The Effects of Personal Values on Service Climate and Service Delivery in the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Rapid growth of the service sector worldwide highlights the importance of service quality as a key to organisational performance. As service quality is influenced by the way service is delivered to customers, a key mission of service organisations is to facilitate their employees to form appropriate attitudes and behaviours that deliver quality service. However, increased workforce diversity presents an array of challenges to organisations in effectively fostering employees to develop exemplary service attitudes and behaviours. Employees from different backgrounds tend to have diverse views and motivations towards customer service. Therefore, organisational success largely depends on how managers understand the effects of employees’ personal attributes on their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards customer service. This thesis examines the role of personal values and provides an insight into how personal values interact with employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery.

The research problem in this thesis is twofold. First, while many studies discuss various organisational factors that influence employee perceptions of service climate, there is a limited understanding of how employees' ‘personal attributes’ affect their service climate perceptions. Specifically, there has been a lack of research examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate. Personal values are recognised as the guiding principles of one’s life and fundamental motivations that influence perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, employees who embrace different types of personal values would be likely to perceive service climate differently. Unfolding the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate would help to effectively promote a service climate in a workplace and facilitate employee service attitudes and behaviours. Second, previous research in personal values suggests limited understanding about the effects of personal values on employee service delivery. By addressing the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and directly on their service delivery, this study provides insights into how personal values play an important role in customer service. As such, this thesis addresses two overarching research questions:

RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?
RQ 2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?

This thesis is guided by a post-positivist paradigm and comprises two stages. The first stage is a quantitative study, using a survey technique to address the first research question. A total of 487 usable surveys were collected from customer-contact employees working at nine four- and five-star hotels in Australia. The second stage, a qualitative study, involved in-depth, semi-structured interviews. In this stage, two issues were addressed. First, to gain deeper insights into the findings of the first study, the second study sought to examine the underlying reasons that could explain the results of Study 1. Second, it explored the second research question. Critical incident and laddering techniques were used to effectively elicit meaningful information from the interviewees. The survey results found that personal values have only limited effects on employee perceptions of service climate. Underlying reasons to explain this result include the suppressing effects of several key organisational factors, the complexity and focus of the questionnaire, inculcation of organisational values and self-suppression of personal value effects. Contrarily, the study identifies strong effects of personal values on employee service delivery. It also suggests that employees tend to use different attributions for different types of service delivery. Specifically, employees tend to attribute the motivation to deliver quality service to their personal values. On the other hand, they often attribute their service recovery efforts to organisational factors.

The study provides several key implications for theory and practice. Given a lack of research examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and service delivery, this thesis extends our understanding of how an employee’s personal values interact with the factors that are crucial in determining customer-perceived service quality. Furthermore, by clarifying the role of an employee’s personal values in customer service, this thesis contributes to the literature of diversity management in the context of customer service. In practice, the current study offers service and hospitality managers insights into developing better communication systems that make full use of the fundamental motivations of workforce, so as to effectively achieve organisational service excellence.
Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

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This journey started in 2012 when the season gradually changed from a hot summer to a beautiful autumn in Brisbane. Before I came to Australia, I had never thought that I would ever complete a PhD. I always wanted to be a successful businessman. Life is full of mystery and no one knows what will happen. When I came to Australia, my first dream was to enrol in this ‘Harry-Potter’ looking university, The University of Queensland. Soon, I had completed my Master’s degree. Now, I am completing my PhD.

I had no idea about academic research before starting my PhD. Everything was new. I learned everything from scratch. I struggled a lot. I had to blaze my own trail in an unfamiliar bush. I got lost so many times. Now, when I look back, I see strong impressions of my footsteps that remind me of the many stumbles and giant leaps forward made along the way towards my goal. This journey has given me a ‘LOT’ of things. These are not limited to subject knowledge or research skills but also include my dearest friends, new perspectives for looking at the world and most of all, ‘bravery to confront new challenges’. I was a person who was afraid of tackling something new. I did not have self-confidence. However, by tackling many ‘unknown fears’, struggling to overcome them and learning from those experiences, I became a ‘man’ who now enjoys new challenges with confidence.

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Hiroaki Saito
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<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>FP</td>
<td>Foundational Premises</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GSCS</td>
<td>Global Service Climate Scale</td>
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<td>HPHRP</td>
<td>High-Performance Human Resource Practices</td>
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<td>Organisational Citizenship Behaviour</td>
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Few would question that globalisation and the internationalisation of business has contributed to the rapid growth of the service sector worldwide. A number of manufacturing industries continue to be replaced by the service industries and the main contributor to national GDP has been radically shifted to the service sector. In Australia, for example, 13 out of 19 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) standard industry classifications are related to the service businesses (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Furthermore, companies that used to sell only tangible products now integrate service components in their offerings. Today, services are ‘everywhere’ and play a pivotal role in our lives. This shift from a manufacturing to service economy urges both practitioners and academics to understand the critical aspects of service (Gronroos, 1990a).

Service quality is a core concept in the service sector, and is defined as the ‘gap’ between customer expectations and the actual service (or performance) they receive (Gronroos, 1990a). In a restaurant, for instance, people check menus, pictures or other customer’s reviews on websites before they make their decision to visit the restaurant. When customers receive service, they already have a certain degree of expectation (e.g., food is nice, staff are friendly and create a welcoming atmosphere and so forth). Through the delivery of service (mainly from waiters/waitresses), customers assess how much the service provider fulfils their expectations. The result of this assessment becomes their perception of the service quality and the total value of their experience of the service (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985).

Prior research in service quality has shown that, while what (e.g., a meal) organisations deliver to the customer is important to ‘meet’ customer expectations, how employees deliver those services (e.g., waiter or waitress interaction with customers in a courteous and friendly manner) has stronger implications for ‘exceeding’ customer expectations and significantly influencing customer perceptions of service quality (e.g., Price, Arnould, & Tierney, 1995; Sharpley & Forster, 2003). That is, in the judgement of service quality, customers put more weight on ‘how the service is delivered’ than ‘what is delivered’. This notion highlights that, in order to deliver high quality service, it is important for the organisations to effectively manage employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery (Gracia, Cifre, & Grau, 2010; Kuo, Chen, & Lu, 2012).
Previous research offers a number of strategies to effectively facilitate an employee’s service attitudes and behaviours. Among them, a myriad of literature suggests that organisations can benefit from promoting a service climate in the workplace (Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Service climate is conceptualised as employee perceptions of service-orientation within the organisation, which emphasises, supports and rewards excellent customer service (Schneider & White, 2004). When employees recognise the importance of excellent customer service through an organisation’s internal functioning, the rationale of service climate is that such perceptions influence employee attitudes and behaviours to deliver better customer service (Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Many studies confirm the strong relationships between employee perceptions of service climate and an organisation’s positive outcomes (e.g., increased customer-perceived service quality, customer loyalty and organisational performance) (e.g., He, Li, & Lai, 2011; Kralj & Solnet, 2010; Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005). These authors suggest that organisations are able to ensure the quality of their service by effectively creating a positive service climate.

However, the rapid growth of workforce diversity in many service organisations has imposed an array of challenges on managers to effectively promote service climate. The diversity in the workforce refers to a number of ‘differences’ among employees (Qin, Muenjohn, & Chhetri, 2014). Such differences encompass an almost infinite number of attributes, which may include but are not limited to gender, age (or generation), disability, race, ethnicity, personality, knowledge, belief, religion, or cultural/personal values (Phillips, Northcraft, & Neale, 2006). These different backgrounds often provide employees a unique ‘lens’ through which to see the world phenomena (Schwartz, 1992). Since employees see the organisational environment through their own unique lens (Gavin, 1975), their perceptions of organisational environment or service climate, would be likely to vary from one employee to another (James, Hater, & Gent, 1978). That is, an organisation’s conventional approach (e.g., treating employees as a homogeneous group) in order to promote employee perceptions of service climate may no longer be as effective as in the past. It therefore becomes important to understand the impact of employee’s various personal attributes on their perceptions of service climate as well as their subsequent behaviours (e.g., employee service delivery).

To address this issue, previous studies have examined the effects of several personal attributes (e.g., personality traits and cultural values) on employee perceptions of service climate. However, in contrast to personality traits and cultural values, prior research examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service
climate is largely absent. Personal values are recognised as the ‘guiding principles’ of our lives, which fundamentally influence employees’ various cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural aspects in a workplace (Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Sousa & Coelho, 2011). Furthermore, personal values are built on a number of other diversity attributes (e.g., age, gender, culture, education and many others); therefore, they are considered as the most ‘fundamental’ attribute of workforce diversity (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004). As such, an investigation of the impact of personal value on employee perceptions of service climate is considered to be one of the most effective ways of addressing workforce diversity challenges in relation to promoting employee perceptions of service climate.

In addition to service climate, the review of literature also indicates a lack of prior research examining how personal values affect employee service delivery. Since employee perceptions of service climate are known to influence service delivery, it is reasonable to imply the effects of personal values on employee service delivery through their perceptions of service climate. However, the study of personal values in the realm of customer service is largely limited (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). Furthermore, employee service delivery is not only influenced by their perceptions of service climate but personal attributes also have direct impacts on employee service delivery (Ekinci & Dawes, 2009; Kim & Lee, 2009). Therefore, I consider that examining the effects of personal values solely on employee perceptions of service climate (and assuming their subsequent effects on service delivery) does not provide a whole picture. It is important to also examine the direct effects of personal values on service delivery. In this way, I strive to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how personal values may affect customer service.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Given a lack of prior research examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate, this thesis first examines this relationship. In addition, the recent review of service climate research conducted by Bowen and Schneider (2014) suggests that examining the effects of organisational factors and an employee’s personal factors (e.g., personal values) on employee perceptions of service climate provides a better understanding of service climate antecedents. Following their suggestion, this thesis also seeks to examine the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between two key organisational factors - HR practices and service leadership (Hong, Liao, Hu, & Jiang, 2013) - and employee perceptions of service climate.
Secondly, given a scarcity of prior research investigating the effects of personal values on employee service delivery, this study also examines these relationships. By examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and actual service delivery, this thesis aims to provide a better understanding of how personal values play an important role in employee customer service. As such, this thesis seeks to answer the following two research questions:

**RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?**

**RQ 2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?**

### 1.3 Summary of Methodology

This thesis is guided by the post-positivist paradigm and adopts a two-phase sequential mixed method approach. In Study 1, I use a quantitative method (survey) to examine the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate (RQ1), as well as the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. The data are collected from customer-contact employees at nine, four- to five-star rated hotels in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Cairns, Australia. To analyse the survey data, a series of statistical analyses (confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses, simple and multiple linear regression analyses and t-tests) are conducted.

Study 2 examines two research issues. First, to gain further insight into the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate, I explore the underlying reasons to explain the results of Study 1. Second, I investigate the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery (RQ2). To address these issues, I utilised in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect data from the customer-contact employees working at the hotels that participated in Study 1. I analysed the interview data using thematic analysis.

After completing these two studies, the findings from Study 1 and Study 2 are reinterpreted to draw an overarching conclusion to this thesis. A detailed discussion of methodology and methods is provided in Chapter 3.
1.4 Summary of Contributions

Results indicate that personal values have only marginal effects on employee perceptions of service climate. In contrast, those values have a strong influence on employee service delivery. I argue that the marginal effects are the result of suppressing effects of key organisational factors, the complexity and focus of service climate questionnaires, the inculcation of organisational values and the self-suppression of personal values. Given these results, this thesis provides several theoretical and practical contributions.

A fundamental contribution of this thesis is to call into question the prevailing approach that many organisations take in managing employees to deliver customer service by examining the role that personal values play in service delivery. Furthermore, by identifying the marginal effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their underlying reasons, this thesis contributes to the body of knowledge of the service climate literature and offers insights into how climate researchers should consider personal values in future research. The study also helps our understanding of how personal and organisational attributes interact with each other and impact on employee perceptions of service climate. The importance of this was highlighted in a recent review of service climate research (Bowen and Schneider, 2014), where the case was made that there is a shortage of research investigating the interaction effects of organisational and employees’ personal attributes on perceived service climate. Also, by examining the moderating effects of personal values on the relationship between two key organisational attributes (HR practices and service leadership), the study contributes to further understanding about the interrelationship among different service climate antecedents. In addition, the results of this study offers a unique insight into the way different types of personal attributes have varying impacts on employee perceptions of service climate.

Given the lack of prior research examining the effects of personal values on employee service delivery in a hospitality context, the results of this study provide important insights. Results suggest that personal values have a strong influence on the way employees deliver service (service delivery). In particular, four personal value types (self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change), as conceptualised by Schwartz, appear to influence employees to delivering excellent service as well as the way they engage in service recovery efforts. Furthermore, this thesis is the first study that simultaneously examines how personal values and organisational attributes
influence different aspects of service delivery. The findings offer important insights into which employees use different attributes to different types of service delivery. It also provides an avenue for future researchers to use attribution theory and the notion of self-serving bias to examine the complex mechanism of employee service delivery.

In practice, this thesis provides evidence that managers may not need to take the effects of personal values into consideration when they promote employee perceptions of service climate. Rather, they need to strive to develop effective organisational policies and practices that are strong enough to suppress personal value effects on employee perceptions of service climate. In contrast to service climate, findings suggest that managers should proactively seek and understand an employee’s personal values to effectively manage employee service delivery. From this improved understanding, it is expected that organisations can establish better policy and practice to effectively promote employee perceptions of service climate and facilitate an enhanced service delivery to achieve their mission of service excellence. The study also suggests an alternative way to achieve person-organisational fit by utilising the personal values scale into the recruitment and selection process. Lastly, findings from this study provide an argument for the necessity of organisations to increase employee commitment, which fosters improved service recovery.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

A number of key terms are introduced in this thesis. This section provides a list of key terms used in the current study.

Conservation: a type of personal value that indicates the extent to which one is motivated to preserve the status quo and the certainty that it provides in relationships with others, institutions and traditions (Schwartz, 1992)

Customer-contact employees: those employees who provide the service directly to the customer (Salanova et al., 2005)

Diversity: a number of ‘differences’ among employees (Qin et al., 2014)

Employee-customer interface (or Service Encounter): “a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service” (Shostack, 1985, p. 243)

HR practices: coherent practices that are designed to increase employee skills,
motivation and opportunities for effective organisational operation, which result in achieving sustainable competitive advantages (Liao, Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009)

**Openness to change**: a type of personal value that indicates the extent to which a person is motivated to follow his/her own intellectual and emotional interests in unpredictable and uncertain ways (Schwartz, 1992)

**Organisational climate**: “the shared views of employees about the practices, procedures and types of behaviours that get rewarded and supported in a particular setting” (Lovelock, Wirtz, & Chew, 2009, p. 423)

**(Perceived) service climate**: employee’s “perceptions that (a) practices and procedures were in place to facilitate the delivery of excellent service and (b) management rewarded, supported and expected excellent service” (Schneider & Bowen, 1993, p. 39)

**Personal values**: trans-situational beliefs about personally and socially desirable and acceptable end-states of existence or modes of conduct, which function as standards or principles to guide our thoughts, attitudes and behaviours

**Self-enhancement**: a type of personal value that indicates the extent to which one is motivated to promote self-interest, even when it is potentially at the expense of others (Schwartz, 1992)

**Self-transcendence**: A type of personal value that indicates the extent to which one is motivated to promote the welfare of others (both close friends and distant acquaintances) and nature (Schwartz, 1992)

**Service**: “the application of specialised competences (skills and knowledge), through deeds, processes and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself” (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, p. 2)

**Service delivery**: an activity or series of activities taking place in interactions between the customer and service employees, which provides solutions to customer problems (Gronroos, 1990b)

**Service failure**: “organisation’s inability to deliver the promised service according to its own standards and/or the guest’s expectations” (Ford, Sturman, & Heaton, 2012, p. 506)

**Service leadership**: “the leadership that communicates a commitment to high levels of service quality” (Schneider, Ehrhart, Mayer, Saltz, & Niles-Jolly, 2005, p. 1018)

**Service quality**: the gap between the customers’ expectations and the actual service (or performance) they receive (Gronroos, 1990a)
**Service recovery**: the actions “to make up for service failure (the case when a customer experiences an unsatisfactory or undeserved service) so that the customer returns to the firm with satisfaction” (Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014, p. 276)

**Service value**: the customer’s overall appraisal of net benefits of the service experience, based on the customer’s assessment of what is received (benefits) and what is given (costs or sacrifice, e.g., time, money and efforts) (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1, this chapter, provides a brief overview of this thesis. In Chapter 2, I review the literature in three key areas: service delivery, service climate and personal values, which underlie the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. Based on the theoretical gaps in the literature, I develop the research questions, conceptual framework and a series of hypotheses to be addressed. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and methods adopted in this thesis. The philosophical paradigm, research strategy, research design and ethical considerations are discussed. Chapter 4 provides the results and discussion of Study 1. Sample characteristics, data-cleaning and -screening processes, results of hypothesis testing and discussion of results are outlined. Chapter 5 provides the results and discussion of Study 2. The data analysis process, results of interviews and discussion of key results and findings are outlined. Finally, Chapter 6 provides an overarching conclusion to this thesis. Theoretical and practical implications, limitation of this thesis and recommendations for the future research are discussed.

1.7 Summary

This chapter outlined an overview of this thesis. It first provided a research background and a statement of research problems. Then, a summary of methodology and methods adopted in this thesis was discussed. Key contributions, definitions of key terms and the structure of this thesis are also discussed. The next chapter offers a critical review of relevant literature, which provides the theoretical underpinning of this thesis.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature relevant to this thesis and identifies the research gaps and issues to be addressed. The chapter is divided into four main sections (see Figure 2.1). First, the nature of service delivery is discussed. Second, the concept of service climate is reviewed. Third, the concept of personal values is examined. Then, based on the review of the literatures, two research questions, a conceptual framework and a series of hypotheses are developed.

Figure 2.1 The Structure of Chapter 2

2.2 Service Delivery

A key mission of service organisations is to achieve high service quality to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. Since service quality is often determined by the way employees deliver service (Bowen & Schneider, 2014), understanding the mechanism of employee service delivery is fundamental for organisations striving to deliver quality
service and achieve the mission of service excellence. While the nature of service delivery is notably complex and specific, the service delivery process could vary from one organisation to another. However, as most service is intangible and people-intensive in nature, researchers consider that the fundamentals of service delivery share certain commonalities (Gronroos, 1990b). This notion provides an idea of how employee service delivery could be managed more effectively.

This thesis examines the effects of employee personal values on their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in the service context. Therefore, understanding the nature and characteristics of service delivery is crucial. This section provides an overview of employee service delivery. A definition of service delivery is provided. Several key underpinnings critical to understand the nature of the concept are outlined and then, various factors influencing employee service delivery are discussed.

### 2.2.1 Service delivery and key relevant concepts

Service delivery is defined as an activity or series of activities that take place in the interactions between customer and service employees, and that provide the solutions to customer problems (Gronroos, 1990b). The nature of service delivery has changed dramatically and modern organisations are introducing various technologies to increase the efficiency of service delivery. Nonetheless, this thesis adopts the position that people still play a crucial role and interactions between employees and customers are key determinants of customer evaluation of service quality.

Service delivery is a complex and abstract concept, which involves a number of theoretical and conceptual underpinnings. To understand the nature of service delivery, the following sections provide a review of three key conceptual foundations of the service delivery concept: employee-customer interface, customer-contact employees and service-dominant logic and value co-creation.

#### 2.2.1.1 Employee-customer interface

The employee-customer interface (also known as ‘service encounter’) is defined as “a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service” (Shostack, 1985, p. 243) or “any episode in which a customer comes into contact with any aspect of the organisation and gets an impression of the quality of its service” (Albrecht, 1988, p. 26). While service delivery refers to ‘the action’ of providing (or co-creating) service
experiences, a service encounter refers to ‘the moment’ when employees interact with customers for service delivery. It is also known as the ‘moment of truth’ when customers make a judgement of service quality and determine the value of their service experiences (Bitner, 1990; Carlzon, 1987).

The proximity and intensity of employee-customer interactions in the service encounter have been widely discussed in relation to service quality. The rationale for this relationship is that the more employees and customers interact both physically and psychologically, the more impacts service providers create on customer service experience (Schneider & Bowen, 1995). Such impacts could be both positive and negative. For instance, when employees listen carefully to the customer needs and provide quality service to guests (sometimes involving customisation or personalisation of service), high proximity and intensity of service delivery amplifies the opportunities to build positive relationships with customers. On the other hand, when employees cause service failures and they are unable to manage the situation or even create ‘double deviation’ (Johnston & Fern, 1999), such closeness between employees and customers may work in a counteractive way.

In service that involves high proximity and intensity, such as the hospitality service, psychological closeness between employees and customers is high (Schneider & Bowen, 1995). That is, an employee’s emotional or cognitive factors (e.g., personality, cultural values, or personal values) are highly involved in service encounters (Schneider, Macey, Lee, & Young, 2009). In order to effectively manage each employee-customer interface, it is therefore important for the organisations, not only to ensure their employees acquire adequate knowledge or technical skills in handling each service encounter, but also understand how their unique individual dispositions affect their service delivery. Given a notion that proximity and intensity of service delivery affect customer evaluations of service quality, it is now important to have a deeper understanding of the role customer-contact employees play in service encounters.

2.2.1.2 Customer-contact employees

Customer-contact employees are those who directly interact with customers and provide the service. Due to various roles they play in the organisation, customer-contact employees are called in many ways. For instance, customer-contact employees are called ‘boundary-spanners’ when they transmit a core value of an organisation to the customers
in their service delivery or when they provide direct customer feedback to the organisation (Little & Dean, 2006; Narver & Slater, 1990). Such functions allow managers and organisations to ensure that existing organisational values or service offerings actually meet customer needs (Gracia et al., 2010). Furthermore, they are called ‘part-time marketers’ when they contribute to revenue growth through up-selling of service products or when they facilitate customer’s return intentions (Gummesson, 1991). In the hotel industry, for example, this group of employees generally refers to the receptionists, bellboys, waiters and housekeepers, who constitute a large portion of the entire workforce (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000).

In essence, it is the group of employees with whom customers most often interact. Therefore, the impacts of their attitudes and behaviours in service delivery on customer evaluations of service quality is substantial (Ashforth, Kulik, & Tomiuk, 2008). A number of previous studies depict the strong link between customer-contact employee service delivery and customer evaluations of service quality. For instance, Tsaur and Lin (2004) found that hotel customer-contact employee’s extra-role service behaviours (i.e., going beyond the role-description and putting more effort, care and appropriate emotion into service delivery) have a significant impact on customer evaluations of service quality. Similarly, Kuo, Chen and Lu (2012) identified that four aspects of service attitudes (i.e., problem-solving, empathy, enthusiasm and friendliness) affect customer-perceived service quality substantially. Thus, in order to achieve high service quality, organisations must facilitate customer-contact employees’ service attitudes and behaviours when they interact with customers through service delivery. This notion is strongly related to service-dominant logic and the concept of ‘value co-creation’ (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2006).

2.2.1.3 Service-dominant logic and value co-creation

Service-dominant (S-D) logic is a perspective that is fundamental to the understanding of the nature of service delivery and highlights the significance of employee-customer interactions in service. Traditionally, researchers considered ‘tangible goods’ as the main focus in the economic exchange and services as simply ‘intangible goods’ or ‘add-on elements’ to enhance the value of goods (this perspective is called ‘goods-dominant logic’). Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2006) questioned this way of conceptualising service and urged organisations to completely ‘rethink’ how they approach the market, both externally and internally and how they should define the value of customer experience. In S-D logic, organisations should see all existing resources and
stakeholders as *operant* resources (being capable of acting on other resources) instead of seeing the external environment as an uncontrollable force and customers as *operand* resources (to be acted upon), (Lusch, Vargo, & O’Brien, 2007). In this light, the value of customer experience is no longer added or created by the service provider alone; rather, all stakeholders (including customers, employees and suppliers) are the essential players in creating the total value of customer service experience. This notion of involving customers to jointly produce mutually valued outcomes is known as ‘value co-creation’, which highlights the importance of employee service delivery in organisational performance (Vargo & Lusch, 2006).

In elucidating S-D logic, Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2006) provided eight foundational premises (FPs). These premises are not a defined set of ‘rules’ but rather, they represent a “developing and collaborative effort to create a better marketing-grounded understanding of value and exchange” (Payne, Storbacka, & Frow, 2008, p. 84). Later, Lusch, Vargo and O’Brien (2007) expanded on the nine FPs and developed nine derivative propositions regarding the role of service in economic competition and competitive advantages under S-D logic. Of particular interest to this thesis, I acknowledge their sixth proposition: “providing service co-production opportunities and resources consistent with the customer’s desired level of involvement leads to improved competitive advantage through enhanced customer experience” (Lusch et al., 2007, p. 13). This proposition clearly depicts the notion of ‘value co-creation’ (and co-production) and highlights the important role that customer-contact employees play in organisational performance, which is an overarching theme of this thesis.

In the value co-creation process, a customer-contact employee’s service attitudes and behaviours are critical. For instance, value co-creation embraces the importance of relationship-building between employees and customers (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). In fact, it would be extremely difficult for the organisations to co-create the customer’s memorable experience without building rapport with them (Payne et al., 2008). In the relationship-building process, organisations may use tangible goods as the instruments to ‘connect’ with the customers; however, it is ‘people’ (i.e., customer-contact employees) and their attitudes and behaviours in service delivery, which helps to develop rapport with the customers and develop brand equity of the organisations (Biedenbach, Bengtsson, & Wincent, 2011). It is therefore important for organisations to understand what factors influence employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery and identify innovative ways to co-create value in the customer experience (Grace & Lo Iacono, 2015). The next
section presents these factors, which influence employee service delivery.

2.2.2 Factors that influence employee service delivery

While a variety of factors can influence employee service delivery, they can be categorised into two types: organisational and employee-related factors. Organisational factors are associated with organisational/managerial practices and can be divided into formal and informal factors. Formal organisational factors are related to organisational policy or guidelines, while informal organisational factors are more about ‘implicit rules’ or ‘shared norms’ within the organisation (Jaworski, 1988). Formal organisational factors include recruitment and selection processes (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996), rewards and recognition systems (Budhwar, Prowse, & Malhotra, 2007), training and development practices (Tsaur & Lin, 2004), empowerment systems (Chebat & Kollias, 2000) and organisational structures (Hartline, Maxham, & McKee, 2000). On the other hand, informal organisational factors mainly involve organisational culture. Parasuraman (1987) and Siehl (1992) are understood to be two of the earlier researchers who posited the effects of organisational culture on employee service delivery. This proposition was empirically tested and supported by subsequent researchers (e.g., Chang, 2006).

Employee-related factors also can be divided into two types: intra-organisational factors and dispositional factors. In examining intra-organisational factors, researchers often use social exchange theory, which depicts “a person, for whom another has done a service, is expected to express his gratitude and return a service when the occasion arises” (Blau, 1964, p. 4). Social exchange theory suggests that the degree to which organisations provide technical and mental support to the employees reflects the way employees serve the organisation or treat customers. Intra-organisational factors mainly include organisational support (Bell & Menguc, 2002; Yoon & Suh, 2003), organisational justice (Bettencourt, Brown, & MacKenzie, 2005; Bienstock, DeMoranville, & Smith, 2003) and employee perceptions of management commitment to quality (Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe, & Avci, 2003; Hartline & Ferrell, 1996).

Contrarily, dispositional factors are inherent in individual employees and can influence their service delivery. Traditionally, a theatrical perspective in service management and marketing research suggests that using ‘scripts’ could help organisations to ensure that employees are providing consistent customer service (Harris, Harris, & Baron, 2003). Scripts provide employees with a framework for what they should
do, how they should do it, in what sequence and in which situation (Lord & Kernan, 1987). Therefore, they help employees control service encounters and take legitimate actions in front of customers (Harris et al., 2003). However, overreliance on scripts often leaves only a little space for employees to display their unique individualities or emotions in their customer service (Harris et al., 2003). Furthermore, scripts discourage creativity or flexibility in service delivery (Louis, 1980). Employees’ dispositions come into play and add unique values to customer service. To examine employees’ dispositional factors, researchers often use personality theory (Goldberg, 1990) or value theory (Rokeach, 1973). Personality traits and cultural values are two of the most frequently discussed dispositional factors in influencing service encounters.

