnel's discretionary behaviours not formally prescribed by the organization – OCB – influence the quality of service delivered to the consumer. González and Garazo (2006) state that hotel organisations who wish to achieve higher quality service from their employees will need to show more OCB, requiring more attention to service leadership, encouraging a culture of customer orientation and empowerment in service encounters, and achieving greater JS among frontline employees. OCB is related to managerial ratings of employee performance as an individual-level outcome (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2009). This study proposes that:

Hypothesis OCB-1: There is a positive impact of OCB on ESQ.

The hypothesised conceptual model (Figure 1) suggests that OSO has direct and indirect influences on ES. The indirect influence of OSO on ESQ goes through JS, AOC, IRB and OCB, which are all supported empirically in the literature. OJ and ISO influence ESQ indirectly through JS, AOC, IRB and OCB. The direct influences of OJ and ISO on ESQ are proposed in this research for testing. It is also suggested that JS and AOC have direct and indirect influences on ESQ. The indirect relationships go through IRB and OCB. Also, the direct influences on ESQ are proposed for empirical testing. It is also assumed that JS directly influences AOC and that IRB also influences OCB directly. ESQ has seven direct and indirect antecedents: JS, AOC, IRB and OCB are proposed to play mediation roles between three antecedents (i.e., OSO, OJ, and ISO) and ESQ.

There is a lack of strong evidence from empirical studies about the relationships among variables that are believed to serve as antecedents of ESQ. Very little research carried out and published in the hospitality and tourism sectors has focused on service orientation and OJ as antecedents of ESQ. This research aims to develop the most reliable model that conceptualises the antecedents of ESQ in the hospitality industry.

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model



3. Research method and the survey development

In this study, the main data was collected quantitatively via questionnaires to address the aim of this research. This quantitative research is considered as explanatory and hypothesis testing research. To identify the variables and relationships that influence ESQ, a survey questionnaire was designed for implementation in four- and five-star hotels in Saudi Arabia.

The survey instrument to measure OSO, OJ, ISO, JS, AOC, IRB and OCB was based on previously validated questions adopted by other researchers. All were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale labelled as 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

Lytle *et al.* (1998) developed the SERV*OR scale to measure OSO. It assesses employee perceptions of an organisation's service practices, policies and procedures. The 29-item OSO scale represents ten dimensions: servant leadership, customer treatment, service technology, service failure recovery, service training, service failure prevention, service communication, service vision, service rewards and employee empowerment. Previous studies found the scale to be reliable, and its items showed acceptable discriminate validity.

The OJ scale was based on Moorman (1991) and consists of 20 items that represent procedural, interactional and distributive dimensions. All items were assessed using a seven point response format, from 1 = very unfair to 7 = very fair.

This study used a new scale that is based on the service predisposition instrument (SPI, Lee-Ross, 2000), consisting of interactivity ($\alpha = 0.819$, six items), attentiveness ($\alpha = 0.713$, four items) and consistency ($\alpha = 0.734$, three items). Using the Cronbach alpha coefficient values, the internal consistency of each factor ranged from 0.713 to 0.819.

The Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1985) contains 36 items measuring nine facets of JS. Responses to the JSS items are numbered from 1 to 6. Spector (1997) tested the internal consistency of each factor by using Cronbach alpha. These coefficient alphas ranged from 0.60 to 0.91. In this study, the instrument used a 7-point Likert-type scale labelled as 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' instead of the original 6-point scale in order to reduce any confusion that might occur among respondents, as the rest of the items were rated by 7-point scales.

In this research, affective commitment is defined as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1990). A 6-item scale of affective commitment was used (Meyer *et al.*, 1993).

A Williams and Anderson (1991) scale was used to measure IRB of customer-contact employees from their manager's perspective and OCB. Williams and Anderson (1991) identified two broad categories of OCB: OCBO-behaviours that benefit the organisation in general, and OCBI-behaviours that immediately benefit specific individuals, indirectly contributing to the organisation. The internal consistency reliability for the OCBI scale averaged 0.85 and OCBO 0.76 (Organ *et al.*, 2006). This research uses Ekinçi *et al.*'s (2008) 4-item scale to measure ESQ, and three items were developed by the researcher.

