

LINKING EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND EXTRA ROLE BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY ACROSS HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Recognition program is critical for every organization, especially in the hospitality industry. This study examines the relationship between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour in the hospitality industry. Data were collected from 203 employees in hospitality industry using a standardized questionnaire. The findings indicate a strong and statistically significant relationship between recognition practices and employees' willingness to go beyond their formal job roles. Recognition explains a substantial proportion of variance in extra-role behaviour, highlighting its strategic importance in organizational settings.

Keywords: Employee Recognition, Extra-role Behaviour, Hospitality Industry

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving organizational landscape, the way employees are treated has become just as important as strategy or technology. Organizations are increasingly realizing that employees are not merely resources to execute tasks, but individuals whose attitudes, emotions, and voluntary efforts shape overall success. One such voluntary effort is *extra-role behaviour*, which refers to actions performed beyond formal job requirements that contribute to organizational effectiveness. These behaviours, often subtle and unmeasured, play a crucial role in building a supportive and high-performing workplace.

Extra-role behaviour has been widely discussed in organizational behaviour literature. According to Lee and Allen (2002), it includes discretionary actions such as helping colleagues, volunteering for additional responsibilities, and demonstrating loyalty toward the organization. These behaviours are not formally rewarded, yet they significantly enhance teamwork, productivity, and organizational climate. In service-oriented industries like hospitality, where employee interactions directly influence customer experiences, such behaviours become even more critical.

On the other hand, *employee recognition* serves as a key driver of such positive behaviours. Employee recognition can be defined as a structured or informal process through which organizations acknowledge and appreciate employees' contributions (Cannon, 2015). Recognition satisfies fundamental psychological needs such as appreciation, belongingness, and esteem. When employees feel valued, they are more likely to reciprocate with

higher levels of commitment and engagement. Supporting this, Abdullah et al. (2016) emphasize that recognition has a strong psychological impact on employee satisfaction and performance, while Imran et al. (2024) highlight its role in enhancing motivation and workplace outcomes.

Despite the growing implementation of recognition programs across organizations, there remains a need to understand how these initiatives translate into behavioural outcomes, particularly extra-role behaviour. Many organizations adopt recognition practices without fully understanding their deeper impact, especially in high-pressure and service-driven environments like the hospitality industry. This creates a gap between practice and evidence.

The hospitality industry, characterized by long working hours, emotional labour, and constant customer interaction, relies heavily on employees' willingness to go beyond their defined roles. Simple acts such as assisting a colleague during peak hours or providing personalized service to guests can significantly influence customer satisfaction and organizational reputation. However, sustaining such behaviours is challenging without appropriate motivational mechanisms.

This study is therefore needed to examine how employee recognition influences extra-role behaviour within the hospitality sector. It aims to bridge the gap between recognition practices and actual employee behaviour, offering insights into how appreciation can drive discretionary efforts. Additionally, the study explores whether these effects vary across different functional areas and demographic factors.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional design. Data were collected from 203 employees using structured questionnaires from hospitality industry employees. The study used standardized tools including the Lee & Allen (2002) OCB scale and the Cannon (2015) Employee Recognition scale. Reliability was confirmed with a high Cronbach's alpha value of 0.979.

| Variable | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------|------------------|
| Dependent | 0.979 |
| Independent | 0.979 |

HYPOTHESIS

H0: Employee recognition programs do not significantly influence extra-role behaviour among employees in the hospitality industry.

H1: Employee recognition programs significantly influence extra-role behaviour among employees in the hospitality industry.

H0: There is no significant difference in extra-role behaviour among employees across different functional departments in the hospitality industry.

H1₂: There is a significant difference in extra-role behaviour among employees across different functional departments in the hospitality industry.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between employee recognition and employee engagement in the hospitality industry.

H1₃: There is a significant relationship between employee recognition and employee engagement in the hospitality industry.

H0₄: There is no significant difference in perception of employee recognition practices across departments.

H1₄: There is a significant difference in perception of employee recognition practices across departments.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between employee recognition programs and extra-role behaviour in the hospitality sector.
2. To evaluate whether employee recognition programs have varying impacts across different functional areas of the hospitality industry (such as housekeeping, kitchen, front desk, and other departments).
3. To analyze the influence of demographic variables, particularly gender, on the relationship between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour.