In the study investigating the effects of employee individual characteristics on their performance, Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic and Baddar (2006) found that employees' trait competitiveness (i.e., “enjoyment of interpersonal competition and the desire to win and be better than others”; Spence & Robert, 1983, p. 41) had significant impacts on their service delivery. The authors concluded that management should set higher goals and create competitive organisational environments for those employees who possess high trait competitiveness in order to facilitate their quality customer service. Furthermore, Ekinci and Dawes (2009) examined the effects of employee personality traits on the quality of interaction with customers (i.e., employee’s helpful behaviours, service-oriented attitudes and expertise) and found that extroversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness had positive and significant relationships with interaction quality.

In relation to cultural values, Kim and Lee (2009) investigated the relationships between national stereotyping, emotion and service behaviour. The data was collected from employees in Korean airline companies. Their study found that in a collectivistic culture, where strong in-group favouritism exists, employees tend to treat fellow customers better than foreign counterparts. Furthermore, Tsang (2011) investigated how Chinese cultural values impact on employee service attitudes in the context of the tourism and hospitality industry in Hong Kong. The purpose of this study was to examine and refine the structure and dimensions of a conceptualisation of Chinese cultural values developed by Yau (1988). Tsang (2011) found that five dimensions of cultural values (including attitude towards work, attitude towards people, moral discipline, status and relationship, and moderation) have strong implications for Chinese employee service delivery.

A number of factors influence employee service delivery, which makes the management of employee service delivery highly complex. It is not realistic to
simultaneously take all these factors into consideration when managing employee service delivery. The most simple and ideal practice may be one in which managers check each employee at every service encounter and correct their attitudes and behaviours as required to deliver quality customer service. However, due to the unique characteristics of service (e.g., intangibility, inseparability and high degree of involvement in the co-production process; Bowen, Siehl, & Schneider, 1989), it is impossible for managers to monitor or control every service encounter of every employee (Schneider & White, 2004). In this regard, an extant literature suggests that organisations are able to facilitate employee service attitudes and behaviours by promoting an organisational environment, which makes it explicit to the employees about ‘what the organisation expects and that it supports and rewards them in relation to the customer services’ (Salvaggio et al., 2007). In this regard, a myriad of literature suggests the concept of service climate that describes a cognitively stimulating environment that facilitates employee delivery of quality service to customers (Schneider, Gunnarson, & Niles-Jolly, 1994). Given the significance of strong service climate to effectively facilitate employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery, the next section examines this concept.

2.3 Service Climate

This section provides an overview of service climate as a key factor to effectively manage employee service delivery. First, the concept of organisational climate is discussed as a theoretical underpinning of service climate. Then, various effects on employees that service climate creates are reviewed. The antecedents of service climate are summarised, followed by the identification of the research gap in literature.

2.3.1 Organisational climate

Service climate is derived from a broader concept of organisational climate—a key theme in the field of organisational psychology. Organisational climate is generally conceptualised as employee perceptions of the practices and procedures that are rewarded, supported and expected in the organisation (Denison, 1996). On a daily basis, organisations transmit the signals of “what is important in the organisation” through various ‘cues’, which may include management support, reward and recognition systems (Schneider & White, 2004, p. 92). When such signals are consistently transmitted to the employees, they recognise ‘what is important’, ‘what is supported’ and ‘what is expected’
within the organisation. This perception helps employees make sense of their work environment and urges them to form certain attitudes and behaviours, which are required by the organisation (Koys & DecCotiis, 1991). In this light, if organisations consistently transmit the signal that ‘good customer service is important in this firm’, the employees are urged to form appropriate attitudes and behaviours to deliver quality service accordingly (Bowen & Schneider, 2014). Thus, the study of organisational climate seeks to examine how employee perceptions of internal organisational functioning can predict their actions and the desired outcomes (Schneider & White, 2004).

Historically, climate researchers adopted a ‘gestalt’ approach to examine the concept of organisational climate. That is, in assessing climate, researchers used a pre-determined set of variables, which includes leadership behaviours, job attributes, social-interpersonal relationships and characteristics of reward systems (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2011b). However, Schneider (1975) argued that such a ‘broad-brush’ measurement would not provide the data that accurately predict the specific outcome of interest. Instead, researchers should use the measurement that has the specific focus on what they want to predict, whereby they should assess “climate for something” (Schneider, 1975, p. 472). Built on his argument, many researchers have focused on different types of organisational climates based on various outcomes of interest (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013). Among them, service climate (Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998) and safety climate (Zohar & Luria, 2004) are the two most widely discussed in literature (Schneider et al., 2013). Since the focus of this thesis is employee customer service, a ‘climate for service’ or service climate is the most relevant type of climate in the current study.

2.3.2 Climate for service

Service climate (or ‘climate for service’) is a type of climate that particularly focuses on service excellence and quality customer service (Schneider, 1980). It is considered as ‘service orientation’ within an organisation (e.g., Lytle, Hom, & Mokwa, 1998) and can be defined as “employees’ perceptions that (a) practices and procedures were in place to facilitate the delivery of excellent service and (b) management rewarded, supported and expected excellent service” (Schneider & Bowen, 1993, p. 39). The concept has been extensively developed by Benjamin Schneider (Bowen & Schneider, 1985, 2014; Schneider, 1973, 2004; Schneider et al., 1998) and continually discussed in various service industry contexts such as banking (Schneider et al., 1998), health care (Greenslade & Jimmieson, 2011), information technology (Jia & Reich, 2012) and more
recently, in the hospitality industry (Tang & Tang, 2012).

Historically, climate study involves a huge debate on whether the concept should be treated as an individual-level or organisational-level construct (Schneider & White, 2004). The general consensus suggests that an individual employee’s subjective perception of working environment is called psychological climate (Baltes & Zhdanova, 2009). On the other hand, when a strong ‘agreement’ occurs in employee perceptions of organisational environment (i.e., psychological climate), those employees are likely to experience the same environment and share the same thoughts (Schneider & White, 2004). In that case, the researchers are able to claim that the climate exists at a organisational-level (i.e., organisational climate) (Schneider, Bowen, Ehrhart, & Holcombe, 2000; Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2011a).

While the recent study of service climate tends to treat the concept at an organisational level, many researchers treat it as an individual-level construct when they examine the effects of employees’ personal attributes on their perceptions of service climate (e.g., Auh, Menguc, Fisher, & Haddad, 2011; Salvaggio et al., 2007). In this thesis, I am interested in how employees’ personal values influence their perceptions of service climate. I treat perceptions of service climate as an individual-level construct. Furthermore, I adopt the term from past research (Auh et al., 2011), and I refer to this individual-level service climate as ‘perceived service climate’ or ‘perceptions of service climate’ throughout the rest of this thesis.

The early days of service climate research were characterised by investigations of the relationships between employee perceptions of service climate, customer-perceived service quality and/or customer satisfaction. This type of study linking the measure of service climate (e.g., internal organisational functioning) to an organisation’s external outcomes (e.g., customer-perceived service quality or customer satisfaction) is known as ‘linkage research’ (Pugh, Dietz, Wiley, & Brooks, 2002). In order to understand a number of positive outcomes that service climate brings to an organisation, it is important to acknowledge some of the key studies in linkage research, which are discussed in the following section.

### 2.3.3 Outcome of service climate

Linkage research examines the relationships between employee perceptions of service climate with those of customer service experiences and other outcome-related
variables (Wiley, 1996). The consensus on linkage research is that employee perceptions of service climate reflect customer perceptions of service quality, which ultimately leads to various other outcomes (e.g., customer satisfaction, loyalty) (Dean, 2004). The rationale of this ‘linkage’ is that both employees and customers are involved in the service delivery process and interact with each other both physically and psychologically (as briefly mentioned in Section 2.2.1). Through this interaction, they share impressions of the same experiences (e.g., place, time, atmosphere or even feeling). Thus, when an employee’s cognitive attachment to service climate reflects ‘how important good service is’ on their service delivery, customers observe these attitudes and behaviours and determine their perceptions of service quality (Schneider et al., 2009). Furthermore, compared to manufacturing products whereby customers use tangible cues to evaluate the quality of product (e.g., specification, shape, design or colour), service is generally intangible. Therefore, in order to offset a lack of tangible cues, customers rely on the service-oriented atmosphere that the service provider creates in their service delivery (Schneider, Parkington, & Buxton, 1980).

While traditional linkage research mainly focuses on an examination of the relationships between employee perceptions of service climate, customer evaluations of service quality and/or customer satisfaction (e.g., Schneider et al., 1980; Schneider et al., 1998), recent linkage research has focused on examining how employee perceptions of service climate influence their ‘specific attitudes or behaviours’ in service delivery (and how they influence subsequent outcomes). For instance, in the nursing industry, Greenslade and Jimmieson (2011) found that an employee’s perception of service climate was significantly related to his or her job efforts in technical care and extra-role behaviours, which led to better performance. Their study also revealed that these performances further created an impact on levels of patient satisfaction. Similarly, Paulin, Ferguson and Bergeron (2006) examined how employee perceptions of service climate influenced their organisational commitments and their subsequent service behaviours. Results of their study revealed that two dimensions of service climate (i.e., co-worker support and the perception of fair treatment) influenced employee service behaviours through affective organisational commitment.

These studies support the notion that employee perceptions of service climate are strong factors that influence their service attitudes and behaviours in service delivery, which in turn, bring about a number of positive effects on organisational performance. However, it should be noted that service climate does not act alone. Numerous factors
yield employee perceptions of service climate (Schneider et al., 2013). Understanding these ‘antecedents’ helps managers to effectively craft and promote service climate in a workplace. The next section therefore provides a review of various antecedents of service climate, which will also help to identify the first research gap to be addressed in this thesis.

2.3.4 Antecedents of service climate

Antecedents of service climate refer to the preconditions that have been shown to be necessary factors, without which it becomes exceedingly difficult for a strong and positive service climate perception to exist. This section provides two different types of service climate antecedents: organisational attributes and employee’s personal attributes.

2.3.4.1 Organisational attributes

Since service climate is conceptualised as employee perceptions of an internal organisational environment, many key, related factors of service climate are naturally associated with organisational attributes. Here, organisational attributes refers to organisation-inherited factors that influence employee perceptions of service climate (Schneider et al., 2013). Such antecedents include but are not limited to organisational support (Jia & Reich, 2012; Schneider et al., 1998), inter-team communication, organisational resources (e.g., technology) (Gracia et al., 2010; Salanova et al., 2005) and team flexibility or norms (de Jong, de Ruyter, & Lemmink, 2004, 2005). Among a number of antecedents, HR (Human Resource) practices and leadership are the two most widely recognised organisational attributes of service climate (Hong et al., 2013).

HR practices

HR practices are an influential antecedent of employee perceptions of service climate. These practices often communicate an organisation’s core values or strategic focus to employees by implicitly and explicitly setting up what is being rewarded, supported and expected through practices and policy statements (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). The strong link between HR practices and employee perceptions of service climate have been widely publicised. For instance, Little and Dean (2006) found that HR practices were the most significant factors to predict employee perceptions of service climate on top of various organisational antecedents (i.e., organisational customer orientation, managerial
practices and customer feedback and HR practices). Furthermore, by targeting the managers and employees of various service organisations (retail, beauty salons and restaurants), Liao and Chuang (2010) examined whether service climate moderates the relationships between HR practices and the market performance of business units. Their study identified that HR practices significantly influence employee perceptions of service climate, which leads to better market performance of the business unit.

More recently, Tang and Tang (2012) investigated the effect of service-oriented high-performance HR practices (i.e., HR practices designed to increase employee competence, motivation and support to provide quality service) on perceived service climate and service-oriented organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Their study revealed that HR practices significantly influence employee perceptions of service climate, which results in creating the positive impacts on service-oriented OCB. The authors suggest that organisations are able to better facilitate employee perceptions of service climate by developing HR practices with specific foci (e.g., delivery of quality service). This notion was later supported by Hong, Liao, Hu and Jiang (2013) who compared generic HR practices and service-oriented HR practices and found the latter had a stronger relationship with employee perceptions of service climate.

Leadership

Another key organisational attribute that strongly influences employee perceptions of service climate is leadership. The rationale for this relationship is that leaders play a key role in communicating an organisation’s commitment to customer service to their employees by demonstrating their attitudes and behaviours towards customer service as well as making sure that employee service delivery meets organisational standards (Salvaggio et al., 2007). This notion is supported by Kozlowski and Doherty (1989) who contend, an “individual’s immediate supervisor is the most salient, tangible representative of management actions, policies and procedures. Thus, the nature and quality of interactions with supervisors may be a key filter in the interpretations that provide the basis for subordinates’ climate perceptions” (p.547).

While a number of different types of leadership are discussed in the literature (e.g., transactional leadership, transformational leadership or authentic leadership), a type of leadership commonly discussed in service climate research is that which has a specific focus on customer service. For instance, in the context of supermarket departments,
Schneider et al. (2005) found the notable effects of service leadership (“the leadership that communicates a commitment to high levels of service quality”; p.1018) on employee perceptions of service climate. The authors contended that, in order to yield enhanced employee perceptions of service climate, it is important for the leaders to demonstrate their service-oriented attitudes and behaviours (i.e., recognition or appreciation of an employee’s high-quality service, removal of obstacles for better service delivery, establishment of clear benchmarks for service quality, creation and sustainment of service climate). This finding was partially supported by Steinke (2008) who found that leadership practices, particularly those focusing on supporting and rewarding the employee delivery of quality service, are a significant factor in predicting employee perceptions of service climate. Other studies depict the ‘spill-over’ effects of leader’s service orientation on employee service delivery. Adopting expectancy and social learning theory, Wieseke, Kraus, Alavi and Kessler-Thones (2011) found that a manager’s motivation to adapt the service technology to deliver quality service is actually ‘spilled over’ to employees and impacts their subsequent service behaviours. The authors concluded that leadership is a multiplier of employee motivation to deliver quality service. This study also confirmed that the manager’s motivation to deliver quality service and their ‘walk the talk’ are the crucial factors needed in order for the employees to perceive their organisations as truly service-oriented.

The review of these studies suggests that HR practices and leadership are two key antecedents of employee perceptions of service climate among other organisational factors (Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013). However, in contrast to these organisational attributes, we still have a very limited understanding of how individual employee’s ‘personal attributes’ affect their perceptions of service climate. Arguably, when employees form their service climate perceptions, they do not respond to their work environment ‘mechanically’ (D'Amato & Zijlstra, 2008). Rather, employees form their perceptions of the organisational environment through the ‘filter’ of their unique dispositions (Auh et al., 2011). For this reason, “perceptions of the same situation are likely to differ among individuals” (James et al., 1978, p. 795). That is, without understanding the effects of these employee dispositions on their perceptions of service climate, organisations may not be able to fully capitalise the positive effects of service climate.

Despite the rapid growth of workforce diversity in the workplace, climate researchers tend to overlook the effects of personal attributes on employee perceptions of
service climate and treat the study samples (e.g., employees or managers) as if they were a homogeneous group. To effectively promote service climate and achieve high service quality, it is crucial to understand how employee personal attributes influence their perceptions of service climate. To address this issue, some studies have examined the effects of employees’ personal attributes on their service climate perceptions. These studies are outlined in the next section.

2.3.4.2 Employee’s personal attributes

An employee’s personal attributes are the factors inherent in an individual employee that influence his or her way of perceiving organisational events. The review of literature in this realm identified that personality traits and cultural values are two commonly discussed personal attributes in relation to service climate.

**Personality traits**

Personality traits are an individual’s enduring dispositions that create consistent patterns of interaction in responding to the environment (Goldberg, 1993; Olver & Mooradian, 2003). They are insusceptible to parental social effects (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998; Riemann, Angleitner, & Strelau, 1997) and highly stable throughout one’s life (McCrae et al., 2000). In addition to some factors related to service delivery mentioned in Section 2.2.2, personality traits are known to influence employee job performance (Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991), organisational commitment (Spagnoli & Caetano, 2012) or OCB (Neuman & Kickul, 1998).

In relation to service climate research, Auh et al. (2011) examined the relationships between personality traits and employee perceptions of service climate. In addition to the direct relationships between personality and service climate, the authors examined the moderating role of employee-involvement climate strength on that relationship. In their study, service climate was treated as a dependent variable and analysed at an individual level. They found that employees who are conscientious, open to experience and agreeable, perceive service climate positively. The authors argued that those three personality types are in line with a nature of service climate. For instance, conscientious employees are likely to be more careful, thorough, responsible and hardworking (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Furthermore, employees who are open to experience are more motivated to
learn and adopt new ways to improve customer service while those who are agreeable are likely to pay more attention to customer problems and empathetic towards customer issues so that they are more willing to solve customer problems (Auh et al., 2011). As such, employees who possess those personality types more willingly acknowledge management’s efforts to promote a service climate (Auh et al., 2011). This study is one of the few that examined personality traits as an antecedent of service climate and designated individual-level service climate as an independent variable.

While other studies did not specifically examine the direct relationships between personality traits and employee perceptions of service climate, some researchers investigated how these two factors interact in an organisational context. For instance, Salvaggio et al. (2007) examined the relationships among manager’s personality, their service quality orientation and service climate perceptions by targeting both managers and employees in a supermarket chain. They found that the positive relationship between one of the manager’s personality traits (i.e., core self-evaluation – “fundamental appraisals of one’s worthiness, effectiveness and capability as a person”; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003, p. 304) and service quality orientation, influenced employee perceptions of unit-level service climate. Similarly, Lanjananda and Patterson (2009) examined the determinants of customer-oriented behaviours of nurses. Their study found that personality traits and service climate influence customer-oriented behaviours. Specifically, extraversion, emotional stability, conscientiousness and agreeableness all impacted directly or indirectly on nurses’ customer-oriented behaviours.

These past studies not only depict the relationships between personality traits and service climate perceptions but also suggest that the impacts on perceived service climate vary according to the types of personality traits (i.e., some trait types are stronger predictors of the variable of interest than others). From these findings, my contention is that other personal attributes, such as personal values, may also follow similar patterns and create variability in employee perceptions of service climate. In order to test this assumption, it becomes necessary to further interrogate the effects of other personal attributes on employee perceptions of service climate.

Cultural values

Cultural values are another personal attribute that has been discussed in previous service climate studies. While the concept of cultural values has proven to be complex, it
has been generally conceptualised as shared values and beliefs inherited from one’s society (Hofstede, 1980). Cultural values are taught and learnt from one’s society in the early stages of life and form our basic assumptions about how we see the world (Hendon, Hendon, & Herbig, 1998; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Since cultural values differ from one society to another (Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007), organisational researchers seek to examine how a set of particular values, unique to the society, influence employees in a workplace (Taras, Rowney, & Steel, 2009).

Similar to the case of personality traits, research examining the effects of cultural values on employee perceptions of service climate remains limited. Nevertheless, a few previous studies have investigated how cultural values interact with employee perceptions of service climate. For instance, Baytalskaya (2011) investigated how six different types of organisational climate (including service climate) influenced a variety of organisational and individual outcomes and how employees’ cultural values moderated these relationships. Three cultural value dimensions were derived from Hofstede’s cultural value conceptualisation (Hofstede, 1980). These include power distance, uncertainty avoidance and individualism/collectivism. Her study did not observe the moderating effects of employee cultural values on their perceptions of service climate; an outcome that did not support the hypothesised relationships. The author reasoned that the results were due to the methodological issues (e.g., sampling, measurement and range restrictions of sample) and the different definitions of service excellence held in different societies. Although her research was one of the few studies that examined the relationships between cultural values and perceived service climate, it highlighted the difficulty in capturing the complex effects of cultural values on employee perceptions of service climate. Furthermore, the results of her study also revealed that not all personal dispositions have strong effects on employee perceptions of service climate. This finding provides another rationale for examining the effects of other types of personal attributes on employee perceptions of service climate.

Previous studies have examined the relationships between some personal attributes and employee perceptions of service climate; however, the study in this realm is still inconclusive and needs further investigation. Furthermore, in contrast to personality traits and cultural values, research examining the effects of employee ‘personal values’ on their perceptions of service climate is lacking. While I will provide more detailed discussion of difference among personality traits, cultural values and personal values in Section 2.4.1, those concepts primarily differ from each other. In essence, personal values constitute the
most fundamental dispositional factor that acts as a ‘guiding principle’ of our lives (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Sagiv, Schwartz, & Arieli, 2011). Since employee perceptions of organisational environment often have motivational significance through the valuation process, its cognitive representations (e.g., service climate) are likely to be interpreted based on one’s personal values (Brown & Leigh, 1996). In this regard, employee perceptions of climate are “a product of personal values” (James, James, & Ashe, 1990, p. 41). Therefore, in order to fully capitalise the benefits of promoting service climate, understanding the impacts of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate is crucial. Built on this premise, this thesis seeks to examine the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate. Various types of ‘values’ are discussed in the literature such as cultural values (Hofstede, 1980), societal values (Mills, 1988), spiritual values (Reave, 2005) and many others. However, my particular interest is in employees’ personal values that fundamentally guide their perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in their daily lives, also known as ‘universal values’ (Schwartz, 1992). I investigate how these values affect the way employees interpret service climate in an organisation. Accordingly, I developed the first research question of this thesis:

**RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?**

This section provides the discussion of the service climate concept. The review of the literature revealed a scarcity in research examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate. Built on this research gap, I developed the first research question of this thesis. However, in order to address this research question, it is now important to understand the concept of personal values in more detail. The next section therefore provides a review of the personal values concept.

### 2.4 Personal Values

This section reviews the concept of personal values beginning with the definition of the concept. Next, the differences between personal values and other similar concepts are outlined. Three key characteristics of personal values are discussed, followed by a review of some seminal studies of personal values. Studies examining the effects of personal values on employees in an organisational context are then reviewed. Finally, the second research gap to be addressed in this thesis is identified.
2.4.1 Personal values definition and similar concepts

The concept of personal values is complex and notably contested, which often presents a number of challenges for researchers in understanding what personal values actually are. For instance, Kluckhohn (1951) described personal values as “a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action” (p.395). Rokeach (1973) defined values as “enduring beliefs that specific modes of conduct or end-states of existence are personally or socially preferable to opposite or converse modes of conduct or end-states of existence” (p.5). Later, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) conceptualised values as “cognitive representations of the important human goals or motivations about which people must communicate in order to coordinate their behaviour” (p.164).

Although the definitions of personal values vary from one author to another, these definitions share some commonalities. That is, values 1) are trans-situational beliefs, 2) have multiple elements (i.e., end-states and modes of conduct), 3) should be preferable and desirable to a person or society and 4) act as a guiding principle. Built on this premise, I define personal values as trans-situational beliefs about personally and socially desirable and acceptable end-states of existence or modes of conduct, which function as a standard or principle to guide our thoughts, attitudes and behaviours. In addition to personal values, the term, value system, is often used in many studies; this term refers to a composition or set of values hierarchically ordered by its relative importance to other values (Rokeach, 1973).

In line with personality traits and cultural values, personal values are one of the employee’s personal attributes. While personality traits and cultural values share some similarities with personal values, they are fundamentally different from each other. Unfolding the differences between these concepts is important to clarify the focus of this thesis. The following paragraphs clarify these differences.

Both personal values and personality traits influence the way we see the world phenomena (McCrae & Costa, 1995). However, while personal values have more evaluative components and reflect our beliefs of ‘what we ought to do’, personality traits are what a person naturally ‘is’ or instinctively ‘does’ (Parks & Guay, 2009). Our personal values are learnt and endorsed by societies, which reflect the way to fulfil one’s needs by adapting the socially desired way of thinking or behaving. However, personality traits are inherent characteristics of that person (Olver & Mooradian, 2003; Rokeach, 1973). In
essence, personal values are variables that influence one’s motivations to think and act, (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002) while personalities are descriptive variables that illustrate a person’s tendency to behave in a particular way (Parks, Feldman, & Bardi, 2014). That is, although personality traits can indicate the tendency for people to act in a particular way, it is only personal values that can explain how our conscious thoughts or intention leads to our actions (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994). Thus, an investigation of personal value effects is in the light of understanding employees’ fundamental motivations for their perceptions and behaviours towards customer service (Coelho & Sousa, 2013).

Cultural values, like personal values, are a type of human values. Personal values are the product of cultural values whereby both types of values simultaneously exist in all people (Schwartz, 1992, 1994b). This interrelationship between personal values and cultural values often makes it difficult to draw a clear line between the two concepts; yet, the difference between personal values and cultural values can be explained. Cultural values are ‘what one’s society values’ compared to ‘what an individual values’ (i.e., personal values) (Schwartz, 2011). This notion explains the phenomena that while a certain level of shared perception might exist among members of the same society (i.e., inter-cultural difference), fundamental values could vary from one person to another in the same society (i.e., intra-cultural difference) (Au & Cheung, 2004). In this thesis, my interest is to investigate the effects of personal values, which is the value type that is associated with what an ‘individual’ or ‘person’ values (rather than what the ‘country’ or ‘society’ values).

The next section provides three key themes that are important in understanding the nature of personal values. These themes include the origin of personal values (i.e., the antecedents of the personal values); how they change or stay over time; and what effects personal values bring about.

2.4.2 Characteristics of personal values

2.4.2.1 Antecedents of values

The first key theme is ‘where values come from’. To unfold the complex mechanism of personal values, many previous studies have strived to identify the antecedents of personal values. One of the key antecedents of personal values is the person’s unique experience (Rokeach, 1968; Schwartz, 1992). The term ‘unique experience’ indicates the notion that everyone in a society experiences the same (or similar) events; but, the way
they experience these phenomena or the way they perceive the outcomes of these phenomena varies for each individual (Schwartz, 1992). This difference influences individuals to prioritise ‘what is important’ and ‘what is not important’ and to create their unique hierarchical systems of personal values (Bubeck & Bilsky, 2004).

Other widely recognised antecedents of personal values are a person’s gender and age. Rokeach (1973) found a difference in personal value orientations between different genders. In his study, men embraced more social recognition, freedom or achievement values while women emphasised harmony, happiness or loving people as their key values. Although this result could vary from one society to another, depending on a gender role in the particular society (Hofstede, 1980), Rokeach’s (1973) study clearly illustrated that gender plays an important role in determining one’s personal values. In terms of age, Schwartz and Bardi (2001) observed a difference in important personal values between students and school teachers. Their study shows that the school teachers had higher conservative values (security, conformity and tradition) and lower open values (self-direction and stimulation) than students. Such a result implies that one’s role in society changes as one becomes older and this may influence ‘what is important’ and ‘what is not’ to each. These changes in perceptions or requirements to live in a society ultimately influence each person’s personal values (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001).

More recently, Hitlin and his colleagues (2004) summarised the macro-level antecedents of personal values. They suggested that some social factors (i.e., social class, occupation and education), family characteristics, immigration status, age cohort, religion and national/demographic factors influence the creation of one’s personal values. Discussing all these antecedents of personal values and clarifying the mechanism of personal value creation is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the argument here is that the creation of one’s personal values is largely influenced by unique personal experiences as well as the many other factors mentioned above. In other words, among all these diversity variables, personal values are considered to be the most fundamental factor that influences people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. In this light, understanding the effects of employee personal values is one of the most effective ways of addressing workforce diversity issues in relation to customer service.

2.4.2.2 Changeability and stability of values

A second theme commonly discussed in personal values research is associated with the changeability and stability of personal values. Once the fundamentals of personal
values (or value system) are developed in early life, they stabilise and act as guiding principles for one’s life (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). However, such personal values never become ‘completely’ stable as they continuously develop through a number of factors. In addition to the antecedents mentioned in the previous section, it is known that ‘experiencing critical events’ influences the modification of one’s personal values. These critical events may include economic crises, political upheavals or transformations of social conditions (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). For instance, Çileli (2000) found societal changes in Turkey led to a change in value orientations of Turkish youth towards more competitive and individualistic inclinations. Similarly, Schwartz and Bardi (2001) argued that people’s adaptive process to a different societal environment might result in change in their personal values.