4. Data collection

The main data collection was conducted in 40 different four- and five-star hotels in Saudi Arabia. A random sample of managers and customer-contact employees working in the same departments were asked to complete self-administered questionnaires about the impact of the relationship between employees and employers on service quality in the hotel industry. The questionnaires were in both English and Arabic.

The survey folder contained two different questionnaires. The first questionnaire contained 31-items that were designed for managers to evaluate employees. The other questionnaire contained 114-items designed to obtain customer-contact employees' opinions about their jobs. The same serial number was printed on the front page of both questionnaires included in the folder. All managers and employees were asked to seal and drop the completed questionnaires in the box provided by the researcher.

5. Analysis of data

To test the postulated hypotheses, factor analysis and structural equations modelling were used. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to derive the underlying factors of the concept that have been operationally defined, indicating which of the items are most appropriate for each dimension, and the reliability of all measurement scales that constitute the survey were measured. Then, structural equation modelling was used to determine the cause-effect relationships between OSO, OJ, ISO and ESQ.

6. Results

In this study, a sample of 800 employees and their managers was surveyed (1600 questionnaires). A total of 356 usable matched questionnaires were returned, an approximate response rate of 47%.

The sample characteristics give a brief description of the respondents' demographic information. 96.1% of respondents were male and only 3.9% female. Over half of the respondents were 20 to 30 years old (58.3%). The second largest age group amongst the sample employees was 31 to 40 years old (27.4%). This suggests that customer-contact employees' in four- and five-star hotels in Saudi Arabia consists largely of younger workers. Moreover, 45.8% of respondents were Saudi Arabian, and 54.2% from other nationalities.

6.1 Factor analysis and reliability tests

In this study, all assumptions support the factorability of data. Correlation matrices of all variables show many correlation coefficients of value 0.30 and above. In addition, the KMO values of all constructs are in the range of 0.747 to 0.963, larger than the cut-off of the 0.6 minimum value for good factor analysis. Finally, the Barlett's Test of Sphericity of

all variables approached statistical significance ($p < .05$). Therefore, using factor analysis for this study is appropriate.

Organisational service orientation (OSO)

The SERV*OR scale (Lytle *et al.*, 1998) captured only two dimensions instead of ten. The two extracted dimensions were not consistent with previous studies in the hospitality industry (i.e., González and Garazo, 2006). However, the items in each dimension extracted are meaningful. The first dimension, 'customer orientation', represents the items that reflect the service orientation towards the customer. The second dimension, 'employee service support', represents the statements that reflect the service orientation towards the employee. The calculated Cronbach alphas of 'customer orientation' and 'employee service support' were 0.931 and 0.942, respectively.

Organisational justice (OJ)

A principle components factor analysis test was undertaken to validate the OJ scale (Moorman, 1991) in Saudi hotels. Only two dimensions out of three were captured. The first dimension included all statements from both the 'procedural' and 'interactional' justice scales. The second dimension, 'distributive' justice, is made up of four of the original statements. Item loadings on this dimension were all above 0.631. The two extracted dimensions were consistent with previous research. Cropanzano and Greenberg (1997) suggested that interactional justice should be considered a facet of procedural justice rather than a separate dimension. The calculated Cronbach alphas showed acceptable values of 0.964 and 0.816, respectively.

Individual service orientation (ISO)

The new ISO scale, which is based on the original SPI (Lee-Ross, 2000) consists of 18 items representing three dimensions: interactivity, attentiveness and consistency. The principal component analysis results show that the instrument captured three dimensions, as suggested. However, the three extracted dimensions were partially consistent with the modified ISO scale. The items in each dimension extracted were found meaningful and renamed 'dedication to deliver' and 'individual engagement'. The calculated Cronbach coefficient for both dimensions had an acceptable level of reliability of 0.910 and 0.903, respectively. However, all items in dimension three, 'attentiveness', were deleted because the alpha coefficients were below the recommended value.