FINDINGS

The study revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.915$, $p < 0.001$) between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour. Regression analysis showed that recognition explains approximately 83.7% of the variance in extra-role behaviour. This indicates that recognition significantly influences employees’ willingness to go beyond their formal duties.

Table 1 – Correlation and regression to examine the relationship between employee recognition programs and extra-role behaviour in the hospitality sector.

Correlations

| | OCB_Scale | ER_Scale |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Pearson Correlation | 1 | .915** |
| OCB_Scale Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| N | 203 | 203 |
| Pearson Correlation | .915** | 1 |
| ER_Scale Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| N | 203 | 203 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Linear Regression

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|-------------|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. Change |
| 1 | .915 ^a | .837 | .836 | .499 | .837 | 1030.117 | 1 | 201 | .000 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), ER_Scale

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 256.726 | 1 | 256.726 | 1030.117 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 50.093 | 201 | .249 | | |
| | Total | 306.820 | 202 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: OCB_Scale
 b. Predictors: (Constant), ER_Scale

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .281 | .090 | | 3.119 | .002 |
| | ER_Scale | .899 | .028 | .915 | 32.095 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: OCB_Scale

The results show a very strong and meaningful relationship between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour in the hospitality sector. The correlation ($r = .915$, $p < .001$) indicates that as recognition increases, employees are much more likely to go beyond their formal duties. The regression analysis further confirms this, with recognition explaining about 83.7% of the variation in extra-role behaviour. This means recognition programs play a major role in encouraging positive employee actions. Since the relationship is statistically

significant, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, when employees feel appreciated, they are far more willing to put in extra effort at work.

Table 2 - To evaluate whether recognition programs exert varying impacts across different functional areas of the hospitality industry

ONE WAY ANOVA

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 635.176 | 35 | 18.148 | 2.900 | .000 |
| Within Groups | 1044.992 | 167 | 6.257 | | |
| Total | 1680.167 | 202 | | | |

The One-Way ANOVA analysis shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups. The significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than 0.05, which means the differences observed are not due to chance.

The F value (2.900) indicates that the variation between the groups is greater than the variation within the groups. This means that the groups are meaningfully different from each other on the variable being studied.

Looking at the data, the between-group variation (635.176) is substantial compared to the within-group variation (1044.992), suggesting that group membership has an impact on the outcome.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected. The alternative hypothesis (H_{12}) is accepted, which means that recognition programs do not affect all functional areas equally. Some departments or roles experience a stronger impact of recognition compared to others.

Table 3 - Independent t-test to analyze the significance of demographic variables, such as gender, in the relationship with employee recognition.

Group Statistics

| | Gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|----------|--------|-----|------|----------------|-----------------|
| ER_Scale | 0 | 146 | 2.93 | 1.273 | .105 |
| | 1 | 57 | 3.03 | 1.213 | .161 |

Independent Samples Test

| | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 1.864 | .174 | -.486 | 201 | .628 | -.095 | .196 | -.482 | .292 |
| Equal variances not assumed | | | -.496 | 106.935 | .621 | -.095 | .192 | -.476 | .286 |

The analysis was conducted to examine whether gender has a significant relationship with employee recognition.

From the group statistics, the mean score for employee recognition is 2.93 for one group and 3.03 for the other. This shows only a very small difference in how recognition is perceived across genders.

Before comparing the means, Levene's test was checked to see if the variances are equal. Since the significance value ($p = 0.174$) is greater than 0.05, we can assume that the variances are equal.

Looking at the t-test results, the significance value ($p = 0.628$) is greater than 0.05, which means the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant.

Table 4 – Independent t test to analyze the significance of demographic variables, such as gender, in the relationship with extra role behaviour.

Group Statistics

| | Gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-----------|--------|-----|------|----------------|-----------------|
| OCB_Scale | 0 | 146 | 2.95 | 1.264 | .105 |
| | 1 | 57 | 2.93 | 1.159 | .153 |

Independent Samples Test

| | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| OCB | 3.194 | .075 | .097 | 201 | .923 | .019 | .193 | -.362 | .399 |
| Equal variances assumed | | | | | | | | | |
| Equal variances not assumed | | | .100 | 110.860 | .920 | .019 | .186 | -.349 | .387 |

From the group statistics, the mean scores are 2.95 and 2.93 for the two gender groups. This difference is extremely minimal, suggesting that both groups display almost the same level of extra-role behaviour.