Despite the notion of value changeability, it is argued that such changes do not occur overnight but often take a long time (Rokeach, 1973). One of the possible explanations for enduring nature of personal values is that people often experience discomfort while acquiring their personal values in their early days (such as from parents or teachers); therefore, they are not so willing to change them so readily (Jones & Gerard, 1967). For instance, despite a child’s own will, parents or teachers teach ‘what is right and wrong’ or ‘what is appropriate and inappropriate’ and facilitate a child to think and behave in a certain way. At this stage, a child needs to go through some discomfort in order to accept and acquire those values (often involving crying, frustration or anger). Thus, once a fundamental value system is developed in the early days of one’s life, people become more reluctant or unwilling to change these fundamental values (e.g., it is never easy to believe something is now ‘wrong’, which one has been believing to be ‘right’ for the past twenty years!) (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

This notion of value stability suggests that, while personal values are partially influenced by critical experiences in life, they fundamentally remain stable over a long period of time (Lusk & Oliver, 1974). Thus, although a number of organisations strive to establish effective socialisation strategies to instil organisational values into employee mindsets, such practices may not be able to fully change one’s basic personal value structure (Lusk & Oliver, 1974). This argument also supports the theoretical underpinnings of person-organisation (P-O) fit, which suggests that an organisation must seek potential employees whose personal values match those of the organisation (as personal values are difficult to change later on) (Judge & Bretz, 1992). Therefore, organisations are required to understand the relatively enduring nature of employee personal values that are
brought into the workplace and how these values influence various cognitive and behavioural aspects.

2.4.2.3 Consequences of values

The third theme involves ‘what personal values do’. As a guiding principle in one’s development, personal values have been recognised to influence various aspects of people’s lives. Specifically, many past studies reveal that personal values affect people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). The following paragraphs unfold the mechanism of how personal values influence these cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural aspects.

The research examining the link between personal values and people’s perceptions has been one of the major themes in the early days of value studies. For instance, Bruner and Goodman (1947) examined the difference in perceptions between groups of rich and poor children. They observed that the sizes of coins were perceived as larger than same-sized wooden discs, particularly by the poor children. They argued that the variance in perceptions between the two groups is derived from the difference in personal values and needs. From the result of their study, the authors concluded that personal values influenced the way children perceived the objects. The link between personal values and people’s perceptions has been widely discussed by many researchers (e.g., Carter & Schooler, 1949; Klein, Schlesinger, & Meister, 1951). The general consensus in previous study suggests that personal values influence people’s cognition processes, specifically the interpretation, selection and judgement of external stimuli (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987; Tajfel, 1957), as well as the importance they attach to them (Schwartz, Sagiv, & Boehnke, 2000). In this regard, one’s perception of objects, people or social events is considered to be a reflection of one’s dominant personal values (Postman, Bruner, & McGinnies, 1948; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). This notion is particularly important in this thesis, since personal values affect people as they interpret external stimuli and evaluate their importance (Brown & Leigh, 1996). Therefore, it is logical to assume that employees who embrace different personal value types have different cognitive attachment to the service orientation within the organisation, which in turn would create variability in service climate perceptions (James et al., 1990).

A number of other studies reported that personal values also influence people’s attitudes and behaviours. The effects of personal values on people’s attitudes and
behaviours are often discussed within a hierarchical structure of the human cognition system (Fulton, Manfredo, & Lipscomb, 1996; Rohan, 2000). Vinson et al. (1977) developed a cognitive hierarchy theory suggesting that human cognition can be ordered in a hierarchical way. According to this theory, personal values reside at the base of cognitive hierarchy. These personal values reflect social cognitions that facilitate one’s adaptation to certain environments through assimilation, accommodation, organisation and integration of the environmental information (Kahle, 1983). Since personal values are the most abstract form of social cognitions, they reflect the most fundamental characteristics of adaptation, which enables people to maintain their favourable position and optimal functioning in a given situation (Homer & Kahle, 1988). Those abstractions serve as ‘prototypes’ from which attitudes and behaviours are constructed (Vaske & Donnelly, 1999). In short, explicitly conceptualised personal values become the criteria or guidance for the interpretation, selection and judgement of external stimuli; therefore, attitudes and behaviours in certain situations are built on such solid underlying motivations as determined by one’s personal values (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Homer & Kahle, 1988). This notion of a hierarchical system of human cognition, which links personal values, attitudes and behaviours, is known as a value-attitude-behaviour model (Allen, Hung Ng, & Wilson, 2002; Milfont, Duckitt, & Wagner, 2010). Furthermore, this mechanism provides the theoretical underpinnings to argue that personal values are significant factors that influence employee service delivery.

This section outlined the three key themes commonly discussed in the personal values literature. Personal values are derived from a number of factors and strongly influence people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. This thesis is built on this premise and argues that personal values influence employee perceptions and behaviours in customer service. However, in examining the concept of personal values in the current study, it is important to understand how researchers have developed the concept and how the concept is studied today. The following section provides the historical perspective of personal values studies.

2.4.3 Key studies in personal values

The origin of personal values research dates back to the 1920s (Tsirogianni & Gaskell, 2011). In the early days of personal value research, the central theme of discussion was to identify the universal value types that exist among all people in all societies (Rohan, 2000). Eduard Spranger (1928) is recognised as one of the pioneers of
personal value studies. He postulated that human psychological aspects in its entirety could be best understood by examining one’s personal values. In understanding values, Spranger (1928) posited that limited numbers of personal values exist in all societies. He adopted a ‘gestalt’ approach and developed five different types of ‘individuation’ that all people possess, to varying degrees, usually with one dominating. These individualities (or value types) include theoretical, economic, social, political and religious types. As an example, for someone who strongly emphasises the importance of ‘love of people’, he or she would be said to possess a high degree of ‘social value type’ on top of other value types. Spranger significantly contributed to the subsequent study of values by developing the first value questionnaire, *The Study of Values*.

Since Spranger’s work, a number of subsequent researches advanced the study of personal values and developed sound instruments to effectively assess the concept. By the 1960s, the study of personal values had become very popular in most disciplines in the social sciences (Hechter, 1993). After the 1980s, interest in personal values studies became more diverse, with the stability of personal values (e.g., Lubinski, Schmidt, & Benbow, 1996; Rokeach & Ball-Rokeach, 1989), methodological advancement (England & Lee, 1974; Maznevski, Gomez, DiStefano, Noorderhaven, & Wu, 2002) and many other aspects being investigated. Among a number of researchers, Schwartz (1992, 1994b) is recognised as the most widely known scholar in the recent study of personal values (Krystallis & Vassallo, 2012; Ralston et al., 2011). The following section provides a summary of his seminal works, which became the cornerstone of recent personal values research.

### 2.4.3.1 Schwartz value survey

Built on the personal value conceptualisations developed by earlier researchers, Shalom Schwartz (1992, 1994b) conceptualised personal values as desirable and trans-situational goals that serve as guiding principles in one’s life. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) proposed that personal values are derived from one or more ‘three universal human requirements’. These requirements include: 1) individual’s needs as biological organisms; 2) the requirements for social interaction or interpersonal coordination; and 3) the societal demands for survival and welfare needs of groups. According to Schwartz and Bilsky (1987), every human being must deal with these basic requirements throughout his or her life. In order to meet these requirements, people must think, communicate and plan how to respond to and how to fulfil them. Through cognitive developments and socialisation,
individuals are able to represent those requirements as conscious goals or values to hold. In short, Schwartz (1992, 1994b) suggests that personal values are motivational goals and the mode of conduct to fulfil the universal requirements of all human beings. Built on this theory, Schwartz and his colleagues derived a typology of personal value content domains that manifests in individual needs, social motives and social institutional demands (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987).

Schwartz and his colleagues developed Schwartz’s Value Survey (SVS) (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). By targeting teachers and students and using smallest space analysis, Schwartz found that 56 values universally exist in all societies (one more value was added later Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004). Among them, 45 values are found to have stable meanings across countries (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a, 2005). These items were used to assess personal values (and later cultural values as well). At a personal level, Schwartz identified the ten basic values that universally exist in all societies. A typology of these values includes universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction; an explanation of these ten values is summarised in Table 2.1. Since the concept of cultural values is beyond the scope of this thesis, no explanation is included.

Table 2.1 Schwartz's Universal Values Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type &amp; Definition</th>
<th>Exemplary values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong>: Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources</td>
<td>Social power, authority, wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement</strong>: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards</td>
<td>Successful, capable, ambitious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedonism</strong>: Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself</td>
<td>Pleasure, enjoying life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stimulation</strong>: Excitement, novelty and challenge in life</td>
<td>Daring, varied life, exciting life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-direction</strong>: Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring</td>
<td>Creativity, curious, freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universalism</strong>: Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature</td>
<td>Broad-minded, social justice, equality, protecting the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benevolence</strong>: Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact</td>
<td>Helpful, honest, forgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tradition</strong>: Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide</td>
<td>Humble, devout, accepting my portion in life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conformity</strong>: Restraint of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms</td>
<td>Politeness, obedient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong>: Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships and of self</td>
<td>Honouring parents and elders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Schwartz (1994a)
Schwartz’s conceptualisation of personal values is built on a solid and comprehensive theoretical basis and his circumplex structure illustrates the relationship among personal values that serve individual interests, group interests and combined interests (see Figure 2.2). If two personal values are close to each other, they are more interrelated and share similar characteristics. On the other hand, when two personal values are separated (or on opposite sides of the structure), these values are in conflict with each other (Tsirogianni & Gaskell, 2011). For example, in the figure, achievement and power values are highly interrelated as they embrace the pursuit of individual interests; however, these values conflict with universalism and benevolence that serve collective interests. Therefore, in research, conceptually opposite poles of personal values are considered to create counteractive effects on outcome variables.

**Figure 2.2 Schwartz’s Personal Values Circumplex Model**

Adopted from Schwartz (1992)

The ten basic personal values can be further categorised into four higher-level value types based on their similarities and differences. *Self-transcendence* involves universalism and benevolence and refers to the extent to which one is motivated to
embrace the welfare of others. Contrarily, *Self-enhancement* includes hedonism, achievement and power and refers to the extent to which one is motivated to embrace one’s own interest even at the expense of others. *Conservation* involves conformity, tradition and security and refers to the extent to which one is motivated to maintain the status quo and the certainty, which provides the relationship within the groups, while *Openness to Change* includes self-direction and stimulation, with hedonism being shared with *Self-enhancement*. This value type relates to the extent to which individuals follow their own cognitive and emotional predilections, even if this happens in quixotic ways. The explanation of these value types is summarised in Table 2.2. While many past studies have adopted ten basic values to assess personal values, the researchers commonly face the issue of scale reliability (Perrinjaquet, Furrer, Valette-Florence, Cestre, & Usunier, 2007). Specifically, in many studies, ten basic values were found to be significantly inter-correlated and the reliability score of each value was often low, which resulted in unreliable regression coefficients (Schwartz, 2009). On the contrary, the use of higher-level value types was more likely to provide higher scale reliability; therefore, researchers have usually adopted higher-level personal value types when assessing the impact of personal values on the outcomes of interest (Ralston, Holt, Terpstra, & Kai-Cheng, 2008; Ralston et al., 2011).

**Table 2.2 Schwartz’s Four Higher-order Value Types and Explanations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Explanations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>Indicates the extent to which one is motivated to promote the welfare of others (both close friends and distant acquaintances) and nature. The relevant basic value types involves universalism and benevolence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>Indicates the extent to which one is motivated to promote self-interest, even when they are potentially at the expense of others. The relevant basic value types includes hedonism, achievement and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Indicates the extent to which one is motivated to preserve the status quo and the certainty that it provides in relationships with others, institutions and traditions. The relevant basic value types involves conformity, tradition and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>Indicates the extent to which a person is motivated to follow his/her own intellectual and emotional interests in unpredictable and uncertain ways. The relevant basic value types includes self-direction and stimulation, with hedonism being shared with self-enhancement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adopted from Ralston et al. (2011)

Schwartz’s conceptualisation and measures have been widely adopted in the study of personal values (Pan, Rowney, & Peterson, 2012; Sagiv et al., 2011), particularly in the field of sociology and social psychology (e.g., Arthaud-Day, Rode, & Turnley, 2012; Feather & McKee, 2012; Tsirogianni & Gaskell, 2011). However, despite the growing
interest of Schwartz's conceptualisation (Ralston et al., 2011), its application to business has been very limited, particularly in the service industry context. As noted earlier, among a number of industries, the service industry particularly emphasises the importance of the employee-customer interface, which is the moment when different personal values interact each other. Given the sound validity of Schwartz’s conceptualisation of personal values, it is important to further interrogate its applicability to the service delivery context (Coelho & Sousa, 2013).

This section provided a historical perspective of personal values study. I also discussed Schwartz’s (1992, 1994b) seminal works considered to be the most widely used personal value conceptualisation in recent studies. However, prior to adopting Schwartz’s conceptualisation, it is important to understand how his conceptualisation has been used in the organisational context. The following section therefore reviews the studies that have investigated personal value effects on employees using Schwartz’s conceptualisation.

2.4.4 Effects of personal values on employees’ attitudes and behaviours

While the number of studies is limited, the extant literature has adopted Schwartz’s conceptualisation and examined the effects of personal values on employees’ attitudes and behaviours in an organisational context. Among several concepts discussed in relation to personal values, OCB and organisational commitment have been the two most widely discussed. These factors are theoretically related to employee perceptions of service climate as well as their subsequent service delivery (Bowen & Schneider, 2014); therefore, reviewing these studies not only provides a general insight into personal values effects but also helps to postulate the possible relationships between personal values and key variables in this thesis (the detailed discussions of hypothesis development will be provided in Section 2.5.2).

OCB refers to an employee’s discretionary behaviour that is not typically recognised or rewarded, but nevertheless, improves organisational functioning (Organ, 1988). When employees engage in OCBs, they go the ‘extra mile’ beyond their job descriptions; therefore, OCB has been recognised as the crucial factor in delivering better customer service and excelling in organisational performance (Tang & Tang, 2012). In relation to personal values, Karabatı and Ucanok (2013) investigated the effects of personal values, work centrality and organisational commitment on different types of OCBs. The results of their study revealed that employees who strongly embrace the Self-transcendence value
type have a positive relationship with OCBs, specifically related to helping and caring for others or preventing the occurrence of work-related issues. Similarly, Seppälä et al. (2012) explored the effects of employee personal values on their change-oriented OCBs by integrating group identification and a sense of power (i.e., how much employees perceive they possess the power in their group/unit). Their study found that *Openness to change* personal value type was related to change-oriented OCBs. The findings of these studies suggest that personal values have implications for employee OCBs when characteristics of personal values share some commonalities with the types of OCBs (e.g., *Self-transcendence* and ‘helping OCBs’ and *Openness to change* and ‘change-oriented OCBs’).

In relation to service delivery, the studies suggest that organisations are able to facilitate their employees to engage in certain types of OCBs by assigning job tasks that are in line with the particular value types they embrace.

Organisational commitment is another concept often discussed with personal values. It refers to the degree to which employees identify themselves with their organisations and it is a function of how much the employees select to adopt the values of organisation (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Employees with high organisational commitment willingly accept and support organisational objectives and act in a manner to promote them, which ultimately affects their service delivery (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004). In relation to personal values, Cohen (2011) found that more traditional values (i.e., tradition, conformity, security, power, benevolence and universalism) have a positive relationship with all types of commitments, while less traditional values (i.e., hedonism, stimulation, achievement and self-direction) have weak or negative relationships with organisational commitment. Since ‘organisational commitment’ is often built on an employee’s willingness to develop a long-term, stable and meaningful relationship with their organisation and its members, the author reasoned this relationship as the employees who embrace traditional values being more likely to have higher organisational commitment. This idea is partially supported by Fischer and Smith (2006) who observed that conservation value type moderated the relationship between the perception of procedural justice and organisational commitment. These studies provide a valuable insight into personal values effects on employee attitudes and behaviours, which are conceptually related to their perceptions or behaviours toward customer service. However, we still have a limited understanding of how personal values create a ‘direct’ impact on such variables.

A limited number of studies have examined the relationships between personal values and attributes related to employee service delivery. Sousa and Coelho (2011)
investigated how an employee’s personal values influence his or her creativity in customer service. In this study, the authors referred to creativity as the development of ideas of service products or procedures that are potentially useful to the service provider. The data were collected from customer-contact employees in the banking industry. Sousa and Coelho’s study revealed that the Openness to change value type had more positive effects on a service employee’s creativity than the Conservation type. This result highlights the notion suggested by a previous study: people who are less curious and more conventional tend to be narrow-minded and less creative (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Their study also found the Self-enhancement value type had more positive effects on creativity than Self-transcendence, which implies that customer-contact employees who embrace their own success, social power, fame and control over others, have a more creative mindset while those who restrain their own concerns and promote the wellbeing of others are not. This study is one of the first empirical studies that provided a valuable insight into personal value effects on the attributes that closely related to employee service delivery. However, this study did not test its subsequent effects on employees’ actual service delivery.

Later, Coelho and Sousa (2013) conducted another study that examined the relationship between personal values and customer-orientation, which is defined as “employee’s tendency or predisposition to meet customer needs in an on-the-job context” (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, & Licata, 2002, p. 111). Similar to their previous study, data were collected from customer-contact employees in the banking industry. The authors found that Self-enhancement value type had significant and negative impacts on employee customer-orientation. The authors reasoned that this result was due to the incongruence between the nature of Self-enhancement value type (i.e., care for self) and customer orientation (i.e., care for others). Their study also demonstrated that Conservation value type did not have a major effect on an employee’s customer-orientation (the relationship was positive only when employee job satisfaction was high). The authors contended this result was due to the conflict between the nature of Conservation value type and the characteristics of bank employee’s jobs, which requires a high level of creativity and innovation. However, this contention was not tested in their study. This study provided another insight into the ways in which personal values influence the attributes closely related to employee service delivery.

The studies conducted by Coelho and Sousa (2013; 2011) provided valuable insights into which personal values influence some factors that potentially influence employee service delivery (i.e., creativity and customer orientation). However, what is
missing in this realm is how personal values actually influence employee service delivery. In short, while the previous research examines the effects of personal values on employees’ tendency to develop innovative ideas for products or service, and employees’ predisposition to care about customers, no study has ever addressed the direct relationships between personal values and employees’ actual service delivery. Therefore, further investigation is required to understand how personal values influence employee perceptions and delivery of customer service.

In addition to a lack of study examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate, the review of literature also revealed a dearth of studies that examine the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. In Section 2.3, I discussed how employee perceptions of service climate influence their service delivery. Therefore, it is theoretically and conceptually possible to examine personal value effects on employee service delivery through their perceptions of service climate. However, as we saw in this section, personal value study in the realm of customer service is limited (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). Moreover, employee service delivery is not only influenced by their perceptions of service climate but also, personal attributes have direct impacts on employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery (as discussed in Section 2.2.2.).

Given this notion, I consider examining the personal value effects solely on employee perceptions of service climate (and assuming its indirect effects on employee service delivery) does not provide a whole picture. It is therefore worthwhile to explore also the direct relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. In this way, this thesis strives to provide a more comprehensive insight into how personal values influence employee customer service. Built on this premise, the second research question is generated as below.

**RQ2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?**

This study examines these research issues in the context of the hospitality industry. Hospitality service essentially involves a high degree and frequency of employee-customer interactions (Lovelock et al., 2009). Furthermore, customers often expect employees to demonstrate hospitable attitudes and behaviour (i.e., those that ensure the happiness of the guests) (Pizam & Shani, 2009). I posit that the unique nature of hospitality service provides a research context in which I can observe the effects of employee personal value
The above sections in this chapter have provided a review of relevant literature in three areas: service delivery, service climate and personal values. The research gaps in the literature have been identified. Given these research gaps, I have developed two research questions to be addressed in this thesis. The context of this thesis is defined. The next section provides a summary of the identified research gaps and research questions. Subsequent to these, the research aim, a conceptual framework and relevant hypotheses for this thesis are developed.

2.5 Development of Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

2.5.1 Summary of research gaps, research questions and conceptual framework

The critical review of key literature in service delivery, service climate and personal values revealed two research gaps. First, research examining the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate is limited. The rapid growth of workforce diversity in many organisations has imposed an array of challenges on managers to effectively promote service climate. Employees come from different backgrounds and they have different predispositions (or ‘lens’) through which to see world phenomena (Schwartz, 1992). Since employees interpret the organisational environment through their unique dispositions (Gavin, 1975), their perceptions of service climate would vary (James et al., 1978). In order to effectively promote service climate in a workplace and bring about a number of organisations’ desirable outcomes (e.g., improved service quality, customer satisfaction or customer loyalty), it is crucial for the organisations to understand how employees’ personal attributes affect their perceptions of service climate.

Limited research has examined the effects of some personal attributes on employee perceptions of service climate. However, in contrast to personality traits and cultural values, a study examining the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate is largely absent. Personal values are recognised as the ‘guiding principles’ of our lives, which fundamentally influence employees’ various cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural aspects in a workplace (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). Furthermore, personal values are built on a number of other diversity attributes (e.g., age, gender, culture, education and many others); therefore, they are considered as the most ‘fundamental’ attribute of workforce diversity (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004). An investigation of the impact of personal value on employee perceptions of service climate is therefore crucial to craft and sustain strong
service climate in a workplace. In order to address this research gap, I developed the first research question to be addressed in this thesis:

**RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?**

Answering this research question will be in light of how personal values influence employee perceptions of service climate. However, in order to unfold a complex mechanism of employee perception of service climate, solely understanding the effects of personal values may not be sufficient. It may require a more holistic approach to examine how personal values interact with other key factors in relation to perceived service climate. In this regard, the recent review of service climate study (Bowen & Schneider, 2014) suggests that investigating the interaction effects between organisational factors and an employee’s personal factors (e.g., personal values) provides a better understanding of service climate antecedents. Following their suggestion, this thesis also seeks to investigate the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between key organisational factors and employee perceptions of service climate. Given HR practices and service leadership are known to be two key organisational antecedents of perceived service climate (see Section 2.3.4), I incorporate them into this thesis.

Second, the review of literature also revealed a lack of study examining the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. While the extant service literature suggests that the use of scripts facilitate employees to consistently deliver a reasonable degree of customer service, scripts leave only little room for them to display their individualities or emotions to deliver unique or flexible customer service (Louis, 1980). In the service industry, which involves higher degrees and frequencies of employee-customer interactions, such as the hospitality industry, employees’ unique personal attributes (or their ‘personal touch’) act as important factors to add value to a customer’s service experience. Arguably, it is important to understand how those personal attributes influence employee service delivery. Nevertheless, research in this realm has been considerably scarce. While a few studies offer empirical evidence of the effects of personal values on the attributes closely associated with employee service delivery (i.e., creativity and customer-orientation) (Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Sousa & Coelho, 2011), no study has ever examined the direct relationship between personal values and employee service delivery. Therefore, filling this research gap will provide a better understanding of how personal values play an important role in employee service delivery, which ultimately contributes to unfolding the complex mechanism of customer service. To address this
research issue, I developed the second research question as below.

**RQ 2: What are the relationships between employees' personal values and their service delivery?**

The aim of this thesis is therefore to examine the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery. Based on the two research questions and research aim, I developed the conceptual framework for this thesis (see Figure 2.3). In this thesis, I undertake two studies to address the research questions respectively (Chapter 3 provides more detailed information about the research design of this thesis). The first study seeks to quantitatively examine the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate, as well as the moderating effects of personal values on the relationship between HR practices, service leadership and employee perceptions of service climate. The second study qualitatively explores the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. For the first study, a series of hypotheses are developed, which are outlined in the subsequent section.

![Figure 2.3 Conceptual Framework for This Thesis](image-url)
2.5.2 Hypotheses development

2.5.2.1 HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate

In this section, I develop a series of hypotheses that address the first research question of this thesis (i.e., *what are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?*). Before examining the effects of personal values, I will first confirm the widely accepted relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Confirming these relationships is important to test the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between these two organisational variables and perceived service climate. It also helps to further validate the findings from previous service climate studies in the context of the hospitality industry.

The first hypothesis is associated with the relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate. As noted in Section 2.3.4, a myriad of literature suggests that HR practices have a strong implication for employee perceptions of service climate (de Jong et al., 2005; Salanova et al., 2005). Underlying reasons for this relationship are that those practices often communicate the organisation’s core values or strategic focus of customer service to employees by clarifying what is being rewarded, supported and expected (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). The key components of HR practices often include training, job description, result-oriented appraisal, employee participation and internal mobility (e.g., Liao & Chuang, 2010; Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007). Based on a number of previous studies demonstrating the positive relationship between HR practices and an employee’s strong perception of service climate (e.g., Liao & Chuang, 2010; Rogg, Schmidt, Shull, & Schmitt, 2001), I hypothesise:

**H1: HR practices have a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate**

The second hypothesis is related to the relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate. The strong relationship between service leadership and employee perceptions of service climate is also widely acknowledged. As discussed in Section 2.3.4, the rationale for this relationship is that the leaders often play a mediator role to communicate an organisation’s commitment to quality customer service to the employees (Salvaggio et al., 2007). Therefore, leadership focusing on “recognising and appreciating high quality service, removing obstacles to service delivery, setting clear standards for service quality” often influence employee perceptions of service climate positively (Schneider et al., 2005, p. 1019). The key components of service leadership
frequently include both a leader’s visionary aspects (service vision) and a leader’s behaviour to help, assist and care for employees to enable them to deliver quality service to the customers (customer-oriented servant leadership) (Lytle et al., 1998; Schneider et al., 2005). Built on a number of past studies suggesting a positive relationship between strong service leadership and an employee’s high perception of service climate (e.g., Salvaggio et al., 2007; Schneider et al., 2005), I hypothesise:

_H2: Service leadership has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate_

2.5.2.2 Personal values and service climate perception

My review of the literature indicated that research efforts to date have not investigated the relationships between personal values and perceived service climate. Therefore, I developed hypotheses based on logically anticipated relations considering the nature of the hospitality industry, the theory of personal values and the characteristics of service climate. In this thesis, I adopted the four higher-orders of Schwartz’s conceptualisation of personal values types (i.e., Self-transcendence, Self-enhancement, Conservation and Openness to change) due to the popularity and sophistication of the conceptualisation (e.g., Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Karabati & Uçanok, 2013).

In Schwartz’s circumplex structure (see Figure 2.2), the effects of personal value types on perceptions are likely to be different in direction. When one value type has a positive relationship with perceived service climate, another value type should have the opposite directional effect. In line with Schwartz’s (1992) value theory, the following sections develop a series of hypotheses predicting the relationships between four personal value types and employee perceptions of service climate, as well as the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate.

_Self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement and perceived service climate_

The key mission of the hospitality industry is to provide quality customer service. Achieving this mission requires not only great care and concern for customer needs but also employee needs (i.e., internal service). Self-transcendence captures not only the concern and welfare of people with whom an individual has frequent contact (benevolence)
but also people more broadly (*universalism*) (e.g., colleagues and customers Schwartz, 1992). As the motivational goal of *Self-transcendence* is congruent with the key theme of service climate (i.e., the delivery of courteous service), employees with higher *self-transcendence* typically feel more motivated, encouraged and supported in a workplace wherein a strong service climate exists. Thus, it makes sense that employees with higher *self-transcendence* would have a positive perception of service climate.