Job satisfaction (JS)

The data set was subjected to a principal component analysis and five dimensions were recorded out of the original nine JSS scale (Spector, 1985). The first three dimensions capture much more of the variance than the remaining dimensions. According to the overall meaning of each dimension extracted, the first dimension was renamed 'rewards'. The second dimension extracted was renamed 'work environment'. The third dimension was renamed 'other people'. The fourth dimension was remained 'operating conditions'.

Finally, the fifth dimension was renamed ‘career development’. All items in dimensions four and five were deleted because the alpha coefficients of these two dimensions were below 0.5. The overall alpha coefficient for the entire scale after deleting those items was 0.892.

Affective organisational commitment (AOC)

In this research, AOC was measured by using a single dimensional scale that consists of 6 item borrowed from Meyer *et al.* (1993). The overall reliability of the scale is high at 0.806. Therefore, the sampled employees in Saudi Arabian four- and five-star hotels have confirmed the validity and reliabilities of the AOC scale.

In-role behaviour (IRB)

In-role behaviour of customer-contact employees from their managers’ perspective was measured by using a single dimensional scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The calculated overall Cronbach alpha of the IRB scale is 0.952. The sampled employees in Saudi hotels confirmed the single dimensionality structure of the IRB scale.

Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)

Organisational citizenship behaviour was measured by using a double dimensional scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). Principal component analysis confirmed two dimensions. However, the first dimension is made up of all five items of the original ‘individual benefit’ dimension as well as of four items from the ‘organisation benefit’ dimension. This dimension was renamed as ‘supportive relationship’. The second dimension is made up of three items from the ‘organisation benefit’. The overall meaning of this dimension is about employees’ ‘personal behaviour’. The calculated Cronbach alphas showed acceptable values of 0.921 and 0.718 respectively.

Employee service quality (ESQ)

ESQ was measured from their managers’ perspective by using a single dimensional scale developed by Ekinici *et al.* (2008) and three items by the researcher. The calculated overall Cronbach alpha of the ESQ scale is 0.949. The sampled employees in Saudi hotels confirmed the single dimensionality structure of the ESQ scale.

6.2 Structural model results and test of hypotheses

The aim of using structural equation modelling (SEM) in this research was to assess the hypothesised model in a simultaneous analysis of the entire system of variables to determine the extent to which it is consistent with the data and whether the fit is adequate (Byrne, 2010).

The following assumptions are assumed in SEM:

- The maximum likelihood method was used as a parameter estimation procedure for multivariate normal distribution. Parameter estimates should be < 1.00 . The critical ratio (c.r.) at the 0.05 significance level should be $> +/- 1.96$ (see Table 1).
- A linear relationship is assumed between endogenous and exogenous variables.
- The data is free of outliers.
- Most researchers prefer a 200 to 400 sample size, with 10 to 15 indicators, equating to 10 to 20 times as many cases as variables (80 to 160 cases). The sample size of 356 cases is within the range preferred by researchers.

The table below shows the regression weights for the structural model.

Table 1: Regression Weights for the Structural Model

	Estimate	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	Probability	Label
OJ <--- OSO	.822	.034	23.988	< 0.001	par_7
JS <--- OSO	.286	.049	5.804	< 0.001	par_1
JS <--- OJ	.346	.047	7.330	< 0.001	par_6
ISO <--- OSO	.385	.034	11.460	< 0.001	par_8
IRB <--- JS	.342	.066	5.165	< 0.001	par_4
IRB <--- ISO	.252	.075	3.346	< 0.001	par_13
OCB <--- ISO	.163	.042	3.873	< 0.001	par_5
OCB <--- IRB	.630	.030	21.113	< 0.001	par_9
AOC <--- JS	.869	.067	12.995	< 0.001	par_2
ESQ <--- OCB	.541	.050	10.929	< 0.001	par_3
ESQ <--- IRB	.400	.041	9.641	< 0.001	par_10
ESQ <--- ISO	.176	.039	4.485	< 0.001	par_11
AOC <--- OSO	.218	.056	3.886	< 0.001	par_12

The SEM (AMOS, version 18) output showed that the minimum was achieved, indicating that AMOS was successful in estimating all model parameters (Byrne, 2010). The chi-square value (CMIN) was 27.12 and the number of degrees of freedom (DF) was 15. The probability level was .028. The ratio CMIN/DF (the minimum discrepancy) was 1.8/1, which is close to the recommended 2/1 ratio.