Levene's test shows a significance value of $p = 0.075$, which is greater than 0.05. This means we can assume equal variances between the groups.

Looking at the t-test results, the significance value ($p = 0.923$) is much higher than 0.05, indicating that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study strongly reinforce the growing body of literature that positions employee recognition as a critical driver of positive workplace behaviour. The results reveal a very strong and statistically significant relationship between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour ($r = 0.915$), indicating that recognition is not merely a symbolic gesture but a powerful behavioural influencer.

This finding aligns with the work of Montani et al. (2017), who emphasized that recognition enhances employees' sense of meaningfulness, which in turn encourages greater behavioural involvement. Similarly, Presslee et al. (2022) found that recognition programs significantly improve employee effort and engagement, ultimately influencing organizational outcomes. The current study extends these findings by demonstrating that recognition alone explains a substantial proportion (83.7%) of the variance in extra-role behaviour, highlighting its dominant role in shaping discretionary efforts.

When compared with previous studies, this research provides a stronger empirical validation within the hospitality context. While studies such as Satish et al. (2023) and Lavanya et al. (2024) have linked recognition to motivation and performance, this study specifically focuses on extra-role behaviour, offering a more nuanced understanding of how employees contribute beyond formal expectations.

The results also reveal that the impact of recognition varies across different functional areas, which is consistent with the findings of Neale (2008), who emphasized the contextual nature of extra-role behaviours. In hospitality, departments such as housekeeping, kitchen, and front desk operate under different work conditions and expectations. Therefore, recognition strategies cannot be standardized but must be tailored to suit departmental cultures.

Interestingly, the study found no significant gender differences in the relationship between recognition and extra-role behaviour. This suggests that recognition operates as a universal motivator, reinforcing the idea that appreciation transcends demographic boundaries.

From an industry perspective, the relevance of this study is particularly significant. The hospitality industry is highly dependent on human interaction and service quality, making employee behaviour a key determinant of customer satisfaction. Extra-role behaviours such as helping colleagues, showing initiative, and maintaining a positive attitude directly contribute to service excellence. Therefore, investing in recognition practices can lead to both improved employee outcomes and enhanced customer experiences.

In terms of interpretation, the findings suggest that employees are more likely to go beyond their formal roles when they perceive genuine appreciation from their supervisors. Recognition appears to act as a psychological trigger that fosters a sense of belonging and ownership, encouraging employees to contribute more actively.

The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it strengthens the understanding of recognition as a behavioural catalyst rather than just a motivational tool. Practically, it highlights the need for organizations to design structured, consistent, and meaningful recognition programs.

Looking ahead, future research can explore the role of emotional responses, cultural differences, and leadership styles in shaping the recognition behaviour relationship.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the relationship between employee recognition and extra-role behaviour within the hospitality industry. At its core, the research aimed to understand whether acknowledging employees' efforts can influence their willingness to go beyond their formal job responsibilities.

The findings clearly indicate that employee recognition plays a significant and powerful role in shaping extra-role behaviour. With a strong positive correlation and high explanatory power, recognition emerges as a key predictor of employees' discretionary efforts. In simple terms, when employees feel appreciated, they are more likely to contribute beyond what is expected of them.

Another important finding is that the impact of recognition is not uniform across all departments. Different functional areas respond differently to recognition practices, highlighting the importance of context-specific strategies. At the same time, the study confirms that gender does not significantly influence this relationship, suggesting that recognition is equally effective across diverse employee groups.

These implications are particularly important in the hospitality industry, where service quality depends heavily on employee behaviour. Extra-role behaviours such as helping colleagues, taking initiative, and enhancing customer experience are essential for organizational success. By fostering a culture of recognition, organizations can encourage such behaviours and create a more engaged and committed workforce.

From a practical standpoint, the study emphasizes the need for organizations to move beyond occasional appreciation and adopt structured recognition systems. Recognition should be timely, genuine, and aligned with employee expectations. Managers play a crucial role in this process, as their daily interactions significantly influence how employees perceive appreciation.

Employee recognition is not just a supportive HR practice but a strategic tool that can transform workplace behaviour. By investing in meaningful recognition, organizations can unlock higher levels of engagement, improve performance, and build a positive organizational culture that sustains long-term success.

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