In contrast, people with higher *self-enhancement* embrace power, achievement and *hedonism* and are motivated to pursue their own interests and achieve success by manipulating people or available resources (Sagiv et al., 2011). However, since the hospitality service requires substantial team effort, the hospitality organisations tend to emphasise employee collaboration (León-Darder & Villar-Garcia, 2011). Furthermore, performance in the hospitality industry is often indirectly measured through customer feedback or reports from other employees. In such a situation, it is difficult not only to freely pursue one's own interests but also to achieve quantitative results. Such conflicts between the nature of *self-enhancement* and hospitality jobs is likely to become a cause of stress and frustration in a workplace. Therefore, it follows that the *self-enhancement* value type would negatively relate to employee perceptions of service climate. I articulate these opposing relationships as the following hypotheses:

**H3**: *Self-transcendence has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate*

**H4**: *Self-enhancement has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate*

The current study further examines the relationships between personal values types and perceived service climate by dividing the employees into two groups (e.g., the group with high *self-transcendence* vs. the group with low *self-transcendence*). The purpose of this investigation is to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between personal value and perceived service climate from an alternative perspective (by looking at the group differences). H3 and H4 hypothesised that while *self-transcendence* has a positive, *self-enhancement* has a negative relationship to employee perceptions of service climate. Built on these propositions, I hypothesised:

**H3a**: *Employees with high self-transcendence perceive service climate higher than employees with low self-transcendence*
**H4a:** Employees with high self-enhancement perceive service climate lower than employees with low self-enhancement

Another set of hypotheses is associated with examining the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. H1 and H2 postulate that HR practices and service leadership are positively related to employee perceptions of service climate. Hence, if self-transcendence also positively relates to service climate (H3), it should strengthen the relationship between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. In contrast, the negative effect of self-enhancement on perceived service climate (H4) should weaken those relationships:

**H3b:** The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high

**H3c:** The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high

**H4b:** The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high

**H4c:** The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high

**Conservation vs. openness to change and perceived service climate**

Hospitality jobs involve high levels of employee-customer interaction and customer-contact and employees often need to deal with unforeseen situations. Therefore, it is important for employees to clearly understand ‘what they are expected to do’ in order to achieve organisational goals. When organisations successfully align training, leadership and reward systems with the mission of service excellence, these systems would offer strong guidance on ‘how to act and behave’ in the organisation (Ford, Wilderom, & Caparella, 2008). Since people with higher conservation embrace tradition, conformity and
security as their guiding principles and are motivated to maintain the certainty that the status quo provides in relationships with others (Schwartz, 1992), a strong service climate helps such employees to feel some degree of cognitive certainty and ensures conformity within the workplace. In turn, these employees demonstrate higher levels of OCBs (Arthaud-Day et al., 2012) and commitment to the workplace (Cohen, 2009; Cohen & Liu, 2011). Furthermore, employees with higher conservation often demonstrate a willingness to fulfil customer requests (Han, Kim, & Srivastava, 1998); therefore, the positive relationships between conservation and customer-orientation are acknowledged (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). Built on these premises, for employees with high levels of conservation, service climate may act as the cornerstone to guide their actions, maintain certainty and provide the confidence to deliver a quality service.

Contrarily, openness to change involves self-direction and stimulation and embraces the pursuit of one’s own intellectual and emotional interests in unpredictable and uncertain ways (Schwartz, 1992). People with high openness to change seek to alter or modify the current system to fulfil their self-interests (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). They strongly support independence, freedom and self-determination of personal goals and are likely to be frustrated or stressed when they need to adopt an existing system. This notion has been partially supported by past studies. For example, Karabati and Ucanok (2013) found that the openness to change value type relates to OCB negatively. Other studies found openness to change is negatively related to affective commitment to the organisation (e.g., Fischer & Smith, 2006; Glazer, Daniel, & Short, 2004). In essence, employees with high openness to change tend to be frustrated in a workplace with strong policies or procedures (e.g. delivery of quality service), which they cannot change easily. To consistently deliver excellent customer service to the guests, many hotels strive to develop strong policies or practices. Furthermore, in the hotel system, customer-contact employees are positioned at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy and it is very difficult for them to change existing systems or procedure. For this reason, openness to change is anticipated to relate negatively to employee perceptions of service climate:

**H5: Conservation has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate**

**H6: Openness to change has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate**
In a similar manner to *self-transcendence* and *self-enhancement*, the current study also examines the group differences between high and low *conservation* and *openness to change* value types in relation to perceived service climate. Since H5 and H6 hypothesised that *conservation* positively and *openness to change* negatively relates to the employee perceptions of service climate, I articulate the group differences of these value types as:

**H5a:** *Employees with high conservation perceive service climate higher than employees with low conservation*

**H6a:** *Employees with high openness to change perceive service climate lower than employees with low openness to change*

Just as in the case of the other two value types, *conservation* and *openness to change* are expected to moderate the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Built on the developed hypotheses H5 and H6, it is expected that *conservation* should strengthen the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate while *openness to change* should weaken those relationships. As such, the following hypotheses are developed:

**H5b:** *The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high.*

**H5c:** *The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high.*

**H6b:** *The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high.*

**H6c:** *The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high.*
2.6 Summary

This chapter provided a critical review of the literature under three themes: service delivery, service climate and personal values. First, I reviewed the concept of service delivery and highlighted the importance of customer-contact employees in determining customer evaluation of service quality. Then, the concept of service climate was discussed as the key factor that influences employee service attitudes and behaviours. Lastly, the concept of personal values was reviewed as the key personal attributes that influence employee perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in a workplace. My review of the literature revealed a lack of research examining personal value effects on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery. Built on the gaps in the literature, I developed two research questions, research aims and a conceptual framework. In this thesis, I undertake two studies to address these research questions respectively. This section provided a series of hypotheses to be addressed in the first study. The next section introduces the methodology and methods used in this thesis.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter provided a review of the literature relevant to the theoretical foundations of this thesis. It identified the main research gaps in the literature and stated the research issues to be addressed. Specifically, the aim of this thesis is to understand the impact of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery. In this chapter, I provide an overview of research methodology and methods employed to address the research aim. The outline of this chapter is depicted in Figure 3.1. First, I discuss my research paradigm. Then, an overview of the research strategy and the research design is outlined. Subsequently, ethical considerations related to this thesis are discussed, followed by the summary of this chapter, thus bridging to chapter 4 and 5, which present and discuss the study results.

![Figure 3.1 Structure of Chapter 3](image)
3.2 Research Paradigm

3.2.1 Ontology, epistemology and methodology

This thesis is guided by the post-positivist paradigm and seeks to examine the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and service delivery. This section begins with a discussion of the three philosophical perspectives that construct my research paradigm. Then, a detailed explanation of post-positivism is provided.

All scientific research is guided by the philosophical perspective of the researcher, which is often called the ‘research paradigm’ (Babbie, 2010; Veal, 2011). The term is defined as “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choice of method but in ontological and epistemological fundamental ways” (Guba & Lincoln, 2004, p. 105). “Paradigmatic positions permeate the entire research process from its conceptualisation to operationalization and finally to its communication” (Robinson, Solnet, & Breakey, 2014, p. 67). The research paradigm is the fundamental framework that guides the researcher to conduct research and determines the way in which the knowledge is constructed (Jennings, 2010). A research paradigm is built on the researcher’s ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ontology refers to a researcher’s perspective of existing objects or concepts in the real world (Neuman, 2011). In general, a researcher’s ontological view is located somewhere along the continuum between realism and relativism (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Realism refers to the belief that there is only one truth (or reality) in the world and the researcher seeks to identify the universal law. On the other hand, relativism is associated with the belief that social phenomena can be constructed by a number of realities and involves multiple underlying themes or meanings in the background (e.g., subjective cultural belief) (Neuman, 2011). In this thesis, I seek to examine the more ‘universal tendencies’ of how personal values influence employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery rather than viewing the phenomenon from various points of view and examining its multiple underlying themes. Thus, my ontological perspective is viewed from the standpoint of realism.

Epistemology is associated with how researchers position themselves when addressing the research issues. It refers to the relationship between the research object and the researcher and it is rooted in ontological assumptions (Neuman, 2011). Epistemology is largely divided into relative objective and relative subjective viewpoints (Creswell, 2009; Jennings, 2010). Relative objectivity refers to the notion that researchers
should maintain distance from the object of study and avoid emotional and physical involvement in order to minimise the researcher’s bias while examining the phenomena (Neuman, 2011). Contrarily, relative subjectivity is associated with the notion that researchers should position themselves in the same or similar setting as the object of study (e.g., interviewees) (Neuman, 2011). Since the focus of this thesis is workforce diversity and their personal values, it is necessary that the researcher has a realistic view and objectively observes the phenomenon to compare the effects of different personal value types, whilst acknowledging that individuals with different personal values bring distinctive and various perspectives to our understandings. For this reason, my epistemological perspective is aligned with the relative objective view.

Methodology considers the approach to addressing research issues and means of collecting data. More specifically, it refers to “the complementary set of guidelines for conducting research…and the methods are the specific tools of data and/or empirical material collection and analysis/interpretation/(re)construction that a researcher will use to gather information on the world for building theory about the world” (Jennings, 2010, p. 35). Thus, methods used for the research are built on methodological perspectives and these are categorised into three types: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In this thesis, I seek first to examine the proposed relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate (as well as personal values’ moderating effects on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate) by using a quantitative approach. Then, the subsequent qualitative study explores the personal value effects on employee service delivery. Thus, a mixed method approach is adopted. The method used for this thesis is discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

Based on various combinations of ontological, epistemological and methodological views, a research paradigm is constructed in a way that influences how research issues are addressed and confronted. While a number of research paradigms are discussed in the literature, five main research paradigms are commonly adopted in social science research: positivism, post-positivism, pragmatism, transformatism and constructivism (see Table 3.1). The researcher’s philosophical positioning is generally located on the continuum between positivism and constructivism (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Built on my ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives, as discussed above, my research perspective is aligned with the post-positivist paradigm.
Table 3.1 Overview of Dominant Paradigms in Social Science Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positivism</th>
<th>Postpositivism</th>
<th>Pragmatism</th>
<th>Transformatism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong></td>
<td>Naïve realism –</td>
<td>Critical realism –</td>
<td>Diverse viewpoints</td>
<td>Diverse viewpoints</td>
<td>Ontological relativity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>identifying universal truth</td>
<td>identifying the probability of phenomena</td>
<td>‘What works’ in the empirical world</td>
<td>regarding social realities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong></td>
<td>Objective point of view</td>
<td>Modified dualism</td>
<td>Both objective and subjective points of view depending on stage of research cycle</td>
<td>Both objectivity and interaction with participants valued by researchers</td>
<td>Subjective point of view; reality co-constructed with participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Primarily quantitative</td>
<td>Both quantitative and qualitative</td>
<td>Both quantitative and qualitative</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Adapted from Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009)

3.2.2 Post-positivism

Post-positivism originally developed from positivism, which is a widely adopted paradigm in pure scientific research. However, since positivism is characterised by its approach to seek universal laws or truths, its appropriateness to social science research has been widely criticised, particularly when examining complex social phenomena (e.g., human cognitions or behaviours) (Creswell, 2009). In order to have a more flexible view and gain a deeper insight of world phenomena, post-positivism was developed (Creswell, 2009). In contrast to the positivists, post-positivists consider that people cannot find ‘universal truth’ when examining complex phenomena (e.g., the effects of personal values), but rather they seek the persuasive probability or tendency of some attributes on the outcome of interest (Creswell, 2009; Veal, 2011).

Post-positivism is further characterised by its ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives. Post-positivists ontologically consider that ‘truth’ can be identified or understood ‘improbabilistically’ and their views towards the real world are more realistic than relativistic in view (Neuman, 2011). Their epistemological position is relatively objective although it often acknowledges some degree of researcher bias. Although post-positivist researchers predominantly adopt quantitative methodologies, there has been a growth in the number of studies employing mixed methods to deeply understand complex social phenomena that cannot be explained by quantitative methods alone (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Given that this thesis seeks to understand the impacts of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery through the lens of a realistic view, objective positioning and a flexible methodological approach, the post-positivist paradigm is aligned with my perspective. Furthermore post-positivism is commonly used research paradigms in service management/marketing research (e.g., De Vita & Tekaya, 2015; Forrest, 2015; Solnet,
which further adds to the credibility of adopting this paradigm to my thesis. The research strategy built on this paradigm and utilised in this study will be discussed in the following section.

3.3 Research Strategy

Research strategy refers to a plan of action that provides specific directions to conduct research. It is often built on a number of factors, which include a critical review of the literature, research settings and an acknowledgement of the researcher’s paradigm. It is also positions research questions, hypotheses and objectives (Blaikie, 2009). Informed by Blaikie’s model (see Figure 3.2), this section discusses how I developed the research strategy used in this thesis.

![Figure 3.2 Research Strategies](image)

In Chapter 2, relevant literatures in three key areas were reviewed (i.e., service delivery, service climate and personal values). Having identified the research gap, two research questions (RQ1 and 2) were developed. They are:
**RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?**

**RQ 2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?**

In order to answer the first research question, several hypotheses were developed. As for the research paradigm, the post-positivist paradigm was discussed and justified as the underpinning philosophical paradigm of this thesis. Post-positivists primarily employ quantitative methods to identify the probability of social phenomena, which can be supplemented by qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Considering the nature of study, the research settings were established to be in the hospitality industry (the detailed discussion of research setting will be provided later in this chapter). Based on these premises, I adopted a deductive approach; that is, the study begins with theoretical propositions derived from the literature (e.g., hypotheses), which are later supported with, or challenged by, the concrete evidence/empirical data (Neuman, 2011).

Utilising a deductive approach, this thesis adopted a mixed method to effectively address the research aim. A mixed method is recognised as neither a purely qualitative nor a quantitative study but rather, it is a combination of both methods to complement and overcome the shortcomings of each approach (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Duberley, 2000). This approach is particularly relevant to the standpoint of post-positivism, where the researcher seeks to identify the probability of a social phenomenon mainly through a quantitative lens, but supplements it through a subsequent qualitative study (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Three major types of approaches occur in a mixed method design: sequential, concurrent and transformative (Creswell, 2009). The sequential approach involves elaborating or expanding on the findings of a first phase study in a subsequent second phase study. The concurrent approach, on the other hand, refers to a strategy of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time and integrating the results to gain overall results. The transformative approach indicates the use of a theoretical lens to develop an overarching framework to guide research. In this approach, data can be collected either sequentially or concurrently (Creswell, 2009). This thesis adopts a two-phase research design to address the research aim and questions; thus, I developed a sequential mixed method approach (see Figure 3.3). Furthermore, the data were collected...
at one specific point in time for each study so that a cross-sectional study approach was employed (Baker, 2001). Specifically, Study 1 quantitatively examined the proposed relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate (RQ1). It also investigated the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. In Study 2, a qualitative method was adopted to explore the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery (RQ2). The detail of this two-phase research design is discussed further in the following sections.

![The Mixed Method Research Design Used for This Thesis](image)

**Figure 3.3 The Mixed Method Research Design Used for This Thesis**

### 3.4 Research Design

#### 3.4.1 Study 1: Employee surveys

In Study 1, a quantitative method was employed to explore the relationships between personal values and perceived service climate, as well as to examine the moderating role of personal values in the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. In general, a quantitative method involves the
collection and analysis of numerical data, which are used to test hypotheses and draw conclusions (Creswell, 2009; Veal, 2011).

3.4.1.1 Survey method

Among quantitative methods, a survey is widely recognised as one of the most predominantly used techniques (Babbie, 2008; Creswell, 2009). The survey technique is particularly useful when the primary aim of the study is to make a generalisation of social phenomena (Creswell, 2009). The main advantage of the survey technique is its systematic characteristics. The researcher can obtain the overall trend or tendencies of responses by presenting the same questions to a large number of respondents. It also enables the researcher to maintain an objective position by minimising the researcher’s subjective intervention in the data collection process (Jennings, 2010) (since this thesis is positioned in the post-positivist paradigm, objectively observing and analysing the phenomena is particularly important). Moreover, the survey technique enables the researcher to obtain valuable data with less time and at a low cost (Sarantakos, 2005).

On the other hand, a survey technique also has a number of methodological issues. For instance, a researcher may not be sure whether respondents answer all questions unless he or she personally handles the questionnaires and observes the respondent’s answering process (Neuman, 2011). Furthermore, if there were an overwhelming number of questions on a survey, it would cause frustration or reluctance for the respondents to think deeply about their answers. In addition, since survey questionnaires often involve closed-ended questions, it may hinder the researcher’s efforts to obtain a rich amount of information (Killion, 1998; Sarantakos, 2005). In order to overcome these issues, this thesis adopted several strategies. I distributed and collected the survey questionnaire by myself which ensured that the questionnaire was completed correctly. The peer review and pilot study were conducted to check the average length of time the respondent spent on answering and completing the questionnaire.

Although there are some shortcomings in a survey, I adopted it as an appropriate technique in this thesis for the following reasons. First, it is a common tool for the climate researcher to address employee perceptions of service climate (e.g., He et al., 2011; Kralj & Solnet, 2010; Manning, Shacklock, Bell, & Manning, 2012; Tang & Tang, 2012). Second, a growing number of personal values studies have now employed the survey technique to examine the impact of personal values on the variable of interests (Ralston et al., 2013; Ralston et al., 2011).
3.4.1.2 Sampling

Sampling is a process of selecting the subjects or study units from a target population for the purpose of a research project (Sarantakos, 2005). In general, sampling techniques are categorised into two different types: random sampling and non-random sampling. Random sampling is associated with the characteristic that each sample unit has an equal opportunity to participate in the study. This sampling technique is traditionally employed in a quantitative study and its main aim is to reflect a target population. For this reason, the selection of participants is systematic and structured (Neuman, 2011). By employing random sampling, a researcher is able to generalise the result with less bias. This type of sampling may include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling and multi-stage cluster sampling (Babbie, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

In contrast, non-random sampling refers to the situation where each sample unit does not have an equal opportunity to participate and this sampling technique is predominantly used in a qualitative study. In contrast to random sampling, non-random sampling is not pre-structured. This type of sampling technique is often used when the aim of study is not to make any generalisation about the target population; rather, the researcher seeks to collect rich and specific data from the respondents. Non-random sampling may include convenience sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling, expert sampling, quota sampling and deviant case sampling (Neuman, 2006, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Although non-random sampling is often adopted by qualitative studies, quantitative studies also employ the technique in some cases. For instance, it is used in a quantitative study when a researcher has only limited access to the information sources (Neuman, 2011). Study 1 required locating appropriate samples from hospitality organisations that hire a diversified workforce who work in relatively strong service climates. Such a situation does not always exist in all hospitality organisations. Thus, it was necessary to carefully and strategically select the samples from the target population. For this reason, among a number of non-random sampling techniques, I adopted convenience sampling for Study 1.

Convenience sampling refers to the sampling technique that selects participants based on their proximity to the researcher (Neuman, 2011). Just as applies to other sampling techniques, convenience sampling has some issues, which may include an inability to reflect the results for other time periods or to collect the data from biased samples (e.g., gender, age, or race) (Neuman, 2011). Nevertheless, it has been one of the
most widely used sampling techniques in the service and hospitality research (e.g., Cheung, Kong, & Song, 2014; Ro & Chen, 2011). Furthermore, one of the main challenges for researchers to gain access to participants is often associated with the constraints on time and budget. In this regard, I considered that the convenience sampling technique was the best possible sampling technique for Study 1.

In selecting the target hotels, I developed a checklist to ensure that the sample would not be biased and that the participants were able to answer the research question. For instance, in order to minimise the influence of organisational variables on employee perceptions of service climate, mainly major international hotel chains in Queensland, Australia were selected. Specifically, the units of analysis were limited to customer-contact employees working in four- and five-star hotels in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Cairns. The reasons for selecting these research sites include:

1. As four- to five-star hotels in the key tourist destinations in Australia, customer-contact employees in such hotels are required to provide high quality service to a variety of customers. Successful operations in these hotels are based on effective internal organisational functioning, focusing on customer service. This notion led to the logical assumption that service climates are likely to exist in these hotels.
2. In addition to Australia being regarded as a multicultural nation, these hotels are often required to hire a diverse workforce to meet various customer needs. Such characteristics of these hotels offer a better chance of accessing a diversified workforce.
3. These three cities are either capital cities or large urban tourist centres in Queensland, which gave the researcher access to an adequate number of four- to five-star hotels and their employees.
4. Other practical considerations were, achieving researcher accessibility and, time and budget constraints.

3.4.1.3 Data collection procedure

Before conducting the survey, I contacted the ‘gatekeepers’ by email and/or phone call and arranged a meeting with them. The term gatekeepers refers to those who have authority to provide a researcher with access to research sites and potential participants (Creswell, 2009) (in this study, all gatekeepers were hotel HR managers). The purpose of these meetings was to acquaint gatekeepers with the research purpose, the use of data, the procedure of data collection and the benefits to them. By providing information to the
gatekeepers in both verbal and written forms (see Appendix A), it was assured that the participation in the study would not be problematic to both hotels and employees. At this stage, dates, times and locations for the data collection were also negotiated.

The promotion period was allocated to each hotel, one week prior to commencing the survey. This was arranged by asking HR managers to display a promotion poster in the staff areas, such as on the notice boards or the walls of the staff canteens (see Appendix B). The actual survey period for each hotel ranged from five to seven days depending on the saturation of accessing potential respondents. While a hard copy survey was predominantly used to collect the data, an electronic survey was also used for one hotel which I could not physically attend. For the hard copy survey, employees completed their surveys during their break time in staff canteens. I remained in the canteens during the staff’s lunchtime and dinnertime, directly approached the employees, and asked them to fill out the survey. I collected the survey when they had been completed. My presence at the survey sites made it possible to address any questions as they arose from the respondents. For the electronic survey, an online survey tool, Qualtrics, was used to facilitate the data collection process. The survey link was sent to the respondents via the HR manager. The responses were automatically transferred to my computer via the Internet. In order to encourage employees to participate and complete the survey, a prize draw was offered (see Appendix C).

3.4.1.4 Development of survey questionnaire

All measurements used in the survey were derived from previous research. Measures were used to assess personal values, HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. The copy of the survey is attached to Appendix D. The following sections provide a summary of adopted measurements.

*Personal values (self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change)*

To measure personal values, Schwartz’s Value Survey (SVS) (Schwartz, 1992, 1994b) was adopted for the following reasons. First, SVS is built on a solid and comprehensive theoretical basis and its unique circumplex structure captures the dynamic interactions among different value types (Porto & Nepomuceno, 2010; Tsirogiani & Gaskell, 2011). Second, SVS has been tested in more than 80 societies and a number of
empirical studies adopting SVS assert the credibility of its use (Feather, 2004; Ryckman & Houston, 2003; Spini, 2003). Third, SVS has been recognised as the most widely used framework for measuring personal values (Pan et al., 2012; Sagiv et al., 2011; Seppälä et al., 2012). Although SVS has been widely adopted in the field of sociology and social psychology, its use in the business context has been somewhat limited (Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Cohen, 2011). Thus, adopting SVS in this thesis aimed to enhance its applicability to the business as well as the hospitality context.

Schwartz and his colleagues have also developed subsequent measurements such as the Paired Comparison Values Survey (Oishi, Shimmack, Diener, & Suh, 1998), the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2001) and the Short Schwartz’s Values Survey (SSVS) (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005). However, among all these measurements, SVS has been considered to be the most common means of measuring Schwartz’s conceptualisation of personal values and consequently, this survey form has been adopted in this thesis (Lee, Soutar, & Louviere, 2008).

While SVS has multiple language versions, this thesis used only the English version of SVS despite the fact that the hotels hire a multicultural workforce. As a customer contact, respondent employees working in 4-5 star hotels in the key tourist destinations in Australia were assumed to have an adequate level of English language skill (both oral and written literacy). Before distributing the survey, the respondents were informed that answering the questions would require a certain proficiency of English both in oral and written forms. Furthermore, by adopting only the English version of SVS, this thesis addressed a potential issue of incidental item bias caused by the translation of the SVS into different languages (Fischer, Vauclair, Fontaine, & Schwartz, 2010; Lee et al., 2008). For the reasons above, I used the English version of SVS in order to examine the influence of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their moderating effects on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate.

To assess an employee’s personal values, the respondents were provided a list of 57 values which included a brief explanation to clarify the meaning of the values (e.g., equality [equal opportunity for all]). They were asked to rate how much each value was important for them as a guiding principle in their lives. Since some respondents were initially confused with the context (i.e., guiding principle of their ‘personal’ or ‘work’ life), this point was clarified when the questionnaire was distributed (i.e., it was emphasised that they were required to answer in the context of their personal life). The respondents rated
the importance of each value using a nine-point Likert type scale (-1 to 7, with -1 being ‘opposed to my values’, 0 being ‘not at all important’, to 7 being ‘of supreme importance’). The items of each personal value type are summarised in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Personal Values Measurement Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>Equality (equal opportunity for all), A world at peace (free of war and conflict), Unity with nature (fitting into nature), Wisdom (a mature understanding of life) A world of beauty (beauty of nature and the arts), Social justice (correcting, injustice, care for the weak), Broad-minded (tolerant of different ideas and beliefs), Protecting the environment (preserving nature), Loyal (faithful to my friends, group), Honest (genuine, sincere), Helpful (working for the welfare of others), Responsible (dependable, reliable), Forgiving (willing to pardon others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>Social power (control over others, dominance), Wealth (material possessions, money), Authority (the right to lead or command), Preserving my public image (preserving my “face”), Ambitious (hard working, aspiring), Influential having an impact on people and events), Capable (competent, effective, efficient), Successful (achieving goals), Pleasure (gratification of desires), Enjoying life (enjoying food, sex, leisure, etc.), Self-indulgent (doing pleasant things)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Respect for tradition (preservation of time-honoured customs), Moderate (avoiding extremes of feeling and action), Humble (modest, self-effacing), Accepting my portion in life (submitting to life’s circumstances), Devout (holding to religious faith and belief), Politeness (courtesy, good manners), Self-discipline (self-restraint, resistance to temptation), Honoring of parents and elders (showing respect), Obedience (dutiful, meeting obligations), Social order (stability of society), National security (protection of my nation from my enemies), Reciprocation of favors avoidance of indebtedness), Family security (safety for loved ones), Clean (neat, tidy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>An exciting life (stimulating experiences), A varied life life filled with challenge, novelty and change), Daring (seeking adventure, risk), Freedom (freedom of action and thought), Creativity uniqueness, imagination), Independent self-reliant, self-sufficient), Choosing own goals (selecting own purposes), Curious (interested in everything, exploring)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Perceived service climate**

In order to measure employee perceptions of service climate, the Global Service Climate Scale (GSCS) developed by Schneider et al. (1998) was adopted. GSCS is a summary measure of service climate dimensions. The respondents answered seven questions and rated them with a seven-point Likert type scale (1 to 7, with 1 being ‘strongly disagree’ and 7 being ‘strongly agree’) (see Table 3.3). The main reason for employing this scale was its effectiveness in assessing service climate perception with a smaller number of questions. This was particularly useful as this study involved a number of scales and measurements to address personal values and other variables, and these could make the survey questionnaire too time-consuming. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to complete
the survey during their lunch or dinner breaks so that the shorter survey length was more appropriate. In addition, this scale has been recognised as one of the most extensively used measurements for addressing employee perceptions of service climate in the service industry context at both the individual (Tsai, 2001; Yang, 2008) and the organisational level of analyses (e.g., Salanova et al., 2005; Schneider et al., 2005). In this thesis, I am interested in how employee's personal values influence their perceptions of service climate. Therefore, as noted in Chapter 2, I regard service climate as an individual-level construct that suits the use of the GSCS.

Table 3.3 Perceived Service Climate Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Service Climate</td>
<td>• How would you rate the job knowledge and skills of employees in your business to deliver superior quality work and service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate efforts to measure and track the quality of the work and service in your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate the recognition and rewards employees receive for the delivery of superior work and service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate the overall quality of service provided by your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate the leadership shown by management in your business in supporting the service quality effort?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate the effectiveness of your communications efforts to both employees and customers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How would you rate the tools, technology and other resources provided to employees to support the delivery of superior quality work and service?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HR practices

The moderating effect of personal values was examined in relation to two key organisational attributes (i.e., HR practices and service leadership) and perceived service climate. As discussed in Chapter 2, these attributes were selected due to their significance in predicting employee perceptions of service climate (Hong et al., 2013).