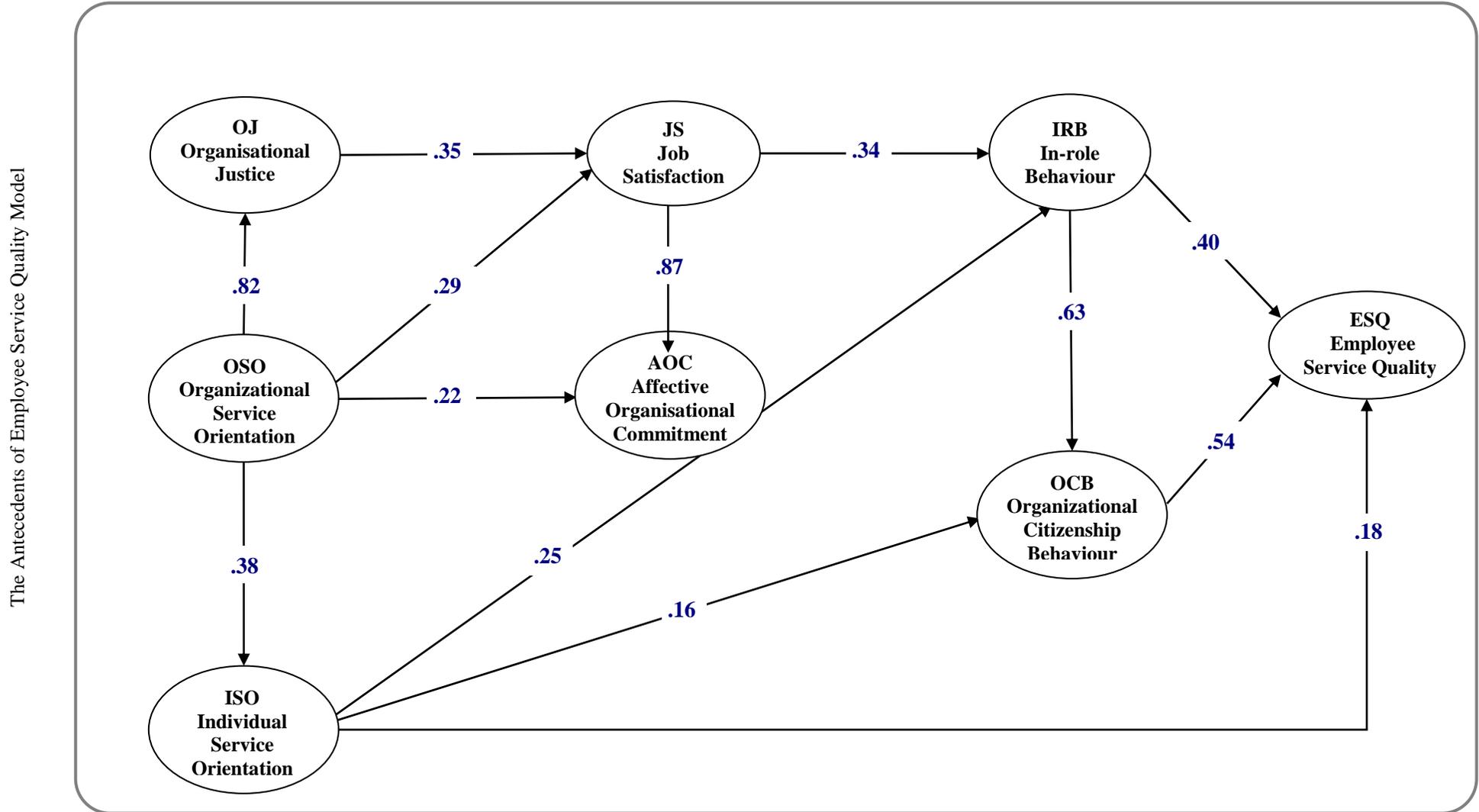
The CFI value, the normed fit index (NFI) and the incremental fit index (IFI) were above the recommended value at 0.994, 0.986 and 0.994, respectively. Finally, the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) was 0.048, satisfying the recommended value of 0.05 or less as an indicator of a close fit of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom (Browne and Cudeck, 1993). The fit measures are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Model Fit Indices

Fit Measures	Recommended Criteria	Model Fit
Absolute Fit Measure		
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	Acceptable level between 0.05 to- 0.08. Preferably lower than 0.05.	0.048
Baseline Comparisons		
Comparative Fit Index (CFI),	In the range from 0 to 1. Recommended at 0.95 or above.	0.994
Normed Fit Index (NFI),	In the range from 0 to 1. Recommended at 0.95 or above.	0.986
Incremental Fit Index (IFI),	In the range from 0 to 1. Recommended at 0.95 or above.	0.994

Figure 2 shows the generated relationships model as the antecedents of ESQ model. The regression weights are illustrated on each arrow. However, some other hypothesised relationships were absent from the SEM model. The hypothesised relationships between OSO and both OJ and ISO were validated and accepted, as was the hypothesised relationships between OSO and both JS and AOC. The model suggests that OJ predicts employee JS only and JS predicts IRB. ISO predicts employee IRB, employee OCB and ESQ. Contrary to expectations, AOC does not play any mediating role between predictors and the outcome. It is confirmed that IRB predicts OCB. The SEM model confirms that ESQ is directly predicted by IRB, OCB and ISO.

Figure 2: The Antecedents of Employee Service Quality Model - Using SEM-AMOS



7. Discussion

This study investigated seven constructs and their consequential relationships in order to suggest the direct and indirect influences on ESQ.

Organisational service orientation as an antecedent

This research has developed seven hypotheses related to the possible relationships between OSO and the other seven constructs. The structural model confirmed the direct relationship between OSO and OJ. This result is supported in previous research that showed relationships between perceptions of fairness and positive organisational attitudes (Greenberg, 1990). The hypothesised positive relationship between OSO and ISO is also confirmed and has a support in the literature. Highly service-oriented employees will be more receptive to service training, have more effective service training, and perform their work roles more reliably under lower levels of supervision (Cran, 1994; Schneider *et al.*, 1992; Teng and Barrows, 2009). The hypothesised positive relationship between OSO and JS is confirmed. This finding is consistent with empirical studies conducted in the hospitality industry by Kim *et al.* (2009) and González and Garazo (2006), which found that management service activities predict JS. The hypothesised positive relationship between OSO and AOC is confirmed. Lee and his colleagues (1999) also indicated this positive relationship, and they considered that developing positive service orientation is a prerequisite to increasing employee JS and commitment.

The other three hypotheses regarding the positive impact of OSO on employees' IRB, their OCB, and their service quality were rejected. This result indicates that OSO influences ESQ indirectly through employee JS, IRB and OCB. This result is expected and has support from the literature. OSO encourages a culture of customer orientation and empowerment to achieve high JS among customer-contact employees, thus developing more OCB, which in turn leads to a higher quality of service (González and Garazo, 2006). Table 3, below, summarises the outcomes from testing consequential relationships hypotheses of OSO.

Table 3: Summary of Organisational Service Orientation (OSO) Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
OSO-1:	There is a positive impact of OSO on OJ.	Accepted
OSO-2:	There is a positive impact of OSO on ISO.	Accepted
OSO-3:	There is a positive impact of OSO on JS.	Accepted
OSO-4:	There is a positive impact of OSO on AOC.	Accepted
OSO-5:	There is a positive impact of OSO on IRB.	Rejected
OSO-6:	There is a positive impact of OSO on OCB.	Rejected
OSO-7:	There is a positive impact of OSO on ESQ.	Rejected

Organisational Justice as an Antecedent

The hypothesised positive relationship between OJ and employee JS is shown to be significant. OJ is considered as an important antecedent of JS. This finding is consistent with other researchers (Moorman, 1993; Bettencourt and Brown, 1997).