The first organisational attribute is HR practices. Given that this thesis focuses on an organisational environment that emphasises the provision of quality service in particular, it was appropriate to select a type of HR practices specifically focusing on the enhancement of employee skills, motivation and opportunities to deliver quality service (Batt, 2002; Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Liao et al., 2009). For this reason, the **High-performance HR practices (HPHRP)** scale, developed by Sun and his colleagues (2007), was adopted to assess employee perceptions of HR practices.
The scale was originally developed for research addressing manager perceptions of HR practices in the Taiwanese hotel industry. However, I considered that some of the dimensions in the scale were also useful to address employee perceptions of HR practices. The scale was therefore modified for the purpose of the current study in consultation with the experts in this area at my university. As a result, five dimensions of HR practices were extracted from the original scale: namely, extensive training (four items), clear job description (three items), result-oriented performance appraisal (three items), participation (four items) and internal mobility (five items) (see Table 3.4). In use of HPHRP, a seven-point Likert type scale (1 to 7, with 1 being 'strongly disagree' and 7 being 'strongly agree') was used. Although many studies often discuss several key dimensions of HR practices and treat them as separate, individual variables, other studies treat HR practices as one 'combined variable' by integrating all these dimensions (e.g., Garcia-Chas, Neira-Fontela, & Castro-Casal, 2014; Shen, Benson, & Huang, 2014). Such studies consider HR practices as a 'holistic system' instead of an individual practice separately affecting organisational performance (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Delery & Doty, 1996; Whicker & Andrews, 2004). The scale developed by Sun et al. (2007) was also used by some authors in this way (e.g., Li, Frenkel, & Sanders, 2011; Patel, Messersmith, & Lepak, 2013). In this study, I am interested in how HR practices as a 'system' contributes to explain the validity of the proposed model. Therefore, in testing the relevant hypotheses, I treat HR practices as a combined variable by integrating measures of extensive training, clear job description, result-oriented performance appraisal, participation and internal mobility.
Table 3.4 HR Practices Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extensive Training</td>
<td>• Extensive training programs are provided for individuals in customer contact or front-line jobs  &lt;br&gt; • Employees in customer contact jobs will normally go through training programs every few years  &lt;br&gt; • There are formal training programs to teach new employees the skills they need to perform their job  &lt;br&gt; • Formal training programs are offered to employees in order to increase employees’ promotability in the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Job Description</td>
<td>• The duties of your job are clearly defined  &lt;br&gt; • This job has an up-to-date description  &lt;br&gt; • The job description for a position accurately describes all of the duties performed by individual employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results-oriented Appraisal</td>
<td>• Performance is more often measured with objective quantifiable results  &lt;br&gt; • Performance appraisals are based on objective quantifiable results  &lt;br&gt; • Employee appraisals emphasise long term and group-based achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>• Employees in this job are often asked by their supervisor to participate in decisions  &lt;br&gt; • Individuals in this job are allowed to make decisions  &lt;br&gt; • Employees are provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done  &lt;br&gt; • Supervisors keep open communications with employees in this job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Mobility</td>
<td>• Employees have few opportunities for upward mobility (i.e. promotion)  &lt;br&gt; • Employees do not have any future in this organisation  &lt;br&gt; • Promotion in this organisation is based on seniority  &lt;br&gt; • Employees have clear career paths in this organisation  &lt;br&gt; • Employees in customer contact jobs who desire promotion have more than one potential position they could be promoted to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Service leadership

Another organisational attribute is leadership. As mentioned in Chapter 2, I considered that the focus of leadership should be related to the provision of excellent service. Therefore, among a number of different types of leadership, I adopted a measure of leadership specifically focusing on customer service (i.e., service leadership) (Lytle et al., 1998).

In order to measure service leadership, the scale, SERV*OR, developed by Lytle et al. (1998) was implemented. The scale has been widely tested and validated in hospitality contexts including the hotel industry in Australia (e.g., Kralj & Solnet, 2010; Solnet, 2006b). The original instrument consists of 34 items, which assesses four dimensions of an organisation’s service orientation (i.e., service leadership practices, service encounter practices, human resource management practices and service systems practices). In this thesis, only those items that address the dimension of service leadership were extracted.

In SERV*OR, service leadership has two sub-dimensions (i.e., servant leadership and service vision). In this scale, servant leadership refers to the leadership style that managers or supervisors demonstrate through their own behaviour in terms of how to provide better services to customers; this then become a ‘model’ for employees (Lytle et al., 1998). On the other hand, service vision is associated with the degree to which leaders’ actions are based on organisational visions or goals. Servant leadership is measured by six items and service vision is measured by three items (Lytle et al., 1998) (see Table 3.5). A seven-point Likert type scale was used (1 to 7, with 1 being ‘strongly agree’ and 7 being ‘strongly disagree’). My interest in this study is how service leadership as one construct helps to explain the proposed model discussed in Chapter 2. Therefore, in keeping with previous studies, I treat service leadership as a combined variable by integrating service vision and servant leadership (Luk, Lu, & Liu, 2013; Urban, 2009; Yoon, Park, & Choi, 2007).

In addition to these measurements above, the survey questionnaire included demographic questions such as gender, age, work department, length of service in the hotel industry, level of education, employee’s nationality and others.
Table 3.5 Service Leadership Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Vision</td>
<td>• There is a true commitment to service, not just “lip service”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Customers are viewed as “opportunities to serve” rather than as “sources of revenue”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It is believed by employees that this hotel exists to serve the needs of its customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership</td>
<td>• Management in this hotel constantly communicates the importance of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(renamed as ‘customer-oriented servant leadership later)</td>
<td>• Management in this hotel regularly spends time “in the field” or “on the floor” with customers and front-line employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management in this hotel constantly measures service quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management in this hotel shows that they care about service by constantly giving of themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management in this hotel provides resources (not just “lip service”), to enhance employee ability to provide excellent service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Managers in this hotel offer leadership in creating quality service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.1.5 Pilot study

Before administering the final survey, a pilot study of the employee survey was conducted. A pilot study is often conducted for the researcher to determine whether the terms used in the questionnaires are clear, the length of questionnaire is reasonable, and the questionnaire has an orderly flow (Neuman, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The pilot study in the current study involved a group of approximately 20 university students who were working in a hotel or had previous working experience in a hotel. Respondents involved both males and females from diverse backgrounds. This context was similar to the real survey whereby the pilot study aimed to foresee any potential issues in the real survey. Any important feedback obtained from the pilot study participants was reflected in the final survey. The feedback includes an overall structure of the questionnaire and some wording issues. The average length of time for answering the questionnaire was approximately 15 minutes. When conducting any quantitative research, it is necessary to address the issue of reliability and validity regarding research processes and findings. The next section provides a discussion of how reliability and validity were established in this study.
3.4.1.6 Reliability, validity and common method variance

Reliability refers to whether an employed method yields the same data when it is repeatedly used to address the same phenomenon. Validity indicates whether employed measures are appropriate to provide accurate data of the study (Babbie, 2010). Although high reliability is often considered to be crucial to any research, this notion does not always apply to social science research because it involves complex and ever-changing human elements (Veal, 2011). Nevertheless, it is still important to assess whether the measurements adopted for the current study are reliable enough to predict the outcome of interest. For this reason, the current study conducted the reliability tests for adopted instruments at both the overall and sub-scale levels by checking Cronbach’s alpha (this will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4).

Four different types of validity are recognised in social science research (Neuman, 2011). First, face validity concerns the requirement that concepts or themes are measured appropriately. Second, content validity refers to whether developed measurements are closely related to the meaning of the studied concept. Third, construct validity indicates to what extent the measurements used cover the meaning that is relevant to the concept of study. Last, criterion validity refers to the degree to which one or a set of variables can predict potential outcomes in relation to specific criteria. In this thesis, a pilot test was used to establish face validity. Content validity was established by discussing the appropriateness of measurements with three senior researchers who have extensive experience in a similar area. In order to achieve construct validity, I performed reliability tests as well as factor analyses. The model tested in this study was developed from an extensive literature review and the theoretical underpinning of the key concepts, which supports criterion validity (Hair, 2010).

Common method variance is “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent” (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003, p. 879). Common method biases are the extent to which bias in the measurement instrument is caused by a systematic error variance shared among the variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). These method biases are problematic as they are one of the main causes of measurement error, which often threatens the validity of the conclusions regarding the relationships between measures (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Study 1 potentially involved several sources of common method bias. For instance, social desirability and leniency biases could affect the way respondents answered the survey questionnaire. Social desirability refers to “the need for social approval and
acceptance and the belief that it can be attained by means of culturally acceptable and appropriate behaviors" (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, p. 109). Leniency biases are associated with the tendency for respondents “to rate those whom they know well, or whom they are ego involved, higher than they should” (Guilford, 1954, p. 278). The survey was conducted in the staff canteens of the sample hotels where other colleagues or managers are around while the respondents were filling out the survey. Such an environment might have affected their responses, particularly for those items asking about workplace effectiveness (i.e., service climate) or service leadership, which often involve emotional attachment to their organisations or managers.

While researchers strive to develop questionnaire items that are as clear, simple and succinct as possible to measure the variables of interest (Peterson, 2000; Spector, 1992), it is often the case that some questionnaire items are still complex and/or ambiguous. These issues are often caused by the use of double-barrelled questions (Hinkin, 1995), words with multiple meanings (Peterson, 2000), technical jargon or colloquialisms (Spector, 1992) or unfamiliar infrequently used words (Peterson, 2000). While all scales used in this thesis were derived from previous research, some respondents may find items that were difficult to understand (e.g., while some items are readily answered by managers, customer-contact employees might struggle to grasp the meaning of the questions).

Being aware of these potential issues and to have a better control for method biases, I opted for procedural remedies suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003). First, to address social desirability and leniency biases, I clarified with respondents that their answers would be anonymous and that there are no right or wrong answers (the detailed discussion of this process is provided in Section 3.5). This way of protecting respondent anonymity and reducing evaluation apprehension should assist the respondents to answer the questions as honestly as possible (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Furthermore, I also asked the gatekeepers to emphasise to the department managers the importance of collecting accurate data and to avoid any disruption while the employees were filling out the survey. In terms of addressing complexity and/or ambiguity in the questionnaire, I used feedback from the pilot study discussed above to keep the questions simple, concise and succinct, avoid any double-barrelled questions, and evade complicated syntax (Tourangeau, Rasinski, & D'Andrade, 1991).
3.4.1.7 **Method of data analysis**

In a quantitative study, statistical techniques are used to examine the relationships and explain the findings between variables of interest (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2011). Alongside the hypotheses and variable types, I performed descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. In this study, linear regression techniques (simple, moderated and multiple) and t-tests (independent-samples) were used to test the hypotheses (see Table 3.6). For H1 to H6, I tested the possible relationships between one independent variable and one dependent variable so simple regression analysis was appropriate. As for H3b, H3c, H4b, H4c, H5b, H5c, H6b and H6c, a moderated regression analysis was used to examine the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. T-tests were used to test hypotheses H3a, H4a, H5a and H6a; these tests compare the group means of personal value types and employee perceptions of service climate. To gain an alternative perspective of understanding the results of hypotheses testing, I performed a multiple regression analysis.

This section outlined the research design of Study 1, which utilised an employee survey. The sampling technique, measurements, the methods of assessing reliability and validity of the measurement, the analysis techniques adopted for this study were discussed. As noted, this thesis employed a sequential approach to investigate the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate in the hospitality industry. The next section discusses the research design of Study 2, the in-depth semi-structured interviews.
Table 3.6 Summary of Hypotheses and Statistic Techniques Used for Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Main statistic techniques used for analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1  HR practices have a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2  Service leadership has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3  Self-transcendence has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a Employees with high self-transcendence perceive service climate higher than employees with low self-transcendence</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3c The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4  Self-enhancement has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a Employees with high self-enhancement perceive service climate lower than employees with low self-enhancement</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4c The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5  Conservation has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a Employees with high conservation perceive service climate higher than employees with low conservation</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5c The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6  Openness to change has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Simple Linear Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6a Employees with high openness to change perceive service climate lower than employees with low openness to change</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6b The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6c The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high.</td>
<td>Moderated Regression (using cross product term)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Multiple regression analysis was performed to gain an alternative perspective of understanding the hypotheses testing for H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6.

3.4.2 Study 2: In-depth semi-structured interviews

3.4.2.1 In-depth semi-structured interviews

Study 2 explores the effects of personal values on employee service delivery, which addresses the second research question in this thesis (i.e., what are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?). Since an investigation of this issue is exploratory in nature, I adopted a qualitative method in Study 2.

In contrast to quantitative methods that seek to identify the general tendency of social phenomena by collecting data from a large number of participants, qualitative methods aim to gain deep insights into specific events from a relatively small number of.
respondents (Flick, 2009). In qualitative methods, the collected data are analysed to describe, interpret and develop the conceptual attributes in order to unfold complex phenomena in the society (Van Maanen, 1983). Among a number of techniques used in qualitative methods, I adopted an in-depth interview technique as it is useful to gain a deep insight into people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours, particularly when the unit of focus is at an individual level (Creswell, 2009).

Key advantages of in-depth interviews are that researchers are able to gather detailed information and ‘thick’ descriptions about participant’s ideas, opinions and perspectives in relation to the research issue (Flick, 2009; Geertz, 1973). Furthermore, instead of following a rigidly structured format, the flexible nature of the interview process enables researchers to effectively establish rapport with participants, which encourages interviewees to actively and deeply engage in the interview. Such ‘trust-building’ between interviewers and participants is very important because if trust is not built, the outcome of the interview would become “particularly dismal” (Oakley, 1981, p. 56), and would cause serious issues in the accuracy of study results. Contrarily, in-depth interviews also have downsides, which may include a lack of generalisability, the subjective and transactional nature of interactions and a time-consuming process (Jennings, 2010). It could also involve high levels of intervention and control over the interview by manner of framing questions or interview directions (Whyte, 1982). Furthermore, an issue of power asymmetry between interviewers and participants (i.e., a dialogue between people with uneven status in a hierarchical form) often influences the amount and depth of data that the researcher can collect from the interview (Anyan, 2013).

Nevertheless, the in-depth interview is particularly useful when the aims of the study are to obtain rich empirical data and effectively examine the complex nature of human perceptions, attitudes and behaviours (Creswell, 2009). It is also expedient when the participant’s responses are expected to vary considerably from one person to another (Veal, 2011). These notions were particularly related to the current study, which required collecting a rich amount of information to understand the complex effects of personal values on employee service delivery. It was also anticipated that the answers to the interview questions could vary considerably among participants, as embracing personal value types theoretically differ from one person to another.

In addition, the current study adopted a semi-structured format for in-depth interviews. The semi-structured interview format is particularly useful when the researcher has a list of research issues that need to be investigated (Neuman, 2011). It is also helpful
for the researcher to stay focused on the research aim and avoid the interview ending up as just ‘friendly conversation’ (Creswell, 2009; Neuman, 2011). In Study 2, in order to effectively address the research issues within the limited time, I developed the interview protocol, which outlines the structure and logical sequence of key questions (see Appendix E). Then, a series of subsequent probing questions were formulated to gain deep insights into participant’s opinions and thoughts. To follow the interview protocol and effectively collect the data from the participants, the interviews needed to be structured to some degree. As such, a semi-structure interview format helped me to effectively address the research aims of Study 2.

3.4.2.2 Sampling

In order to select an appropriate sample for Study 2, I considered three points. First, to effectively address the research aim of this thesis, the interviewees should be from the same hotels that participated in Study 1 (and ideally from those who completed the survey). Second, the context of this thesis is workforce diversity in the hospitality industry; thus, it is important to include the extent of workforce diversity (e.g., gender, department or ethnic background) among participants. Third, it is crucial to have interviewees who had enough time and the willingness to participate in the interview so that one can obtain accurate and rich data from the participants. Such employees who meet all these conditions are not always available in all hotels. Therefore, sampling is required that strategically and purposefully selects the participants; for this reason, I adopted a purposive sampling technique in Study 2.

Purposive sampling (also known as judgemental sampling) is a sampling technique often used when the researcher seeks participants who are difficult to reach or locate (Neuman, 2011). As the name suggests, the researcher ‘purposefully’ selects the target population and samples those who are most appropriate or closest to the study focus (Jennings, 2010). Based on the consideration of the three points mentioned above, I developed sampling criteria for the current study as follows:

- The interviewees should be the customer-contact employees who work in one of the hotels that participated in Study 1.
- The interviewees must include both genders and their countries of origin must vary (at least five different countries are included in the samples).
- The interviewees must be able to allocate enough time (approximately 60 min) and
be willing to participate in the interview.

In Study 2, the recruitment process involved two approaches. The first approach was to ask the survey respondents whether they were interested in participating in Study 2 while they were filling out the initial survey. If they did, they exchanged their contact details with me (i.e., name and email address). My second approach was to re-visit the staff canteens of those hotels (where the survey in Study 1 was conducted) and directly recruit potential interviewees. Given the constraints on time and budget, the interviewees were selected only from those who worked at hotels in Brisbane. Through those two recruiting processes, I ensured that the sample consisted of employees from diverse backgrounds (e.g., gender, department and ethnicity) and interviewees were able to allocate mutually convenient times to meet.

In terms of sample size, a different perspective is taken between quantitative and qualitative methods. While a quantitative study requires a large sample size to make generalisations of social phenomena, a qualitative study focuses on a small sample size to obtain in-depth information (Flick, 2009). In a qualitative study, the sample size is often determined by theoretical saturation, which refers to the situation where “redundancy with respect to information” occurs (Calabretta, Jordi, & Iglesias, 2008, pp. 233-234). In other words, it is the point when a researcher is no longer able to find new information from the sample. As the sample size is often not pre-determined, a researcher needs to decide when the research should be terminated (i.e., at the point of saturation). In Study 2, theoretical saturation was achieved after interviewing 23 participants. This number was reasonable considering the nature of this study, which seeks to collect various views and opinions among employees from different backgrounds. Just as was applied in Study 1, a prize draw was offered to the participants as an incentive to participate.

3.4.2.3 Interview procedure

The dates and times of the interview sessions were confirmed with the interviewees via email and text messages. Before the interview sessions, the participant information sheet (see Appendix F) and informed consent form (see Appendix G) were sent to the interviewees by email. The purposes of sending those two documents prior to the session are:

1. for the interviewees to have enough time to carefully read and understand the nature of the study, ethical considerations, voluntarily participation and procedures
of the interview

2. to minimise the administration work at the interview session and focus on the interview contents.

In order to effectively collect the data from interviewees, I considered two points. The first point was regarding the contextual effects, which have the potential to influence the way participants think and provide their answers to interview questions (Brener et al., 2006). For instance, if employees were interviewed in the organisational environment where other colleagues or managers were present, it could hinder them from providing honest thoughts; or the ‘work-mindset’ could prevent them from accessing or recalling their personal values (similar to the notion discussed in Section 3.4.1.6). The second point is the notion of power issues discussed earlier. It is important to consider any power issues between an interviewer and participants in order to effectively build rapport and obtain an accurate and rich amount of data from participants (Wasserfall, 1997). For these reasons, most interviews (20 out of 23) were conducted at my university. Specifically, a library conference room was used as the interview venue as it provided a quiet environment, which mitigates any background noise for transcription. The room was booked in advance once the date and time of the interview session had been confirmed. For those who could not come to the campus, the interview was conducted at either a cafeteria or their hotel’s conference room, without the presence of other colleagues or managers. At these venues, no intervention from other people (e.g., colleagues/managers or waiter/waitresses) was involved. To further defuse power concerns, I dressed casually. For almost all interviews, I built a rapport with interviewees before the session. My familiarity with hospitality work (in which I used to work for six years previously) and non-organisational environment (i.e., university campus) may have helped to create this rapport reasonably quickly.

Before starting the interview sessions, the signed participant consent form was collected from the interviewees (see Appendix G). The participants retained the information sheet so that they were able to contact the researcher when required. I also explained verbally the nature and purpose of the study and ethical considerations (e.g., voluntary participation, confidentiality, privacy and anonymity). With interviewee permission, audio recorders were used to record the interview sessions, which helped the researcher to produce transcripts of interviews without losing valuable data (Veal, 2011). For all interviews, I used two recording devices in order to avoid any uncertain technical issues that could result in the loss of important data. Furthermore, the field notes were also used to record the occurrence of non-verbal cues (e.g., gesture or facial expression). All
important questions were asked in the interview within the limited time (see Appendix H). The average time of interview sessions was one hour (minimum forty minutes to maximum one and a half hours). When the interview was likely to exceed one hour, I sought permission from the interviewees to continue the session.

In order to effectively collect the data to address relevant research questions, I used two techniques: critical incident and laddering techniques. Critical incident technique “consists of a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behaviour in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles” (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327). The technique is often used to facilitate the examination of significant occurrences (e.g., events or situations) experienced by the respondent, the way these incidents are managed and outcomes in terms of perceived effects (Chell, 1998). The objective of using the critical incident technique is to examine and understand how the respondent’s cognitive, affective and behavioural elements are involved when they experienced such an incident (Chell, 1998). The term, critical incident, is often described as the event that makes a significant contribution (either positively or negatively) to one’s psychological states (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990) and a number of different approaches to employing the technique are possible. Nevertheless, service research often asks the respondents to relate a story about their critical experience (Gremler, 2004). In this thesis, the critical incident technique was adopted in order to prompt employees to recall their service delivery from two memorable events (i.e., when they delivered the most excellent service and when they rectified their worst service failure). Then, these incidents were further examined to understand how underlying cognitive or affective factors (e.g., personal values) were involved in their experience by using the laddering technique.

The laddering technique refers to an interview technique that attempts to examine one’s belief structure in a simple and systematic way while building an individual’s personal constructs (Bannister & Mair, 1968; Veludo-de-Oliveira, Ikeda, & Campomar, 2006). The technique is particularly useful when the researcher wants to elicit hierarchical constructs of human behaviour (e.g., values – attitudes – behaviours) and it has been widely used when examining the effects of personal values (e.g., Gjerald & Øgaard, 2010; Ramkissoo & Nunkoo, 2009; Vriens & Hofstede, 2000; Wansink, 2000, 2003). In practice, the interviewer repeatedly asks why certain motives are so important to the respondents (e.g., ‘why is providing good service important to you?’) (Jansen-Verbeke & van Rekom, 1996). Each time the respondents state the importance of certain motives to particular
attitudes and behaviours, the interviewer further asks probing questions, ‘Why is that important to you?’ (Ramkissoon & Nunkoo, 2009). In this way (as the name suggests, by ‘climbing down the ladder to an interviewee’s deeper level’), the interviewer is able to identify the fundamental motivation (i.e., personal values) that influences the respondent’s target attitudes or behaviours (i.e., service delivery).

After the completion of the interviews, the interview audio data were sent to the commercial service provider for transcription. After the transcripts were returned, I thoroughly checked them with the audio data to ensure the accuracy of the transcripts. If any errors or mistakes occurred in the transcription, they were corrected at this point.

3.4.2.4 Method of data analysis

The main analysis technique adopted in study 2 was thematic analysis, a technique used for analysing the context or information contained in written documents or any other media communication sources (Neuman, 2011). Thematic analysis is one of the most widely used qualitative analysis techniques and is often employed to identify explicit and implicit meanings or key themes involving social phenomena (Sarantakos, 2005).

Data analysis in the current study consisted of three steps. First, I manually imported the transcribed interview data into the qualitative analysis software, NVivo version 10.2, which is widely used and available to contemporary qualitative researchers. I used this software for note-taking, editing, thematic analysis, coding (for later retrieval) and data linking (Weitzman, 2000); all of which becomes the platform for the subsequent analysis. Second, using NVivo, I developed the codes to organise complex raw materials (e.g., interview transcripts) into manageable units (Neuman, 2011). This process is called ‘coding’ and two types of coding techniques are often used in a qualitative study (Neuman, 2011). Manifest coding refers to the type of coding which involves sorting and classifying the visible, surface content in an information source. Researchers develop a list of key words that they want to examine and count the number of times these key words appear in the sample documents (Neuman, 2011). Latent coding, on the other hand, examines the implicit meaning such as the theme or particular connotation underlying the texts and identifies them in a systematic way. This technique thus requires the researcher to critically examine the documents to identify those hidden meanings or underlying themes (Neuman, 2011).
In this study, I used both manifest and latent coding techniques (including open, axial and selective coding). First, I conducted manifest coding to identify and classify the keywords relevant to research issues. Then, latent coding was performed to identify the underlying key themes. The identified key themes and developed codes were examined with the theoretical frameworks derived from the relevant literature, which include service climate and personal values. The coding process will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

3.4.2.5 Pilot study

Before conducting the interviews, pilot interviews were conducted. The participants in the pilot interview were five university students who worked in hotels or other types of hospitality organisations (e.g., bar or café). The interview was conducted at my university. This context was similar to the real interview setting, which helped identify any potential issues in the interview sessions during Study 2. Similar to Study 1, the aim of this pilot study was to check whether the way of asking the questions was clear, the interview flow was logical, the length of interviews was appropriate and whether there were any missing (or unnecessary) questions to ask. The feedback from these participants were integrated into the final interview protocol, which informed the sequence of interview questions and resulted in the omission of some questions that may not have contributed to answering research questions comprehensively. Furthermore, two pilot interviewees were included in the analysis of the final interview data as their profiles (i.e., the department and the hotel they worked in) matched the criteria of the final sample of participants.

3.4.2.6 Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

Built on a post-positivist perspective, the establishment of validity and reliability is essential for quality in research (Guba & Lincoln, 2006). In contrast to quantitative research, a qualitative study conceptualises the validity and reliability as trustworthiness, which is defined as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide an explanation of these four criteria. Credibility refers to whether the results of the study are credible or trustworthy from the participant’s perspective. Transferability involves the degree to which the results of the study can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or different settings. Dependability refers to whether the researcher can obtain the same results if he or she
conducted the study under the same conditions. Confirmability indicates the degree to which the results of the study could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. In Study 2, several techniques were adopted to address these four aspects of trustworthiness in research. In order to reduce the possibility of researcher’s bias in data interpretation and to assess credibility, a peer debriefing was undertaken with one senior qualitative researcher and one doctoral student. Thick descriptions were assembled and a reflexive journal was compiled throughout the data collection process and analysis process in order to achieve transferability and objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An external audit of the research was undertaken with an expert in qualitative studies to achieve dependability. With this audit, I ensured that all procedures were undertaken to comply with the research aim and objectives (Flick, 2009). The above sections provided the research design of Study 2, an in-depth semi-structured interview, conducted in this thesis. In the following section, the discussion moves to the ethical considerations for both Study 1 and 2.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

In any scientific research, researchers are required to follow the guidelines of ethical considerations when conducting research that involves any human involvement. In particular, these considerations include the voluntary participation of respondents, informed consent obtained from each participant, anonymity of participants and the confidentiality of collected data (Creswell, 2009). Before conducting data collection, I sent the research details (both Study 1 and 2) to the ethics officer at the UQ Business School, The University of Queensland and obtained ethical clearance in accordance with strict university guidelines. Furthermore, in order to address the ethical issues raised above, I implemented the following protocols throughout Study 1 and Study 2.

1. Participation in the survey and/or the interview was completely voluntary and respondents could stop their participation at any stage if they did not wish to continue. Participants were informed of this in both verbal and written form before the commencements of the survey and interviews. In addition, I provided participants in both studies with information on the purpose of study, procedures, expected length of time to complete the survey and interviews and both my own and my principal advisor’s contact details.

2. I ensured the anonymity of participants. After the completion of data collection, I stored survey data and interview audio data securely. Specifically, I secured the completed hard copy survey results in a lockable cabinet that only I could access. I
stored the transcript data in my computer. This computer was always with me and password-locked at any time when not in use.

3. In Study 1 and 2, some participants’ names, email addresses and phone numbers were obtained. These contact details were used only for reporting the results of the prize draw (Study 1); contacting the interviewees to negotiate the date/time of interview sessions (Study 2); and sending the necessary documents to them (Study 2). I communicated how I would use these contact details in both verbal and written form before conducting Study 1 and 2.