As supported by the literature, the other five hypotheses regarding the positive impact of OJ on employees' ISO, AOC, IRB, OCB, and their service quality were rejected. Dubinsky and Levy (1989) reported that fairness perceptions were not significantly related to performance. This suggests that OJ encourages AOC through JS and encourages OCB and ESQ through JS and IRB. Table 4 below summarises the outcomes from testing the consequential relationships hypotheses of OJ.

Table 4: Summary of Organisational Justice (OJ) Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
OJ-1:	There is a positive impact of OJ on ISO.	Rejected
OJ-2:	There is a positive impact of OJ on JS.	Accepted
OJ-3:	There is a positive impact of OJ on AOC.	Rejected
OJ-4:	There is a positive impact of OJ on IRB.	Rejected
OJ-5:	There is a positive impact of OJ on OCB.	Rejected
OJ-6:	There is a positive impact of OJ on ESQ.	Rejected

Individual Service Orientation as an Antecedent

This research has developed five hypotheses related to the possible relationships between ISO (ISO) and the other five constructs. The holistic approach of examining the causal relationships among all constructs indicates that ISO has direct positive impacts on IRB, OCB, and ESQ. Teng and Barrows (2009) argue that ISO is associated with good performance (Frei and McDaniel, 1998; Harris and Fleming, 2005) and that the attitudes and behaviours of frontline employees are connected to guest satisfaction (Susskind *et al.*, 2007, p. 1422). The most interesting finding is the positive impact of ISO on ESQ, which is confirmed in this study consistent with Teng and Barrows's (2009) assertion "the employee service orientation has a significant impact on the customer's perception of overall service quality" (p. 1422).

The other hypotheses regarding the positive impact of ISO on JS and AOC were rejected. Table 5 below summarises the outcomes from testing the consequential relationships hypotheses of ISO.

Table 5: Summary of Individual Service Orientation (ISO) Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
ISO-1:	There is a positive impact of ISO on JS.	Rejected
ISO-2:	There is a positive impact of ISO on AOC.	Rejected
ISO-3:	There is a positive impact of ISO on IRB.	Accepted
ISO-4:	There is a positive impact of ISO on OCB.	Accepted
ISO-5:	There is a positive impact of ISO on ESQ.	Accepted

Job Satisfaction as an Antecedent

This research has developed four hypotheses related to the possible relationships between JS and the other four constructs. The direct relationship between JS and AOC is significant. This result is supported traditionally in the literature, and JS is known as the essential antecedent of organisational commitment (Williams and Hazer, 1986; DeCotiis and Summers, 1987; Sagar, 1994; Harrison and Hubbard, 1998). It also suggests that JS predicts IRB, which in turn predicts both OCB and ESQ. This result is consistent with the empirical results of Lee *et al.* (2006) who suggested that JS affects IRB but does not affect OCB.

Although there is general agreement that the path to satisfied customers is through satisfied employees (Grönroos, 1985; Gummesson, 1987; Greene *et al.*, 1994; Varey, 1995) and Rogers *et al.* (1994) argue that it is very unlikely that employees will deliver an exceptional service when they are not satisfied with their work, this study does not support the direct impact of JS on ESQ. This suggests that JS influences ESQ through IRB and OCB, rather than directly. Table 6 below summarises the tests of all hypothesised direct relationships caused by JS.

Table 6: Summary of Job Satisfaction (JS) Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
JS-1:	There is a positive impact of JS on AOC.	Accepted
JS-2:	There is a positive impact of JS on IRB.	Accepted
JS-3:	There is a positive impact of JS on OCB.	Rejected
JS-4:	There is a positive impact of JS on ESQ.	Rejected

Affective Organisational Commitment (AOC) as an Antecedent

This research has developed three hypotheses related to the possible relationships between AOC and the other three constructs. As shown in Table 7 below, these direct relationships of AOC on managers' perceptions of employees' IRB, their OCB, and their service quality were rejected. Although many researchers in the area of organisational commitment support the correlation between commitment and OCB (Meyer *et al.*, 2002; Schneider *et al.*, 1992; Mackenzie *et al.*, 1998), Lee *et al.* (2006) found that organisational commitment does not affect both in-role and extra-role behaviours. The results suggest that AOC does not predict either employee behaviours (i.e., IRB and OCB) or ESQ. This result is consistent with Lee *et al.* (2006).