4. As noted earlier, I provided a participant consent form and participant information sheet prior to the interview sessions in Study 2. I obtained the signed participant consent forms from the participants during the interview session.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology and methods used in this thesis. In line with my ontological and epistemological assumptions, this thesis is guided by the post-positivist paradigm. Based on this paradigm, methodology and methods were developed and a research strategy was established. This thesis adopts two-phase studies. In Study 1, I employed a quantitative method (employee survey) and examined the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate as well as the personal values’ moderating effects on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Study 2 used a qualitative method (in-depth semi-structured interviews) to explore the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. The research design for each study was outlined. Finally, ethical consideration involved in this thesis was discussed. Built on this methodology and methods, the next chapter reports the result of Study 1, followed by the discussion of findings and their implications.
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: SURVEY

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter outlined the research design, methodology and methods adopted in this thesis. The thesis consists of a two-phase study, which involves employee survey followed by in-depth semi-structured interviews. This chapter presents the results and implications of Study 1, which address the first research question of this thesis:

RQ1: What are the relationships between employees' personal values and their service climate perceptions?

This chapter first reports the characteristics of survey respondents. Then, the data screening and cleaning process are outlined. The results of factor analyses and reliability tests are provided. The results of hypotheses testing are reported next, followed by the discussion of the key findings. Lastly, the link to Study 2 is discussed.

4.2 Sample Characteristics of Study 1

A total of 1,467 surveys were distributed to the customer-contact employees at nine hotels in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Cairns in Australia. Table 4.1 depicts the sample characteristics of Study 1. The number of survey responses across the nine hotels ranged from 15 to 108. While a large number of surveys were collected from some hotels (e.g., #2, #4 and #5), the number was limited in other hotels (e.g., #6 and #9). One of the reasons for this is that the total population varied from one hotel to another. Furthermore, the access was limited to a few departments at some hotels (e.g., #9). In total, I collected 545 unique responses. The response rate was 37%, which is in line with other hospitality research (Keegan & Lucas, 2005).
Table 4.1 Summary of Sample Characteristics of Study 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel #</th>
<th>Star rating</th>
<th>Total no. of employees</th>
<th>No. of survey respondents</th>
<th>% of total respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
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<td>#6</td>
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<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18*</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Front office and concierge department only

The statistical software package, SPSS version 21, was used to manage the survey data. The respondents were mainly female (n = 340, 62.4%), and predominantly aged between 20 and 29 years (n = 280, 51.4%). This distribution of gender and age illustrates traditional characteristics of the Australian hospitality workforce; that is, young female employees dominate the workforce population (Davidson, McPhail, & Barry, 2011; Haynes & Fryer, 1999). The majority of respondents were food and beverage attendants (n = 202, 37.1%) or housekeepers (n = 182, 33.4%). The majority had completed at least the equivalent of an Australian college or undergraduate degree (n = 286, 52.5%). Many respondents were Australians (n = 223, 40.9%). Other major nationalities included Filipinos (n = 44; 8.1%), New Zealanders (n = 26, 4.8%), Chinese (n = 22, 4.2%), Indians (n = 23, 4.2%), Britons (n = 20, 3.7%) and Japanese (n = 16, 2.9%). The next section outlines data screening and cleaning process used in this study.

4.3 Data Screening and Cleaning

The data screening and cleaning process normally involves an inspection of the collected data and correction (or removal) of any errors that potentially can cause substantial impacts on the analysis results (Osborne, 2013). It often includes an examination of missing values, identification of substantial errors, management of raw data for an appropriate use of the analysis and assessment of normality and outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014).
4.3.1 Examination of missing data

As a first step, I identified and rectified missing values in my dataset. It is generally suggested that researchers may remove particular cases if they have more than 50 per cent of values missing (Hair, 2010). These cases can create substantial impacts on the rest of the observations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Following this suggestion, I omitted the cases with more than 50 per cent of missing values. After removing these cases, I also treated the cases with less than 50 per cent of missing values. For the treatment of such missing values, three options are often suggested (Pallant, 2011):

- **Listwise exclusion**: totally removing the case from the analysis if any data are missing in that case
- **Pairwise exclusion**: removing the case only when they are missing the data required for specific analysis
- **Replacing with mean**: calculating the mean value for the variables and applying it to the missing value.

Among these techniques, I adopted a pairwise exclusion option in consideration of its advantages. The advantages include: that the option has fewer problems with convergence; the factor loading estimates are relatively free of bias; and the option is easy to implement by using any statistical program (Hair, 2010).

4.3.2 Treatment of personal values data

The second step of the data screening and cleaning process in this study is the treatment of personal values data (i.e., Schwartz Value Survey [SVS]). Glazer and Beehr (2002) suggest that in order to clearly identify the respondents’ most important personal values and use them effectively for the subsequent analyses, it is necessary to remove the cases that contain largely biased responses (e.g., too many 3, 5 or 7 ratings). Following their suggestion, I removed the cases if the responses to personal values questions contained any of the following:

- more than 34 instances of item responses receiving ratings of 3, 5 or 6
- more than 22 instances where item responses receive a rating of 7
- more than 27 instances where no rating value was given to the item responses (i.e., a rating of 0) (Glazer & Beehr, 2002)

After the data cleaning process above, 487 cases remained.
4.3.3 Management of data for subsequent analysis

The third step involved the management of data for subsequent analyses. Specifically, I first transformed the data collected for personal values. To do this, I followed the Schwartz’s SVS manual, which was directly sourced from the author of this scale, Shalom Schwartz (personal communication, October 25, 2013). As suggested by his manual, all scores for each case were aggregated first. Then, these scores were divided by the total number of items (i.e., 57). This is called MRAT (Mean RATing for the particular individual). Each of the items for an individual was centred around that individual’s MRAT. Then, these scores were first computed for the ten basic values (i.e., conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and security). The ten basic values were further aggregated to four higher-level value types for the purpose of analyses (Ralston et al., 2011). They were labelled as self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change. The structure of this scale alongside its reliability scores is summarised later in Section 4.4.1.

Second, I also transformed the data collected for the other variables (i.e., perceived service climate, HR Practice and service leadership). In this study, I adopted an ‘average score approach’ to calculate respondents’ total score (Osborne, 2013). This approach aggregates and calculates only those items answered by the respondents (e.g., if five items are used to measure a scale and one item is missing, the syntax calculates the average of the four items answered). Therefore, it provides an accurate total score for each construct by eliminating the missing responses. The syntax used was “MEAN#.X (a,b,c…)” where X is the minimum number of items with a valid score. In order to use this method, a majority of items must be answered (Osborne, 2013). In this study, I considered 75% completed responses as an appropriate cut-off point for applying the average score approach.

4.3.4 Assessment of normality and outliers

The last step of the data screening and cleaning process was to check for normality and outliers. For this process, descriptive analysis was performed for all variables (i.e., personal values—self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change—perceived service climate, HR practices and service leadership) (see Table 4.2). In order to check the distribution of the data, minimum and maximum values, means and standard deviations of respective variables were assessed. The scores of skewness and
kurtosis as well as a graphical method (i.e., histograms) were also used to assess the normality of data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Skewness refers to the degree to which the data is symmetrically distributed while kurtosis indicates the ‘peakedness’ of the distribution (Pallant, 2011). Skewness and kurtosis outside the range of -1 and +1 are considered to be noticeably skewed (positive or negative) or kurtotic (leptokurtic or platykurtic) (Hair, 2010). Histograms are often used as a tool to quickly check the normality of the data in a visual form (Pallant, 2011).

Table 4.2 Descriptive Analyses of Measurements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>-.75</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived service climate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>-.49</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>-.75</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>-.72</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores of all variables fit into acceptable ranges of minimum and maximum values, means and standard deviations. While conservation and openness to change showed slight kurtosis (respectively 1.60 and 1.07), mildly non-normal data is often considered to be still usable with a sample over 100 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1984; DeCarlo, 1997; Olsson, Foss, Troye, & Howell, 2000). Furthermore, according to the central limit theorem, it is considered that the data was normally distributed because the sample size was ‘big enough’ (generally defined as greater than n=30) (Field, 2013). Furthermore, the derived histograms depicted that all variables in the current study were normally distributed to an acceptable degree.

Subsequently, the study sought to identify any outliers that potentially could cause substantial problems to the analysis. For this purpose, box plots were produced (Field, 2013). An examination of box plots revealed two extreme point outliers on the conservation variable. These two cases were dropped from further analyses. None of the other observations showed a considerable deviation from the rest of observations. The next section outlines the verification of measurement scales by reporting the results of factor analyses and reliability tests.
4.4 Understanding the Underlying Structure of the Main Constructs of the Study

To identify the underlying factor structure and verify the measurement scales, I performed a confirmatory factor analysis with AMOS software package in SPSS. In the current study, all scales were derived from the existing literature. Thus, the purpose of adopting this statistical technique was to validate the main constructs of the key variables in the current study (Brown, 2015; Hair, 2010). Since the use of SVS (Schwartz, 1992) follows very specific and unique procedures to construct the variables, the dimensions of personal values (or value types) were constructed by following Schwartz’s manual. For this reason, factor analysis was not performed on the SVS. Therefore, the factor analysis assumptions were checked only for perceived service climate, HR practices and service leadership variables.

First, I evaluated the collected data based on the specified factor solution suggested by the previous research on perceived service climate (Schneider et al., 1998), HR practices (Sun et al., 2007) and service leadership constructs (Lytle et al., 1998). Then, I examined how well each construct produces the same/similar correlation/covariance matrix of the measured variables (Brown, 2015; DiStefano & Hess, 2005; Thompson, 2004). The model and result of confirmatory factor analysis are presented in Appendix I.

The result of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the Chi square was significant. Other goodness-of-fit indices must also be examined in testing the measurement model (Byrne, 2010). The following fit indices were checked: comparative fix index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), parsimonious comparative fit (PCFI), p of close fit (PCLOSE) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Brown, 2015; Thompson, 2004).

Table 4.3 Fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Model Perceived Service Climate, HR Practices and Service Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>P-value &gt;0.05</th>
<th>RMSEA &lt;0.05</th>
<th>PCLOSE &lt;0.05</th>
<th>PCFI &gt;0.9</th>
<th>NFI &gt;0.9</th>
<th>CFI &gt;0.9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Default Model</td>
<td>3069.225</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td>.657</td>
<td>.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence model</td>
<td>3069.225</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A model is regarded as acceptable if: The Normed Fit Index (NFI) exceeds .90 (Byrne, 1994) or .95 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004); the Goodness of Fit Index this is Chi square exceeds .90 (Byrne, 1994); the Comparative Fit Index exceeds .93 (Byrne, 1994); RMSEA is less than .08 (Brown & Cudeck, 1993)—and ideally less than .05 (Stieger, 1990). Alternatively, the upper confidence interval of the RMS should not exceed .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998); and the relative chi-square should be less than 2 or 3 (Kline, 1998; Ullman, 2001).
The evaluation of these indices did not show an adequate fit to the theory-based constructs (i.e., the constructs identified in previous research) (see Table 4.3). Instead, the matrix of covariance among errors showed large loadings in the means and intercepts tables of the CFA model, suggesting that several items were not clearly defined within a factor (Appendix I). Based on the results of this confirmatory factor analysis, I made a decision to perform an exploratory factor analysis in order to gain a better understanding of underlying structures of the items in this study (Hair, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014).

Exploratory factor analysis is used to determine the underlying structure of variables (Hair, 2010). Along with other statistical analyses, this analysis technique requires that the data meet certain assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). The assumptions of exploratory factor analysis include:

1. Sample size: whether the sample size is adequate to conduct the factor analysis (conducting a factor analysis requires a minimum of 300 responses).
2. Correlation coefficient: whether correlation coefficients of the majority of items in one construct are above .3.
3. Factorability of the data: whether the factorability criteria of the data is met as assessed by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity (Bartlett, 1954). The KMO index needs to be above .6 and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity must be significant (p < .05).

In the current study, the sample size was 487, which exceeds the minimum requirement for the factor analysis (Brown, 2015). Correlation coefficients of all components, the KMO index and the statistics for Bartlett’s test of sphericity of the three scales are summarised in Table 4.4, which supported the latent structure and dimensionality for all scales.

### Table 4.4 The Results of Assumption Testing – Exploratory Factor Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Correlation matrix</th>
<th>KMO value</th>
<th>Bartlett’s test of sphericity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Climate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>All .3 and above</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>$X^2(21)=1111.63, p&lt;.000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Majority .3 and above</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>$X^2(171)=4023.05, p&lt;.000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>All .3 and above</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>$X^2(36)=2216.05, p&lt;.000$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with the exploratory factor analyses, reliability tests were also conducted to assess the scale reliability. For this purpose, Cronbach’s alpha was used. Cronbach’s alpha is known as the most frequently used index to assess the scale reliability and its coefficients indicate the degree of internal consistency of the item sets on a scale
In general, an acceptable lower limit for Cronbach’s alpha is .70 (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991).

### 4.4.1 Personal values

Schwartz’s Value Survey (SVS) (Schwartz, 1992) was used to assess employee personal values. Its factorial structure is summarised alongside Cronbach’s alpha in Table 4.5. Since each dimension of this scale is distinctively separated from each other, they do not comprise one overall scale. Therefore, Cronbach’s alpha was checked only for each value type (i.e., *self-transcendence*, *self-enhancement*, *conservation* and *openness to change*). The result of the reliability test showed that all Cronbach’s alphas were above .7, ranging from .71 (*openness to change*) to .82 (*conservation*), which reports the high reliability of the scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Ten basic dimensions (and individual items)</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Self-transcendence | • Universalism (Equality, A world at peace, Unity with nature, Wisdom, A world of beauty, Social justice, Broadminded, Protecting the environment)  
|                    | • Benevolence (Loyal, Honest, Helpful, Responsible, Forgiving)                                             | .80          |
| Self-enhancement   | • Power (Social power, Wealth, Authority, Preserving my public image)                                       | .80          |
|                    | • Achievement (Ambitious, Influential, Capable, Successful)                                                 | .80          |
|                    | • Hedonism (Pleasure, Enjoying life, Self-indulgent)                                                        | .82          |
| Conservation       | • Tradition (Respect for tradition, Moderate, Humble, Accepting my portion in life, Devout)                 | .82          |
|                    | • Conformity (Politeness, Self-discipline,Honouring of parents and elders, Obedient)                        |              |
|                    | • Security (Social order, National security, Reciprocation of favours, Family security, Clean)            |              |
| Openness to Change | • Stimulation (An exciting life, A varied life, Daring)                                                      | .71          |
|                    | • Self-direction (Freedom, Creativity, Independent, Choosing own goals, Curious)                            |              |

### 4.4.2 Perceived service climate

The Global Service Climate Scale (GSCS) (Schneider et al., 1998) was used to measure perceived service climate. The scale was designed to measure employee perceptions of service climate using seven items. This study subjected the GSCS to an exploratory factor analysis to assess its uni-dimensionality. The result of this analysis is summarised in Table 4.6 together with the Cronbach’s alpha. One extracted factor explained 52% of the variance. An examination of the scree plot suggested a clear break after the first component. Using Catell’s (1966) scree test, this study retained one
component for further investigation. The uni-dimensionality of the measure was consistent with previous research on the GSCS (Schneider et al., 1998). Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .84.

Table 4.6 Service Climate Scale - Exploratory Factor Analysis and Cronbach’s Alpha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Eigen-value</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1- Service Climate</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC1: How would you rate the job knowledge and skills of employees in your business to deliver superior quality work and service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC2: How would you rate efforts to measure and track the quality of the work and service in your business?</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC3: How would you rate the recognition and rewards employee receive for the delivery of superior work and service?</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4: How would you rate the leadership shown by management in your business in supporting the service quality effort?</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC5: How would you rate the leadership shown by management in your business in supporting the service quality effort?</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC6: How would you rate the effectiveness of your communications efforts to both employees and customers?</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC7: How would you rate the tools, technology and other resources provided to employees to support the delivery of superior quality work and service?</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 HR practices

The High Performance HR practices (HPHRP) scale (Sun et al., 2007) used nineteen items to measure HR practices. The current study subjected the HPHRP scale to an exploratory factor analysis in order to assess its multi-dimensionality. The result revealed the presence of five factors, explaining respectively 36%, 10%, 8%, 7% and 6% of the variance. A substantive theoretical reading of the factor structure suggested that the five-factor solution was the most meaningful. An examination of the scree plot suggested a relatively clear break after the fifth component. Using Catell’s (1966) scree test, five components were retained for further investigation.

Accordingly, five factors were submitted for a rotation. In order to determine which rotation method would provide the clearest and most interpretable results, both an orthogonal approach (i.e., varimax) and an oblique approach (i.e., direct oblimin) were considered. While an orthogonal approach is a more commonly adopted method, Preacher and MacCallum (2003) suggested that the selected rotation technique among all the alternatives should provide an easily interpretable solution, which illustrates the best simple structure. They also state that the researcher should not assume that all the factors are completely independent; therefore, it is more appropriate to assume co-relation among individual items. In this regard, a direct oblimin rotation allows for assessing the
correlations between items and provides a more accurate and interpretable solution than a varimax rotation (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Preacher & MacCallum, 2003). Therefore, this study adopted a direct oblimin rotation.

The results of exploratory factor analyses and reliability tests for the HPHRP scale are summarised in Table 4.7. The results of these tests revealed two issues. First, the internal mobility dimension (HIM) showed very low scale reliability. Second, two items measuring internal mobility (HIM4 and HIM5) did not load on this dimension but they loaded on the extensive training dimension. This result was inconsistent with the factor structure observed in the original study (Sun et al., 2007). Since retaining HIM4 and HIM5 increased the reliability score of the extensive training dimension and including them was important based on the underlying theory, I decided to retain these items albeit with slight changes in this scale.

Specifically, HIM4 and HIM5 were moved into Component 1 (HRT). The reliability test of this new dimension yielded Cronbach’s alpha coefficient as .85. This new dimension was named the HR training for promotion as it contained the essence of HR training for the purpose of career advancement. The merge of these items logically makes sense as receiving appropriate training and gaining necessary skills are essential for an individual’s promotion in the organisation (Taormina, 2009). Furthermore, HIM4 and HIM5 seem to contain the essence of upward mobility achieved by gaining knowledge and skills and this characteristic is very closely related to HRT4. After reconstructing these dimensions, Cronbach’s alpha for all dimensions were assessed, which demonstrated relatively high scale reliability except for the internal mobility dimension (i.e., HR training for promotion = .85, clear job description = .86, result-oriented performance appraisal = .83, participation = .84 and internal mobility = .60). Therefore, the dimension of internal mobility was removed at this point.
Table 4.7 HR Practices Scale - Exploratory Factor Analysis and Cronbach’s Alpha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Commun.</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Eigen-</th>
<th>% of</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1 - HR Training for Promotion (HRT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRT1: Extensive training programs are provided for individuals in customer contact or front-line jobs</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>35.63</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRT2: Employees in customer contact jobs will normally go through training programs every few years</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRT3: There are formal training programs to teach new employees the skills they need to perform their job</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRT4: Formal training programs are offered to employees in order to increase employees’ promotability in the organisation</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HIM4: Employees have clear career paths in this organisation</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HIM5: Employees in customer contact jobs who desire promotion have more than one potential position to which they could be promoted</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 2 -- Clear Job Description (HJD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJD1: The duties of your job are clearly defined</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJD2: This job has up-to-date description</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJD3: The job description for a position accurately describes all of the duties performed by individual employees</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 3 -- Result-Oriented Performance Appraisal (HPA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA1: Performance is more often measured with objective quantifiable results</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA2: Performance appraisals are based on objective quantifiable results</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA3: Employee appraisals emphasise long term and group-based achievement</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 4 -- Participation (HPC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC1: Employees in this job are often asked by their supervisor to participate in decisions</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>-.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC2: Individuals in this job are allowed to make decisions</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>-.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC3: Employees are provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>-.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC4: Supervisors keep open communications with employees in this job</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>-.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 5 -- Internal Mobility (HIM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>9.67</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HIM1: Employees have few opportunities for upward mobility (i.e., promotion)</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HIM2: Employees do not have any future in this organisation</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HIM3: Promotion in this organisation is based on seniority</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Initially, these items belonged to the Internal Mobility (HIM) dimension

**These items were reverse-coded

4.4.4 Service leadership

The Service Leadership scale derived from SERV*OR (Lytle et al., 1998) was used to measure service leadership by using nine items. The current study subjected the Service Leadership scale to an exploratory factor analysis to assess its dimensionality. The result of the analysis demonstrated the presence of two factors, explaining 55% and 12% of the variance, respectively. An inspection of the scree plot suggested a clear break after the second component. This two-dimensional scale was consistent with the previous study (Lytle et al., 1998). After conducting Catell’s (1966) scree test, two components were
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY

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retained for further investigation. These factors were submitted for a direct oblimin rotation. The result of the analysis is summarised in Table 4.8 alongside associated Cronbach’s alphas. The Cronbach alpha for each dimension demonstrated good reliability of the scale (service vision = .77 and servant leadership = .90). That is, the internal consistency of the Service Leadership scale was reasonably high in this study. The next section reports the results of hypothesis testing.

Table 4.8 Service Leadership Scale - Exploratory Factor Analysis and Cronbach’s Alpha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Eigen-value</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1 - Service Vision (SV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>12.35</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SV1: There is a true commitment to service, not just &quot;lip service&quot;</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SV2: Customers are viewed as &quot;opportunities to serve&quot; rather than as &quot;sources of revenue&quot;</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SV3: It is believed by employees that this hotel exists to serve the needs of its customers</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 2 –Servant Leadership (SL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>54.57</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL1: Management in this hotel constantly communicates the importance of service</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL2: Management in this hotel regularly spends time “in the field” or “on the floor” with customers and front-line employees</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL3: Management in this hotel constantly measures service quality</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL4: Management in this hotel shows that they care about service by constantly giving of themselves</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL5: Management in this hotel provides resources (not just “lip service”), to enhance employee ability to provide excellent service</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL6: Managers in this hotel offer leadership in creating quality service</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Results of Hypotheses Testing

As noted in Chapter 3, this study adopted regression analysis (i.e., simple and moderated regressions) and independent-samples t-tests (or simply called, t-tests) as two main analysis techniques to test the hypotheses. To gain an alternative perspective of understanding the results of hypotheses testing, multiple regression analysis was also performed. Before conducting the analyses, the assumptions of these techniques were checked. For simple and moderated regression analyses, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals were assessed via probability-probability (P-P) plots and scatter plots (Pallant, 2011). The detailed explanation of these assumptions is provided below (Pallant, 2011).

- P-P plots: This plot is often used to check normality, which depicts the cumulative probability of a variable against the cumulative probability of a specific distribution
(Field, 2013). When the data points are on a fairly straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, it suggests the data is normally distributed.

- **Scatter plots:** This plot is often employed to assess the linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals (Field, 2013). When the cases are fairly evenly distributed akin to a cigar shape along its length and there is no clear or systematic pattern in the distribution, it suggests that there is no violation of assumption.

The results of the assumption tests depict that all assumptions were met for regression analysis in this study.

As for the independent-samples t-test, homogeneity of variance was checked by using Levene’s test for equality of variance. Homogeneity of variance indicates whether the sample is collected from populations of equal variance. A p-value of more than .05 suggests the variance for the two groups are equal for hypothesis testing at a 0.05 level of significance (Pallant, 2011). With this score, the researcher can claim that data met the assumption of homogeneity of variance (Pallant, 2011). The results of this assumption test are summarised in Table 4.9, which shows that all assumptions of t-tests were met.

### Table 4.9 The Results of Assumption Testing - T-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Levene’s test for equality of variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H1: HR practices have a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate**

As noted in Chapter 2, HR practices have been widely recognised as one of the key antecedents of perceived service climate. For this reason, the current study proposed that HR practices positively relate to employee perceptions of service climate (H1). HR practices consists of four dimensions (HR Training for Promotion, Clear Job Description, Result-Oriented Performance Appraisal and Participation). However, as noted in Chapter 3, I treated HR practices as a single ‘combined variable’ to examine how HR practices as a ‘system’ (rather than separate individual HR practices) contribute to explaining the proposed model in this study. To test H1, a simple regression analysis was conducted. The result of the analysis is summarised in Table 4.10, which revealed that HR practices had a statistically significant relationship with perceived service climate ($\beta = .63$, $t = 17.22$, $p < .05$). That is, HR practices have a positive relationship to employee perceptions of
service climate, which provides support for H1. This result is also in line with the findings from previous research suggesting the strong positive link between HR practices and employee perceptions of service climate (Hong et al., 2013).

Table 4.10 HR Practices Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>9.69</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>296.34 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,463)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .39$, **$p < .05$**

**H2: Service leadership has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate**

Similar to HR practices, service leadership is widely accepted as a key antecedent of perceived service climate. Thus, the current study proposed that service leadership positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H2). Service Leadership consists of two dimensions (Service Vision and Servant Leadership). Just as for HR practices, I treated service leadership as one combined variable. In order to test a proposed relationship, a single regression analysis was conducted. The result of this analysis is summarised in Table 4.11, which indicates that service leadership contributed to employee perceptions of service climate ($\beta = .65$, $t = 20.90$, $p < .05$). That is, service leadership contributed to employee perceptions of service climate, which provides support for H2. This result confirms the findings from previous research suggesting a positive relationship between service leadership and employee perceptions of service climate (Schneider et al., 2005).

Table 4.11 Service Leadership Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>9.26</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>436.74 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>20.90</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .48$, **$p < .05$**
H3: Self-transcendence positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate

Self-transcendence refers to a personal value type that emphasises care and concern for others. Since the characteristic of this personal value type is congruent with the characteristics of service climate (i.e., emphasising care for customers), I hypothesised that self-transcendence positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H3). A simple regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis. The result is summarised in Table 4.12, which revealed that self-transcendence did not have a statistically significant relationship with perceived service climate ($\beta = -.08$, $t = -1.75$, $p > .05$). As such, H3 was not supported. This finding was surprising and contradicts previous studies, which suggest positive relationships between self-transcendence and employee perceptions/attitudes related to ‘helping or caring for others’ (e.g., Karabati & Uçanok, 2013). Such a surprising result requires further investigation to understand possible explanations for this finding. This point will be discussed later in this chapter.

Table 4.12 Self-transcendence Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>106.07</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.07***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,479)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .01$, ***$p > .05$

4.5.1 Transformation of personal values variables into categorical variables

Before conducting t-tests and moderated regression analyses, I transformed the personal values variables into categorical variables for the following reasons. First, conducting t-tests (associated with H3a, H4a, H5a and H6a) requires independent variables to be categorical dichotomous variables (Field, 2013). Second, transformation of the moderating variables into distinct categorical groups is considered to help the researcher clearly observe their moderating effects (see H3b, H3c, H4b, H4c, H5b, H5c, H6b and H6c) (Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, & Rucker, 2002).

Specifically, in the current study, I first transformed the numeric personal value scale into three equal categories by using 0.33 percentiles as the group cut-offs. These three groups represented employees who scored low, medium or high on each personal
value type. After the medium group was removed from the further analyses, the codes (1 and -1) were assigned to high and low groups respectively. In this way, four personal value variables (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change) were transformed from interval variables into categorical variables for testing the relevant hypotheses.

**H3a: Employees with high self-transcendence perceive service climate higher than employees with low self-transcendence**

Using the dichotomous variables created above, a t-test was conducted to examine the proposed relationship between self-transcendence and perceived service climate. In line with H3, the current study hypothesised that employees with high self-transcendence perceive service climate higher than those with low self-transcendence. The result is summarised in Table 4.13, which indicates no significant difference in perceived service climate between low self-transcendence (M = 4.90) and high self-transcendence groups (M = 4.73; t (318) = 1.64, p = .102). As such, the current study did not support H3a. This result is not surprising given that H3 was not supported (which effectively tests the same idea).

**Table 4.13 Comparison of Service Climate Perception by High and Low Self-Transcendence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Self-transcendence</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-transcendence</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses H3b, H4b, H5b and H6b examined the moderating effects of personal values on the relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate. The rationale of these hypotheses was: HR practices should have a positive relationship with employee perceptions of service climate (H1) and each personal value type should have either a positive or negative relationship on perceived service climate (H3-6). Therefore, the current study proposed that when these personal values interact with HR practices, they would play moderating roles and influence employee perceptions of service climate accordingly.
H3b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high.

Built on the review of relevant literature, the current study proposed that self-transcendence positively relates to perceived service climate (H3). Based on this proposed relationship, it is hypothesised that self-transcendence strengthens the positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate (H3b). A moderated regression analysis was conducted to test this proposed relationship. As mentioned above, self-transcendence was used as a nominal variable in this analysis. The result is summarised in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Moderating Effects of Self-transcendence on HR Practices and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta (β)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>121.38</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>120.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>13.78</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-transcendence x HR practices</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, R^2 = .39, ***p > .05
*Mean centred scores are used for HR practices.

HR practices and self-transcendence were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The model explained a total of 39% of the variance in perceived service climate (R^2 = .39, F (2, 302) = 97.67, p < .05). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between self-transcendence and HR practices was entered to allow the comparison between models with and without the product term. The interaction effect of self-transcendence and HR practices was not significant in predicting perceived service climate (β = .01, t = .27, p >.05). That is, self-transcendence did not moderate the relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate. Therefore, **H3b was not supported.**
**H3c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high**

With the same rationale as HR practices, the current study examined the moderating effects of respective personal values on the relationship between service leadership and employee perceptions of service climate (H3c, H4c, H5c and H6c). H3c hypothesised that *self-transcendence* strengthens the positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate. In order to test this hypothesised relationship, a moderated regression analysis was performed. The results are summarised in Table 4.15. Service leadership and *self-transcendence* were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The results showed that a total of 49% of the variance in the perceived service climate were explained by the model ($R^2 = .49$, $F (2, 315) = 151.05$, $p < .05$). In the second step, the interaction term between *self-transcendence* and service leadership was entered. The interaction effect of *self-transcendence* and service leadership was not significant ($\beta = -.01$, $t = .32$, $p > .05$). Therefore, *self-transcendence* did not pose any moderating effect on the relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate. Thus, **H3c was not supported**.

**Table 4.15 Moderating Effects of Self-transcendence on Service Leadership and Service Climate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta ($\beta$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>135.29</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>151.05***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>17.23</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-2.55</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>135.08</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>100.45***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>17.21</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-2.56</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence x Service Leadership</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.32</td>
<td>.747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .49$, ***$p > .05$*

The current study hypothesised a positive relationship between *self-transcendence* and perceived service climate through H3 and H3a. However, the results of the testing of these hypotheses showed no significant relationship between them. Since two other
hypotheses (H3b and H3c) were developed on the assumption of a positive relationship between *self-transcendence* and perceived service climate, these hypotheses, **H3b and H3c were not supported**. As mentioned above, such results were surprising and further interrogation is required to identify the underlying possible explanations. This discussion is provided later in this chapter.

**H4: Self-enhancement negatively relates to employee perceptions of service climate**

_Self-enhancement_ embraces power, achievement and hedonism as one’s motivational goals. However, instead of facilitating an individual’s achievement, the hotel industry and service climate often emphasise ‘coordination’ or ‘team efforts’ to deliver flawless service. Since such characteristics conflict with _self-enhancement_ values, I hypothesised that _self-enhancement_ negatively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H4). In order to test this hypothesised relationship, a simple regression analysis was performed. The result is summarised in Table 4.16. Against the proposed relationship, the study revealed that _self-enhancement_ positively and significantly relates to the employee perceptions of service climate ($\beta = .11, t = 2.34, p < .05$). Therefore, **the hypothesis (H4) was not supported**. In addition to the relationship between *self-transcendence* and perceived service climate, this result was surprising.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.16 Self-enhancement Regression Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1,478)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .01$, ***p. <.001

**H4a: Employees with high self-enhancement perceive service climate lower than employees with low self-enhancement**

In line with H4, the current study proposed that employees with high _self-enhancement_ perceive service climate lower than those with low _self-enhancement_. An independent-samples t-test was used to test this proposed relationship. The result of H4a testing is summarised in Table 4.17. Similar to H4, the current study revealed the opposite effects of _self-enhancement_ on perceived service climate. In other words, employees with high _self-enhancement_ perceive service climate higher than employees with low self-enhancement. This finding was contradictory to the proposed relationship. Hence **H4a was**
not supported.

Table 4.17 Comparison of Service Climate Perception by High and Low Self-enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Self-enhancement</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-enhancement</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>-2.03</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H4b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high

H4 hypothesised that self-enhancement relates negatively to employee perceptions of service climate. In line with this hypothesis, H4b proposed that self-enhancement weakens the positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate. In order to test this relationship, a moderated regression analysis was conducted. The result is summarised in Table 4.18. HR practices and self-enhancement were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The model explained a total of 39% of the variance in perceived service climate (R² = .39, F (2, 306) = 98.87, p < .05). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction effect of self-enhancement and HR practices was not significant (β = -.08, t = -1.75, p > .081). Thus, H4b was not supported.

Table 4.18 Moderating Effects of Self-enhancement on HR Practices and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta (β)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 (Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>122.16</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>98.87***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>13.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2 (Constant)</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>122.08</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>67.39***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>13.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-enhancement x HR practices</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, R² = .39, ***p < .05
**H4c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high**

The moderation effect of *self-enhancement* on the relationship between service leadership and service climate (H4c) was examined by using a moderated regression analysis. The result is summarised in Table 4.19. Service leadership and *self-enhancement* were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The results indicated that the total variance explained by the model was 49% ($R^2 = .49$, $F (2, 311) = 148.97$, $p < .05$). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between *self-enhancement* and service leadership was entered. The interaction effect of self-enhancement and service leadership was not significant ($\beta = -.04$, $t = -1.09$, $p > .05$). As such, **H4c was not supported.**

Table 4.19 Moderating Effects of Self-enhancement on Service Leadership and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>(2,311)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 (Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>134.40</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>148.97***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>17.03</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 2 (Constant) | 4.87 | .04 | 134.44 | .000 | 99.76*** | (3,310) |
| Service Leadership     | .64 | .04 | .69 | 16.87 | .000 |        |
| Self-enhancement       | .09 | .04 | .10 | 2.39 | .018 |        |
| Self-enhancement x Service Leadership | -.04 | -.04 | -1.09 | .278 |        |        |

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .49$, **p > .05**

In this study, *self-enhancement* was hypothesised to have a negative relationship with perceived service climate. However, the results of simple regression (H4) and t-test (H4a) showed the opposite effects. In other words, *self-enhancement* was actually positively related to perceived service climate. Since another two hypotheses (H4b and H4c) were built on the assumption of having a negative relationship between those variables, H4b and H4c were also not supported. In addition to the relationship between *self-transcendence* and perceived service climate, these results were unexpected. One of the reasons that might explain this result is that some characteristics of service climate
actually work in favour of those employees with a *self-enhancement* value type. In other words, delivering excellent service may serve their needs for power and achievement.

**H5: Conservation positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate**

Conservation emphasises the importance of certainty or security. Since service climate clarifies ‘what is important’ or ‘what should be done’ in relation to customer service, I argued that such a strong signal or consistent message helps employees to have ‘a sense of certainty’ in a workplace. Thus, I proposed that *conservation* positively relates to perceived service climate (H5). In order to test this relationship, a simple regression analysis was performed. The result is summarised in Table 4.20. As proposed, *conservation* positively relates to the employee perceptions of service climate ($\beta = .12, t = 2.56, p < .05$) whereby **H5 was supported**. However, it should be noted that the model fit was very poor, explaining only 1% of variance in employee perceptions of service climate. Thus, the effect of *conservation* on perceived service climate is marginal. Although a number of reasons might explain such a subtle effect of *conservation*, several possible explanations are provided later in this chapter.

### Table 4.20 Conservation Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>110.42</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>6.54***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,482)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .01$, ***p < .05

**H5a: Employees with high conservation perceive service climate higher than employees with low conservation**

In addition to H5, the current study proposed that employees in the high conservation group perceive service climate higher than those in the low conservation group (H5a). A $t$-test was conducted to examine this proposed relationship. The result is summarised in Table 4.21, which revealed that there was a significant difference in service climate scores between the low conservation (M = 4.72) and the high conservation group (M = 4.98; t (321) = -2.57, p = .011). This result indicates that employees with high conservation perceive service climate higher than those with low conservation. As such, **H5a was supported**.
Table 4.21 Comparison of Service Climate Perception by High and Low Conservation groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Conservation</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Conservation</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>-2.57</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H5b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high.

Built on H5 and H5a, I proposed that the positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is strengthened by conservation (H5b). A moderated regression analysis was performed to test this relationship. The result of this hypothesis testing is summarised in Table 4.22. HR practices and conservation were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The total variance explained by the model was 40% ($R^2 = .40, F (2, 308) = 102.18, p < .05$). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between conservation and HR practices was entered. The interaction effect of conservation and HR practices was not significant ($\beta = -.06, t = -1.26, p > .05$). Thus, H5b was not supported.

Table 4.22 Moderating Effects of Conservation on HR Practices and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta (β)</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>123.22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>102.18*** (2,308)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>13.93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>123.04</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>68.79*** (3,307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>13.53</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation x HR practices</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .40$, ***p > .05
H5c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high

Just as in H5b, the current study proposed that conservation strengthens the positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate (H5c). In order to test this hypothesised relationship, a moderated regression analysis was conducted. The result is summarised in Table 4.23. Service leadership and conservation were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The results indicated that the total variance explained by the model was 49% (\(R^2 = .49, F = (2, 316) = 150.67, p < .05\)). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between conservation and service leadership was entered. The interaction effect of conservation and service leadership was not significant (\(\beta = -.01, t = -.14, p >.05\)). Therefore, \textbf{H5c was not supported}.

Table 4.23 Moderating Effects of Conservation on Service Leadership and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>(df)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta ((\beta))</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>135.36</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>150.67***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>134.85</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>100.14***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>16.91</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation x Service</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, \(R^2 = .49\), ***p > .05

This study hypothesised that conservation and perceived service climate has a positive relationship (H5 and H5a). The results of regression analysis and t-test supported this hypothesised relationship. However, it also revealed that the effects of conservation on perceived service climate were very marginal. Such a subtle effect of conservation might explain why I found no moderating effect of conservation on the relationship between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate (H5b and H5c).
As mentioned earlier, a number of factors might explain such marginal effects. Understanding the result of these hypotheses requires further investigation. This point will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

**H6: Openness to change negatively relates to employee perceptions of service climate**

People with high openness to change are motivated to pursue their own intellectual and emotional interests by constantly changing the existing system or environment to fulfil their own needs. Employee perceptions of service climate are often developed upon a solid ground of policy, practice and procedure in relation to service excellence. Thus, the employees with high openness to change might be frustrated with the situation in which they need to follow an existing policy or practice, particularly if they cannot easily change it as they want. Based on this incongruence between the nature of service climate and the characteristics of openness to change value type, the current study hypothesised that openness to change negatively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H6).

In order to test this proposed relationship, a simple regression analysis was conducted. The result of the analysis is summarised in Table 4.24. Openness to change negatively and significantly relates to the employee perceptions of service climate ($\beta = -0.12$, $t = -2.67$, $p > .05$), which supports H6. However, just as in H5, the model fit was very poor (2%) so that the relationship between openness to change and service climate was subtle and marginal. Similar to conservation values, some factors may explain such marginal effects of openness to change. These underlying reasons will be examined later in this chapter.

**Table 4.24 Openness to Change Regression Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>119.54</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>7.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-2.67</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .02$, ***p. <.05

**H6a: Employees with high openness to change perceive service climate lower than employees with high openness to change**

In line with H6, the current study hypothesised that employees with high openness to change perceive service climate lower than those with low openness to change (H6a). In order to test this relationship, a t-test was conducted. The result is summarised in Table
4.25, which revealed that employees with low openness to change (M = 5.01) rated the service climate higher than those with high openness to change (M= 4.73; t (318) = 2.86, p = .004). As such, the result supports H6a.

**Table 4.25 Comparison of Service Climate Perception by High and Low Openness to Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Openness to Change</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Openness to Change</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.09 .47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H6b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high**

In this study, H6 and H6a proposed openness to change negatively relates to perceived service climate. In line with these propositions, it is hypothesised that a positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is weakened by openness to change (H6b). A moderated regression analysis was used to test this proposed relationship. The result is summarised in Table 4.26. HR practices and openness to change were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. The results indicated that a total of 40% of the variance in the perception of service climate were explained (R$^2$ = .40, F (2, 305) = 102.70, p < .05). The interaction effect of openness to change and HR practices was not significant ($\beta = .03$, $t = .57$, $p > .05$). As such, the result of current study revealed that H6b was not supported.
Table 4.26 Moderating Effects of Openness to Change on HR Practices and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta (β)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>123.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>13.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>122.52</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>13.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to Change x HR practices</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, R² = .40, ***p > .05

**H6c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high**

In addition to H6b, this study hypothesised the moderating effect of openness to change on the relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate (H6c). In order to test this relationship, a moderated regression analysis was performed. The result is summarised in Table 4.27. Service leadership and openness to change were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. A total of 49% of the variance in the perceived service climate was explained (R² = .49, F (2, 313) = 151.82, p < .05). In the second step of analysis, the interaction term between openness to change and service leadership was entered, which was not significant (β = .00, t = .04, p > .05). As such, H6c was not supported.
### Table 4.27 Moderating Effects of Openness to Change on Service Leadership and Service Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-standardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta (β)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>135.29</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>134.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Change x</td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>.966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Service Climate, $R^2 = .49$, ***p > .05

Built on the relevant literature, I hypothesised a negative relationship between openness to change and perceived service climate. The result of simple regression analysis (H6) and t-test (H6a) supported the hypothesised relationship. However, similar to conservation values, the effect of openness to change on the perceived service climate was very marginal, which might be the reason why the current study did not identify the moderating effect of openness to change (H6b and H6c). In addition to the results of conservation, further investigation to explain the marginal effects of these personal values types is warranted and this issue is discussed later in this chapter. A summary of all hypotheses and their results are provided in Table 4.28.
Table 4.28 The Results of Hypotheses Testings and Statistical Test Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Main statistical technique used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: HR practices have a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Service leadership has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Self-transcendence has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: Employees with high self-transcendence perceive service climate higher than employees with low self-transcendence</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-transcendence, such that the relationship is stronger when self-transcendence is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: Self-enhancement has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a: Employees with high self-enhancement perceive service climate lower than employees with high self-enhancement</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by self-enhancement, such that the relationship is weaker when self-enhancement is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5: Conservation has a positive effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Marginally Supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a: Employees with high conservation perceive service climate higher than employees with low conservation</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by conservation, such that the relationship is stronger when conservation is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6: Openness to change has a negative effect on employee perceptions of service climate</td>
<td>Marginally Supported</td>
<td>Simple Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6a: Employees with high openness to change perceive service climate lower than employees with high openness to change</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6b: The positive relationship between HR practices and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6c: The positive relationship between service leadership and perceived service climate is moderated by openness to change, such that the relationship is weaker when openness to change is high</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
<td>Moderated Regression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Testing hypothesised relationships via multivariate regression analysis

To gain an alternative perspective from testing the hypotheses via simple regressions, I conducted a multiple regression analysis. The composite variable of perceived service climate was set as the dependent variable while the composite variables of personal values (i.e., conservation, self-enhancement, self-transcendence, openness to change), HR practices and service leadership were set as independent variables. The technique used for the regression analysis was a forced entry. That is, all variables are simultaneously forced into the theoretically developed model in the current study. Studenmund (2011) suggests that this method is the most appropriate when testing
theory-based constructs because the result is not influenced by random variation in the data but it can produce the same results if the test is replicated.

Before conducting multiple regression analysis, I inspected the assumptions of linearity of the dependent variable, constant variance of the error terms, independence of the error terms and normality of the error term distribution assumptions (see Appendix J). These assumptions were inspected by plotting the difference between the observed and the predicted values for the dependent variable (residuals versus the independent variables) (Hair, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Then, I assessed multicollinearity by examining a correlation matrix of the predictor variables, tolerance (TOL) and measures of variance inflation factors (VIF) (Field, 2013; Hair, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). The matrix showed low degree of multicollinearity among the independent variables, and moderate to high correlations between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The VIF values were not greater than 10 (1.677 – 3.479) and TOL values were above 0.1 (0.287 -0.596) (Field, 2013).

Table 4.29 Multiple Regression Analysis of Key Variables in Study 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>.493</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td></td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td></td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td></td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to change</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R - square</td>
<td></td>
<td>.548</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R - square</td>
<td></td>
<td>.542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (6, 451) = 99.019 Sig .000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To validate the process of the regression model, I assessed the adjusted R- square. Examination of the adjusted R-square values revealed little loss in predictive power when compared to the R-square values (.548 versus .542 on Table 4.29). This result indicates that the model maintains an adequate ratio of observations to variables and no overfitting, which would be shown by a more noticeable difference between the two values (Field, 2013; Hair, 2010). The result of the multiple regression analysis confirms that personal values (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, and openness to change) are not related, and HR practices and service leadership are significantly related to perceived service climate. This result corroborates the results of previously conducted regression analyses above.
In sum, while the current study confirmed the well-established relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate, I did not observe any major effect of personal values on perceived service climate. Such marginal effects might have led to the result of no moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Based on the results of hypotheses testing, the following sections discuss the findings and implications of Study 1.

4.6 Discussion

4.6.1 The results of hypothesis testing

The purpose of Study 1 was to investigate the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate, as well as the moderating role of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Before investigating the effects of personal values, I first examined the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. Based on the relevant literature, I hypothesised that HR practices and service leadership positively relate to employee perceptions of service climate (H1 and 2). The results of a simple regression analysis supported the proposed relationships. Employees positively perceive service climate when they identify high levels of effective HR practices and strong service leadership in the organisation. This finding supports a number of previous studies and confirms HR practices and service leadership as key antecedents of perceived service climate (e.g., Bowen & Schneider, 2014; Hong et al., 2013).

To address the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate, I adopted Schwartz’s (1992) conceptualisation of personal values, particularly his four higher-order personal value types (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change). A series of simple regression analyses were performed to examine the direct relationships between personal values and perceived service climate (H3, H4, H5 and H6) while t-tests were used to investigate the between-group differences (high and low in each personal value type) in their service climate perceptions (H3a, H4a, H5a and H6a). In relation to the personal values’ moderating role on HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate, moderated regression analyses were performed (H3b, H3c, H4b, H4c, H5b, H5c, H6b and H6c). To gain an
alternative perspective of understanding the results of hypotheses testing, I also performed multiple regression analysis. The section below discusses the results of the testing of these hypotheses.

First, I proposed that *self-transcendence* positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H3 and H3a). However, the results of regression analysis and t-test showed no statistically significant relationship between these two variables. That is, employees who strongly emphasise the importance of ‘care for others’ and those who do not embrace such values perceive service climate similarly. Considering the nature of service climate and *self-transcendence*, this result was surprising. One of the possible reasons might be associated with the context of the current study. The survey respondents in this study belonged to 4-5 star international hotel chains, which often have a strong service culture or well-developed internal HR management or operation systems (e.g., service policies, practices and procedures) (Ford et al., 2012). Such a strong service culture or effective management systems might have strongly influenced employee mindsets and facilitated them to form a homogeneous view towards the organisation’s internal environment. This notion of the ‘suppression effects’ of organisational factors on personal values is discussed later in this chapter.

Second, I hypothesised that *self-enhancement* negatively influence employee perceptions of service climate (H4 and H4a). However, against the proposed relationship, the result revealed that *self-enhancement* was actually positively related to perceived service climate. This result was also surprising. Nevertheless, this result could be explained by examining the role of service climate from a specific angle. For instance, employees who embrace *self-enhancement* are motivated to achieve their objectives in a workplace (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). Such employees possibly develop their ‘ideal customer service’ or ‘own goals’ that they strive to achieve in their work. Employee perceptions of service climate are derived from their identification of the organisation’s support for customer service. Given this notion, when employees perceive that the organisation provides support for them to achieve their own goals in service delivery, they may feel positive about the organisation’s internal environment, which leads to their positive assessments of service climate.

Third, I posited that *conservation* positively relates to employee perceptions of service climate (H5 and H5a). The results of analyses supported the proposed relationship. Given that hospitality employees often need to deal with a number of uncertainties (e.g., unexpected customer needs or unforeseen events), a service climate that determines
‘what is important in the organisation’ or ‘what the employees need to do in the organisation’ is considered to provide some degree of certainty to the employees. The current study partially supported this argument and the results are also in line with the finding from a previous study, which observed that *conservation* is positively associated with the desire to fulfil customer needs (Han et al., 1998). However, it should be noted that, while H5 and H5a were supported, the effect of *conservation* on employee perceptions of service climate was subtle.

Fourth, I postulated and established a negative relationship between *openness to change* and employee perceptions of service climate (H6 and H6a). This finding partially supports the argument of incongruence between the nature of *openness to change* (embracing independence, freedom, modification of existing system as core values) and the characteristics of hospitality organisations (which often have strong policies or practices that the employees have to follow). Nevertheless, just as in *conservation*, the current study did not observe a major effect of *openness to change* on employee perceptions of service climate. These results may also be explained by the ‘suppressing factors’ discussed above. This notion will be further discussed in the following section.

In addition to the direct relationships between personal values and perceived service climate, I examined moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. The results of moderated regression analyses showed that none of personal value types had moderating effects on the relationships between these variables. Furthermore, the result of multiple regression analysis was consistent with the findings from other regression analyses. That is, the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate are marginal at best.

In sum, the current study confirmed the widely recognised relationship between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. However, the results of hypothesis testing between personal values and perceived service climate were far less certain and confirming. However, this result is still questionable when considering a myriad of literature suggesting the strong impacts of personal values on our perceptions, attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Han et al., 1998; Karabatı & Uçanok, 2013). Thus, further investigation is justified to understand why the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate are marginal. The following sections discuss three possible explanations.
4.6.2 Possible explanation to the results of Study 1

The first possible explanation for the results of Study 1 might be associated with the concept of situational strength. This construct refers to “implicit or explicit cues provided by external entities regarding the desirability of potential behaviours” (Meyer, Dalal, & Hermida, 2010, p. 122). The concept suggests that environmental factors impose psychological pressure on individuals to take certain courses of action, which result in reducing the effects of personal attributes on their perception, attitudes, or behaviours (Meyer et al., 2010). In this study, the survey respondents were employees from 4-5 star international hotel chains, which often possess strong policies, practices and procedures. Furthermore, these particular hotels often strive to instil organisational values into employees through effective HR practices or strong leadership (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Therefore, it is likely that employee perceptions of these strong organisational factors masked the effects of personal values and created a workforce who viewed the organisational environment in a similar way (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Initially, I thought that such hotels with strong service policies or practices would provide an ideal context to assess the effects of personal values on perceived service climate. However, it is possible that such a context counteractively worked against my rationale.

The second possible explanation for the findings in Study 1 is associated with employees’ ‘self-suppression’ of their personal values. This action can be explained by the notion of ‘creating facades of conformity’. This notion refers to an action to suppress the effects of one’s own personal values and pretend to hold the organisational values (Hewlin, 2003). For some employees (e.g., immigrants or college/university students), earning money would be the main reason to work in hotels (Baum, Devine, Devine, & Hearns, 2007), while other employees consider working in and promoting their organisations is more important than anything else (Hewlin, 2003). These employees may consider that their personal values do not matter in the organisation and simply adopt the organisational policy by putting their personal values aside (or ‘turn off’ their personal values when they come to the workplace). Since creating facades of conformity often “mask one’s true self” in a workplace, these employees would not perceive the organisational atmosphere through their subjective lens (Hewlin, 2003, p. 634). Accordingly, the effects of personal values would not strongly appear in relation to employee perceptions of service climate.

The last possible explanation is associated with the challenge in measuring personal values through a survey technique. As noted in Chapter 3, the current study adopted the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS) (1992) as it has been extensively used in
other fields of study (e.g., sociology and psychology). Although the number of studies was limited, the scale has also been used in recent organisational studies. Nevertheless, past studies using SVS also show that researchers often struggle to clearly observe the effects of personal values on the variables of interest. They commonly found that some personal value variables (e.g., two out of four) often show no effects or marginal effects at best (e.g., Arthaud-Day et al., 2012; Jia, Rowlinson, Kvan, Lingard, & Yip, 2009; Karabatı & Uçanok, 2013). This outcome may simply reflect the difficulty of identifying strong personal value effects through the survey technique and the results of this current study support this notion. One of the reasons for this difficulty might be that personal values reside at one’s subconscious level (Locke, 1975) and it is hard to extract these effects unless the respondents are urged to reveal such deeply held beliefs (Gutman, 1991). That is, the survey technique may lack the ability to dig deep enough into the respondent’s subconscious. In this regard, qualitative methods (such as in-depth interviews) may assist in more effectively uncovering the effects of personal values by asking personal or customised questions in a more flexible manner (Gutman, 1991). The next section provides the rationale for conducting Study 2.

4.7 Link to Study 2

Study 2 was designed to investigate further the effects of personal values on employee service delivery:

**RQ2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?**

The results of Study 1 provided unexpected but interesting findings; that is, the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate are marginal. Given that the literature points to myriad ways that personal values impact one’s perceptions in a workplace, I questioned this result and provided possible explanations for my findings. Nevertheless, these explanations are still speculative at this point. Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore the underlying reasons for the findings of Study 1, which, in turn will assist in better understanding the relationships between personal values and perceived service climate. On this premise, I examined two issues in Study 2. First, I examined the underlying reasons to explain the findings of Study 1. Then, I addressed the second research question of this thesis (i.e., the relationship between personal values and employee service delivery).
4.8 Summary

This chapter provided the results and discussions of Study 1. It began by outlining the sample characteristics of survey respondents, the data screening and cleaning process. The results of factor analyses (both confirmatory and exploratory) and reliability tests were reported. Then, I discussed the results of hypothesis testing and the key findings of Study 1. Having identified the subtle effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate, three possible reasons were provided. Lastly, the rationale and outline of Study 2 were discussed. The next chapter reports the results and discussion of Study 2.
5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the results and findings from Study 1, which quantitatively examined the direct effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate as well as personal values’ moderating effects on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. In Study 2, I addressed two research issues by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. First, given the unexpected but interesting results in Study 1 (i.e., only marginal effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate), I sought to explore the underlying reasons. Second, I investigated the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery, which corresponds to the second research question of this thesis:

RQ2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?

This chapter presents the results and implications of Study 2. First, it discusses the data analysis process. Then the results of interviews are reported, which leads to the discussion of findings and implications of Study 2. The chapter concludes with a summary that segues to the final chapter in which the results of both study stages are integrated to draw an overarching conclusion of this thesis.

5.2 Interview Data Analysis Process

Chapter 3 details the sampling process of Study 2. In total, 23 customer-contact employees were interviewed. Table 5.1 presents a summary of the interviewees, including their gender, department and country of origin. As the table depicts, the sample involved 10 males and 13 females from various departments and ethnic backgrounds, which generally reflects the employee demographic characteristics of international hotels in Australia. For ease of reference, I assigned a code to each employee, which corresponds to the interview transcripts (e.g., E1 = Employee 1).
Table 5.1 Interview Participant Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee # (Code)</th>
<th>Gender (M/F)</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Front office</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Australia/Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Front office</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>Netherland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>Macao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Front office</td>
<td>Australia/Argentina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Australia/France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E14</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E15</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Front office</td>
<td>Australia/Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Australia/Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E17</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E18</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Australia/Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E20</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study 2 consists of two sections (see Figure 5.1). The first section explores possible explanations for the results of Study 1. The second section addresses the relationship between personal values and employee service delivery; this corresponds to research question 2 of this thesis. In order to effectively address these issues, I developed two tasks for each section. The subsequent sections follow this structure to report the data analysis process, results and the discussion of Study 2 findings.
Section 1
Reasons for Study 1 results

TASK 1
What factors influence Service Climate Perceptions?

TASK 2
What are the other possible reasons to explain Study 1 results?

Section 2
Relationship between personal values and service delivery

TASK 1
What types of personal values influence employee service delivery?

PART 2
How identified personal values influence employee service delivery?