Table 7: Summary of Affective Organisational (AOC) Commitment Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
AOC-1:	There is a positive impact of AOC on IRB.	Rejected
AOC-2:	There is a positive impact of AOC on OCB.	Rejected
AOC-3:	There is a positive impact of AOC on ESQ.	Rejected

In-Role Behaviour (IRB) as an Antecedent

As shown in Table 8 below, the two hypotheses related to the possible direct relationships between IRB and both OCB and ESQ were confirmed. These relationships are supported in the literature (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1990; George, 1991; Keaveney, 1995; Brown, 1997).

Table 8: Summary of In-Role Behaviour (IRB) Hypotheses Tests

Code	Hypothesis	Results
IRB-1:	There is a positive impact of IRB on OCB.	Accepted
IRB-2:	There is a positive impact of IRB on ESQ.	Accepted

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour as an Antecedent

The direct relationship between OCB and ESQ was confirmed, as is supported in the literature (Morrison, 1996; Bienstock *et al.*, 2003). This suggests that employees' citizenship behaviour predicts the quality of service delivered.

Antecedents of Employee Service Quality

The holistic approach model using structural equation modelling confirmed that ESQ is highly predicted by OCB ($r = 0.54$) and IRB ($r = 0.40$). Individuals' service-oriented attitudes also predict ESQ ($r = 0.18$) but less strongly than employee behaviours do.

8. Conclusion

The results of testing the study's model suggested that individual service orientation, in-role behaviour and organisational citizenship behaviour are the direct antecedents of employee service quality. On the other hand, OSO, OJ and JS are indirect antecedents of ESQ. Affective organisational commitment plays no role in predicting ESQ. The indirect paths from OSO and OJ explained greater variance in ESQ than the direct path from ISO to ESQ. This means high perceptions of OSO, OJ and ISO lead to a high level of ESQ mainly through higher perceptions of JS, IRB and OCB. Although there is less variance explained by ISO in ESQ, it is still considered an important contribution of this study. This means higher employee service-oriented attitudes lead to higher service quality levels. The study's findings support the strong association of JS and employee behaviours with ESQ. These findings confirm the concept of the service profit chain and the rationale of the service encounter.

Improving employee behaviour and overall performance has been viewed through improving service-oriented organisational culture, OJ and satisfying customer-contact employees. Based on models of the service profit chain (Heskett *et al.*, 1994), this study developed an integrated model that relates service-oriented employee attitudes, OSO, OJ, JS, AOC, employee job performance and employee citizenship behaviour to ESQ. However, the role of AOC was not supported in the Saudi hotel context. Consequently, this study does not support the general organisational commitment rationale that highly committed employees are better performers.

Examining the relationships proposed in the model required measuring each construct. Eight constructs were measured (OSO, OJ, ISO, JS, AOC, IRB, OCB and ESQ), and the study revealed important methodological contributions. The SERV*OR scale (Lytle *et al.*, 1998) was reliable to measure OSO in the hospitality industry in the Saudi hotel sector. In addition, Moorman's (1991) multidimensional scale is a valid and reliable scale to use in Saudi hotels. ISO was measured by a modified version of Lee-Ross' (2000) service predisposition instrument (SPI). Since the original scale of SPI was reported to have a lack of stability (Lee-Ross and Pryce, 2005), the new ISO scale needs further research to increase the validity and reliability for use in Saudi hotels. Furthermore, JS was measured by using a multidimensional scale (JSS; Spector, 1985). The three new structural dimensions, 'rewards', 'work environment' and 'other people', were accepted as dimensions to measure JS in Saudi hotels. AOC was measured using a single dimensional scale borrowed from Meyer *et al.* (1993). The AOC scale is a valid and reliable scale to measure AOC in Saudi hotels. OCB was measured using Williams and Anderson's (1991) two-dimensional scale, and this study confirmed that 'supportive relationship' and 'personal behaviour' is suitable for use in Saudi hotels. Finally, ESQ was measured from managers' perspectives by using a single dimensional scale developed by Ekinici *et al.* (2008) and three items by the author. The ESQ scale is significantly valid and appropriate for Saudi hotels.

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