Figure 5.1 Structure of Interview Protocol

5.2.1 Data analysis process for Section 1

Section 1 explores the underlying reasons that explain the results of Study 1. For Task 1 in this section, I sought to examine ‘suppressing factors’ that possibly mask personal value effects on employee perceptions of service climate. The results of Study 1 suggest that, although marginal, personal values still had an effect on perceived service climate. Based on situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010), I argue that this result is due to the fact that some strong organisational factors might suppress personal value effects. However, the approach I took to examining employee perceptions of service climate in Study 1 (i.e., quantitative study) would not inform what those suppressing factors were exactly. Therefore, by using a qualitative study, I sought to explore these factors. First, I asked the interviewees to rate their perceptions of service climate by using Global Service Climate Scale (1=lowest and 7=highest) (Schneider et al., 1998), which is the same process as the survey respondents undertook in Study 1. However, in Study 2, I directed the interviewees to write the keywords that determined their ratings, next to each item. Then, they were asked to explain how and why these keywords influenced their
answers/ratings. The key themes were derived from these keywords and their explanations (e.g., the comment ‘[my hotel] constantly try to recognise employees when they have done something to provide superior customer service’ (E15) refers to ‘reward and recognition system’).

In addition to these suppressing factors, Task 2 in Section 1 explored the ‘other reasons’ to explain Study 1 results. I informed the interviewees of the Study 1 results and asked them directly what might be the possible reasons why the effects of personal value on perceived service climate were so subtle. When asking this question, I clearly explained the meaning of the service orientation and service climate concepts to the interviewees. The key themes and codes were derived from the explicit meaning of the interviewees’ answers. For instance, the interviewees mentioned “all that information fed into our brains about the way things should be, what is meant to be, what is not meant to be and that may cloud our personal effects” (E15), which indicates the inculcation of organisational values. Thus, the relevant code was assigned accordingly.

5.2.2 Data analysis process for Section 2

The aim of Section 2 was to explore the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. As outlined in Section 3.4.2, two interview techniques were used in this section: the critical incident and laddering techniques. With the critical incident technique, I provided the interviewees with two different cases of service delivery: the case of service excellence (i.e., positive incident) and service failure/recovery (i.e., negative incident). In this way, I elicited employees to recall their attitudes and behaviours involved in their experiences of extreme cases of service delivery. Specifically, the questions asked were:

• What was your most excellent service delivery?
• What was your worst service delivery and how did you rectify it?

After these questions, I used the laddering technique to probe the underlying themes or fundamental motivations that influenced employees’ these particular service deliveries. The usefulness of the laddering technique to capture one’s personal values in research was outlined in Chapter 3. Example probing questions included, “What was the motivation to deliver such an excellent service?”, “What were the motivations to rectify the service failure?”, “Where was that motivation coming from?” and “How did it influence your
For Task 1 in this section, I sought to identify the various types (‘what’) of personal values that influence employee service delivery. An overview of the coding process is illustrated in Figure 5.2. I first performed a ‘broad-brush’ coding, specifically by coding all transcripts in Section 2 into either ‘personal attributes’ or ‘organisational attributes’. Personal attributes refer to the factors that are inherent in individual employees and influence employee service delivery. On the other hand, organisational attributes refer to the factors associated with the organisation that influence their service delivery, rather than the employee’s intrinsic motivation. These codes were assigned based on the explicit meaning of interviewee dialogues. For instance, if the interviewees talked about personal attributes as a fundamental motivation for their service delivery, the code of ‘personal attributes’ was assigned and vice versa. Then, ‘personal attributes’ were further divided into ‘personal value groups’ (e.g., motivation to help other people or seeking achievement) and ‘non-personal value groups’ (e.g., cultural background or upbringing).

Following this process, the relevant codes were assigned to the content of these personal value groups. For instance, when the interviewees were talking about ‘to care and help other people’ as a fundamental motivation to deliver good service, the code ‘helping others’ was assigned. Once the codes were ascribed to all transcripts referring to personal value, they were grouped based on Schwartz’s (1992) framework that has been discussed throughout this thesis. This categorisation was implemented based on the logic and similarity to Schwartz’s personal value taxonomy. As a result, ‘super-codes’ were assigned to four personal value types (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change).
After identifying ‘what’ personal value types, Task 2 in Section 2 examined ‘how’ these identified personal values influence employee service delivery. Specifically, I examined the interactions between personal values and organisational attributes in relation to service delivery. First, I investigated the strengths of personal value effects on employee service delivery in comparison to organisational attribute effects. Then, I further investigated whether the strengths of these effects could vary according to the type of service delivery (i.e., excellent service delivery and service recovery efforts). To do this, I followed two steps. First, I identified the organisational attributes that influence employee service delivery. This was done after assigning the codes of personal attributes and organisational attributes in Task 1 of Section 2. Then, organisational attributes were divided further into different themes based on my interpretation of the transcripts. For instance, when employees said, ‘Our hotel has a reputation. We are a five star place…trying to build, to keep the brand of our hotel and reputation as well’ (E12), this quote indicates that the employee’s reason to take a certain action in their service delivery is associated with protecting the hotel reputation. Thus, the code ‘hotel reputation’ was
assigned. Second, I examined the frequency of personal value and organisational attribute themes that appeared in the two different service delivery contexts.

5.3 Results of Interviews

This section provides the results of Study 2. Exemplar quotes and extracts were provided as supporting evidence of the key themes identified, as well as to strengthen the credibility of the analysis results. They were chosen based on the high relevance to the key themes identified from the interviews.

5.3.1 Underlying reasons to explain Study 1 results

5.3.1.1 Organisation’s suppressing factors

Section 1 explored the underlying reasons that explain Study 1’s results; specifically, examining why the effect of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate was marginal. The result of Task 1 in this section revealed four organisational factors that strongly influence the way interviewees answered the service climate questionnaire. Table 5.2 presents a summary of these key themes. In the table, the term, ‘source weighting’ refers to the number of employees who mentioned the theme while ‘reference weighting’ refers to how many times these themes appeared in all the interviews. The following sections report the four key themes identified in Task 1 in Section 1.

Table 5.2 Key Themes Influencing the Answers to Service Climate Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source weighing</th>
<th>Reference weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership showing to the employees including skills &amp; knowledge, responsible attitudes and behaviours, management supports, coordination among the managers, revenue orientation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>HR practices implemented by the organisation include reward and recognition system, induction &amp; on-going training)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information-sharing</td>
<td>Conducting regular customer-satisfaction surveys and customer loyalty surveys, keeping daily logs, sharing the results of surveys with employees</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication system for service delivery</td>
<td>Organisation’s efforts to create a seamless communication system, encouraging formal/informal communication among within/across departments, Communication efforts among employees</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership

In Task 1 of Section 1, leadership was the most frequently occurring theme. As mentioned in Chapter 2 as well as in Study 1, this result was not surprising as this organisational factor is known to be one of the key antecedents of employee perceptions of service climate (Hong et al., 2013). Nevertheless, the current study found some important aspects of leadership, which particularly affect employee perceptions of service climate.

Firstly, the manager or supervisor’s professional skills and knowledge is considered to be crucial for the employees to positively perceive service climate. The skills and knowledge demonstrated by management facilitate employees to perceive how seriously organisations emphasise professionalism towards customer service – “My manager knows how to create a good working team in order to deliver good customer service...he knows how the whole hotel system works in general. But in his field, he is good at his job, 100%” (E7).

Management’s responsible attitude and behaviour is also important for the employees to have strong perceptions of service climate (E16). This is particularly crucial in the case of service recovery. For instance, the manager’s highly responsible attitudes or behaviours to proactively deal with service failure give employees an impression of an organisation’s serious attitude towards caring for the customers - “If something goes wrong in service quality, the managers are very proactive. As soon as they hear about a customer complaining, they go to the customer and proactively do something to rectify the situation immediately” (E15).

Furthermore, management support for employee’s quality service delivery is always crucial for the employees to perceive how much the organisation is committed to creating service orientation within a workplace (E23). In particular, top-level managers’ care or concern for customer-contact employees at an individual level (“My general manager sees my comments and he immediately responds to it” – E9) significantly influence employees’ positive assessment of service climate (E20).

On the other hand, the current study found some negative impacts of leadership on perceived service climate. Some employees reported the frustration with inconsistency in management styles among supervisors or managers. This means, when there are multiple managers or supervisors in the department and their ways of managing employees vary from each other (e.g., a priority or process of customer service), it sends out inconsistent
signals of ‘how’ and ‘what’ employees should do in relation to customer service (i.e., ‘conflicting lines of authority’), which in turn negatively affects employee perceptions of service climate (E22)

We have four different managers in the front office. They always have different ways of doing things and their priorities in customer service are different from one manager to another. So when you work with one manager, you feel like you are doing more ‘customer-oriented’ service. And with the other one, you feel like you are doing more ‘operational service’. It’s always different. (E8)

In addition, a lack of coordination among managers gives employees an impression of ‘a lack of the organisation’s holistic approach to customer service’. In particular, the conflicts between managers are perceived negatively by the employees and potentially undermine the effectiveness or solidarity of teamwork. Ultimately, it adversely affects employee perceptions of service climate. This was illustrated from the excerpt from one respondent -

In my department, my supervisors don’t work with other teams. I can hear them complaining about other supervisors. I think it is unacceptable… We’ve had a new supervisor come lately. A lot of other people always talk behind his back and other supervisors will try to make him look bad to our boss, which is not good. They should be working as a team rather than trying to sabotage each other to make them look good. It’s very inevitable to me. (E18)

As such, the current study found various factors related to leadership, which strongly influenced the way employees answered the service climate questionnaire. In this light, it is considered that one of the suppressing factors that mask the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate is leadership.

**HR practices**

HR practices was another frequently occurring theme, which influenced the way employees answered the service climate questionnaire. Similar to leadership, this result was not surprising as HR practices is another key antecedent of employee perceptions of service climate (Hong et al., 2013). While HR practices encompass a number of aspects, the current study identified that two key aspects of HR practices strongly influence employee to perceive service climate.
The first key theme related to HR practices is a *reward and recognition system*. This is in line with the definition of service climate, which describes that, a customer-focused recognition and reward system is a key factor for the employees to positively perceive service climate (Schneider & White, 2004). The current study supported the notion that promoting such systems facilitates employee delivery of superior customer service (“It’s good to get a bit of recognition when you go beyond the job description and help the guests” - E1), which in turn, fosters employee perceptions of service climate:

Organisation is always constantly trying to recognise employees. They are constantly recognising and rewarding them. They encourage superior customer service a lot throughout the hotel. (E15)

However, some interviewees reported that management often fail to notice an employee’s good service delivery and ‘only recognise it if someone writes a letter or email’ (E21). Such ‘oversight’ may give employees an impression of ‘whether the organisation is truly focusing on the delivery of quality service’, which in turn, negatively influences their perceptions of service climate. It may also result in employees losing their motivation to go beyond their job descriptions and deliver quality customer service:

I see a lot of good service happening but not getting recognised… It is a bit sad when you know that one of your colleagues has given such a great amount of service even to one particular customer but they don’t get recognised for it. (E1)

Another important aspect of HR practices that influences employee perception of service climate is *training*. A number of interviewees discussed that they learnt many things through induction processes and on-going training. The trainings helped them to recognise the organisation’s commitment and passion for the delivery of quality customer service, which ultimately influenced their perceptions of service climate:

Everyone has to go through an induction that covers all of these things before you get into the company. The organisation tells you, ‘These are our values, this is what we do, this is how we like to do things, this is what’s important to us…’ Then, you will know how your organisation operates and how important certain things are. (E23)

In contrast, the current study also found that employee perceptions of ‘lack of training’ in their workplace would lead them to doubt the organisation’s commitment or
passion for providing excellent customer service, which negatively influence employee perceptions of service climate:

I don’t think our hotel has appropriate training sessions to give that five-star service because I know hotel A goes through five days of intense training before you get to step out the door and go to customers…I started my first shift and I walked down to the floor and they just say, ’learn by doing’. (E21)

Just as leadership does, this study found that HR practices (particularly reward and recognition systems and training) have a strong influence on the way employees answered the service climate questionnaire. It suggests that HR practices, in addition to leadership, is a strong organisational factor that suppresses the effects of personal values on perceived service climate.

Information-sharing

Information-sharing is another key theme that influences the way employees answer the service climate questionnaire. It suggests that sharing information about the results of a customer survey or daily, an updated TripAdvisor ranking affects the way employees perceive how much an organisation is committed to provide good customer service (E23). It therefore influences the way employees positively perceive service climate. This information is often shared through weekly newsletters or email. Some interviewees report:

They always give us the scores for the week and months. They are always measuring and tracking quality even through revenue strains. We do get that information in newsletters. And if it’s really bad, we’ll have a meeting and discuss why the quality of work is not where it should be. (E1)

Effective communication systems for service delivery

The final key theme is effective communication systems for service delivery. The interviewees reported that effective communication among employees is essential to deliver quality customer service. If the organisation strives to develop such an effective communication system (sometimes, by adopting technology), employees recognise the
organisational effort to facilitate a seamless customer service delivery. Such a perception would lead them to evaluate service climate in a workplace positively:

We have a Skype chat between the concierge and front desk. The front desk would say Mr. [Smith] just checked in, “Can you please deliver this bag to room 8096.” We will check on our system that Mr. [Smith] is in room 8096 and will take this bag to that room. I found that really good to have such a system. (E1)

In addition to leadership and HR practices, the current study revealed that these two factors are so strong that they influenced the way employees answered the service climate questionnaire. As noted earlier, the situational strength theory suggests that these factors (i.e., leadership, HR practices, information-sharing and effective communication system for service delivery) are considered to be strong factors that suppress personal value effects on employee perceptions of service climate. The next section reports the results of Task 2 in Section 1.

5.3.1.2 Other reasons to explain subtle effects of personal values on employee perception of service climate.

In addition to these supressing factors, Task 2 in Section 1 explored ‘other reasons’ to explain Study 1 results. The results revealed three key themes; they were, complexity and focus of the service climate questionnaire, inculcation of organisational values and self-suppression of personal values effects. Table 5.3 summarises the description of these latent codes, the source-weighting and reference-weighting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source weighting</th>
<th>Reference weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexity and focus of questionnaire</td>
<td>Complexity of questions, Confusing wording, Lack of understanding what the respondents are asked, The focus of questionnaire items is too much on organisational aspects so that it does not effectively recall the effects of personal values.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inculcation of organisational values</td>
<td>Strong HR policies and practices through induction, socialisation and training instil organisational values into employee’s mindset, Strong organisational culture.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-suppression of personal values effect</td>
<td>Willingness to keep working in the current hotel due to the reputation of the hotels; The reason to work in the current hotel is simply earning the money whereby suppressing personal values in a workplace even if it clashes with organisational values.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Complexity and focus of service climate questionnaire

The first key theme is the complexity and focus of service climate questionnaire. The interviewees reported that the contents of the service climate questionnaire were quite complex and this could be one of the reasons that Study 1 did not find any significant effects of personal values on service climate perception – “…because the question is quite complex…(some employees are) not simply understanding the question. So because of that, the responses are skewed” (E15). Another interviewee also stated, “to be honest, some participants might be confused with the question” (E3). In addition to the complexity of the questionnaire, some interviewees mentioned that the focus of the questionnaire is solely on organisational attributes and there is no space for them to reflect their personal values in their answers. For instance, one interviewee mentioned “a lot of the questions have to do with the organisation… so they don’t really have a lot to do with your values” (E1). Others also reported, “…because it was like an objective measure of how well the organisation functions. It’s not so much about how I am involved” (E4).

Incultation of organisational values

The second key theme is associated with the inculcation of organisational values. The interviewees frequently reported that their hotels effectively instil organisational values into employees’ mindsets through strong policies and practices. As a result, the effects of an individual’s personal values are minimised in the organisation and the employees tend to have a homogeneous view in a workplace. In most of the hotels that were represented in the current sample, employees often go through a number of induction and on-going training processes, then “all that information fed into our brains…information about the way things should be, what is meant to be, what is not meant to be; and that may cloud our personal values” (E15). Furthermore, a strong organisational culture influences employee perceptions and aligns their mindset with organisational values. Thus, “even though we have all these personal values, we’re ultimately brainwashed by the organisation…we are influenced so heavily by the organisational culture” (E15).

Self-suppression of personal value effects

The third key theme is related to self-suppression of personal value effects (or ‘creating facades of conformity’, as discussed in Chapter 4). To recap, creating facades of
conformity refers to the self-suppression of one’s own personal values in order to adapt themselves to a workplace even if their personal values and organisational values are not congruent (Hewlin, 2003). In this study, employees engage in creating facades of conformity for various reasons. Some interviewees reported that they self-suppress their personal value effect because they want to keep working at a hotel with a prestigious brand (“we work in the hotel with prestigious brand. I want to keep working here even if there is a bit of conflict between my personal values and organisational values” - E17). Other interviewees create facades of conformity to work in a hotel for simple economic reasons, (“I’m earning money, that’s all. I don’t care as long as I am getting paid. I guess from your own personal values, whatever your motivation is…money just comes because we needed to live” - E18). For these employees, a discrepancy between their personal values and organisational values would not be an issue because they often put their personal values aside, “making one’s true self (Hewlin, 2003, p. 634)” and pretend to adopt organisational values without question. As a result, the effects of personal values did not appear when assessing service climate (E3).

The above sections reported the results of Section 1 in Study 2, which investigates the underlying reasons that explain Study 1 results; that is, why personal values have only marginal effects on employee perceptions of service climate. The next section provides the results of Section 2, which addresses research question 2 of this thesis (What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?).

5.3.2 Effects of personal values on employee service delivery

5.3.2.1 Personal value types that influence service delivery

The result of Task 1 in Section 2 revealed that many different types of personal values influence employee service delivery. As noted earlier, such personal values are grouped into four types based on Schwartz’s (1992) personal value conceptualisation (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change). Table 5.4 depicts the most frequently occurred themes, their descriptions and Schwartz’s taxonomies corresponding to each key theme.
Table 5.4 Key Personal Value Themes Influencing Employee Service Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value Types</th>
<th>Associated Key Themes</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source Weighting</th>
<th>Reference Weighting</th>
<th>Corresponding Schwartz’s value taxonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Transcendence (22)*</td>
<td>Helping other people</td>
<td>Helping and caring for other people (customers)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility for own job</td>
<td>Responsibility for putting efforts into own job/task</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Being fair to customer, value for money</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Achieving own goals through service delivery</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambitions for promotion</td>
<td>Doing hard work, developing own skills and knowledge, seeking promotion opportunities</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Ambitious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capability to do good job</td>
<td>Showing capability to do good job, Proving competence in customer service to others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Capable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reciprocity of favours</td>
<td>Karma (doing something good for others will come back in the future)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Reciprocity of favours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation (21)*</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Securing own job by not delivering bad service, Rectifying the negative situation not to cause any troubles and lose the job</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N/A (but this value involves the characteristics of Conservation (i.e., ‘maintaining status quo’) whereby, it is grouped in this category)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Following rules</td>
<td>Avoiding any extreme consequences, risk avoidance, following the rules</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curiosity of interacting with people</td>
<td>Being interested in people and knowing them</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Branch-out</td>
<td>Doing something different, receiving and confronting new challenges</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A varied life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The number in the bracket indicates the number of employees who reported that the value type is related to their service delivery (the maximum number is 23).

**Self-transcendence**

Self-transcendence was the most frequently identified personal value type among all four of Schwartz’s higher-order personal value types. As noted in Chapter 2, *self-transcendence* refers to the value type that embraces concern and welfare of other people. This study found three key themes associated with the *self-transcendence* value type. These include *helping other people, responsibility for own job* and *fairness*.

Among the key themes related to *self-transcendence* personal value type, *helping other people* was the most frequently reoccurring theme. It suggests that the fundamental motivation for most customer-contact employees to deliver excellent service is associated with their value of helping other people (e.g., “when I see the customer is happy, it makes me happy, knowing that I brought happiness to that person for that day” [E16]). One excerpt from the interviewees clearly depicts how the value of ‘helping other people’
How does my value of caring for other people relate to my service delivery in a real life situation? Well, probably a lot… [The] caring nature that I have and what I think is fair turns into action. That’s how it impacts my service delivery. (E15)

This theme was also identified when the interviewees talked about the service recovery process. They emphasised that their motivation to put their efforts in service recovery is derived purely from their personal values. For instance, some interviewees noted, “I am truly worried. It’s not just because of my job. I’m not following a script to say what I have to say. I am really trying to engage with them, understand and provide solutions” (E22). Others also mentioned, “caring from a personal level, not because you are getting paid to care” (E18); “It is just a genuine kind of motivation I have. My will to make people happy” (E5); “It comes down to my personal thing…it’s not just a job. I like to do what I can to help them out and see how I can assist them” (E13).

Responsibility for own job is another key theme that influences employee service delivery. This theme was more frequently observed in the context of service recovery. It suggests that the employee’s fundamental motivation to rectify the service failure is strongly influenced by their value of being responsible to their own jobs. For instance, some interviewees reported, “it’s my job so it’s important for me to be there for my guest when there was something that went wrong.” (E16) (researcher emphasis added with italics). Others also mentioned, “you never want guests to leave unhappy because that means you haven’t done a good service personally. While they’re there, you still have a chance to resolve the problem. Do what you can to resolve the problem” (E1) (researcher emphasis added with italics).

Fairness, particularly associated with the ‘value for money’, is another key theme to affect employee service delivery. Many interviewees reported that customers pay a lot of money to stay in a four or five-star hotel. In order to be fair to the amount of money they pay, employees have to provide good service to the guests (“when you pay for something and are being treated in a negative way, it’s not a good feeling. So when you’re paying a lot of money to stay at (the five star hotel), you expect the very best” - E18). Similarly, other interviewees mentioned that customers are “paying a lot to be here. It costs a lot to be here. If I was paying that much, I would expect a certain amount of service, especially in such a high-end brand like (our hotel)” (E4) (researcher emphasis added with italics).
As such, the current study found that self-transcendence and its associated themes (helping other people, responsibility and fairness) strongly influence employee service delivery. This result is not surprising considering the similarity of the nature of the hospitality service, which requires ‘hospitable’ attitudes and behaviours of employees, and the nature of self-transcendence, which emphasises ‘caring for other people’. This result will be discussed further in this chapter.

Self-enhancement

Self-enhancement was the second most frequently identified value type. It emphasises the importance of pursuing one’s own interests and achievements. This personal value type was identified more frequently in the context of excellent service delivery. The current study found three key themes related to self-enhancement, which include achievement, ambition for promotion and capability to do good job.

Among these key themes, achievement was the most frequently identified theme. It suggests that the fundamental motivation for many employees to go beyond the call of duty is to ‘achieve’ the high quality of customer service delivery (“Because it’s just I’m motivated towards my work, I’m passionate about it. I want to achieve” - E16). Such achievement involves extrinsic and intrinsic achievement and both influence employee service delivery. Extrinsic achievement refers to compliments from the customers or recognition from managers (“I like to be told, “Oh, you’re doing a good job” and get some recognition or rewards. It is achievement and it motivates me to further deliver good customer service” - E21). Intrinsic achievement is associated with a sense of self-achievement:

For me, it just feels good to have good results. I guess I can sit back at the end of it and say I’m happy with how I've performed and I've done the best that I can. That’s kind of my recognition internally. (E19)

Ambition for promotion, is another key theme related to self-enhancement. This theme is somewhat similar to achievement mentioned above. However, while achievement emphasises the end-state of action (e.g., achievement of excellent service or receiving compliments from customers or managers), ambition for promotion is associated more with employee’s continuous actions to deliver quality service so that they can be promoted in the future (e.g., “I want to progress quickly to a management position...I just need to
work hard.” - E19). The current study found that ambitions for promotion influence employee efforts to deliver quality customer service. As an example, one excerpt illustrates, “…because to me, hotel or hospitality or guest service is something I’m passionate about. I want to do it well and I want to progress; then, I want to be in a management position in the near future. It might be the reason why I do my best to deliver good service to the customers” (E2).

*Capability to do good job,* is another key theme associated with *self-transcendence.* The interviewees mentioned that they strive to deliver quality service because they want to demonstrate their capability of delivering good customer service to their managers or colleagues:

> It comes from myself showing what I can actually handle. I would say this was a hard event to deal with and I was able to overcome all the barriers to deliver a good service. So, I was able to take all these factors into account… because you want to show them, "I can do the job, I can do it very well". (E7)

Other employees reported that there is discrimination against the employees in ethnically minority groups. Their managers or supervisors underestimate the customer service skills of such employees. In order to prove their skills and competences in customer service, these employees put extra effort into delivering quality customer service:

> To prove I can do the job well. There is a kind of imbalance (i.e., ethnic discrimination) in the hotel. So I have to prove myself that I can do this job well and what I’m doing is right. This is also a kind of motivation for me to do the job better…capable of doing everything. (E10)

This section reported the key themes related to *self-enhancement,* which strongly influence employee service delivery. The result suggests that these themes appear more in the context of employee efforts to deliver excellent service than in service recovery efforts. Underlying reasons to explain this finding will be discussed later in this chapter.

*Conservation*

*Conservation* was the next frequently occurring personal value type. *Conservation* indicates the extent to which people are motivated to preserve the current situation and its
long-lasting stability. This study found that three key themes related to conservation. These themes include reciprocity of favours, job security and following rules.

Among these themes, reciprocity of favours was the most frequently occurring theme, particularly in the context of excellent service delivery. The term refers to the notion of ‘give-and-take’. For instance, some interviewees mentioned that if they do good things to someone (i.e., customers), good things will eventually come back to me’ (“if I’m giving it to people, it will eventually come around” - E1). Alternatively, others reported, “I would like to offer good service to the guests as I was very happy when someone treated me [well] when I was a guest in other hotels” (E15). In relation to this theme, the term ‘karma’ was frequently identified by the interviewees (e.g., E18). Furthermore, when interviewees discussed this theme, many of them repeated the phrase; ‘I put myself in the customer’s shoes’ (E13).

Job security is another frequently identified theme associated with conservation; however, in Schwartz’s taxonomy of personal values, job security does not exist. Nevertheless, this theme is strongly linked to maintaining the status quo (e.g., income, status, or life etc.), which is the main characteristic of conservation. Therefore, I categorised the theme of job security in conservation. The current study found that job security strongly influences employee efforts in both delivering quality service (“You don’t want to lose your job. That’s why you go the extra mile and try to please the customers. It’s a really competitive place to work.” - E7) and avoiding any potential service failure (“If you deliver bad customer service, you will lose everything. I don’t get any shifts so I have no money. If I don’t fulfil all these job duties, I’d personally get fired or get in trouble.” - E10).

Following rules is another key theme in relation to conservation. Employees who embrace conservation strive to avoid any unexpected and particularly negative, incidents (“I don’t want to cause any trouble” -E17; “Because I'm scared to do something wrong for customers” - E20). This theme suggests, by ensuring they follow the organisational rules or formal procedures, employees try to avoid any chance to encounter trouble or to mitigate the acceleration of negative incidents. In this way, the theme of following rules affects the way employee deliver customer service;

My morals are, “do the right thing”. So… following procedures and making sure that everything gets done in order. I don’t like any trouble, so I’d rather do a right thing in my service delivery…following procedures and sticking by the rules. (E12)
In addition to the two preceding personal value types, the current study found that *conservation* and its three key themes influence employee service delivery. Furthermore, while reciprocity of favours was more associated with the case of service excellence, following rules appeared more in the context of service recovery. Further discussion of the relationships between *conservation* and service delivery will be provided later in this chapter.

**Openness to change**

Last but not least, the current study found that *openness to change* also influences employee service delivery, particularly in the context of excellent service delivery. *Openness to change* refers to the extent to which people are motivated to pursue their own intellectual and emotional interests. The current study found two key themes related to *openness to change*; they include *curiosity of interacting with people* and *branch-out*.

In relation to the *openness to change* value type, *curiosity of interacting with people* was the first frequently identified theme. This theme suggests that an employee’s fundamental motivation to deliver customer service is to interact with customers. Most employees are genuinely curious about people and want to know their customers, whereby they proactively engage in employee-customer interactions. This kind of motivation eventually influences them to go a step further and deliver good service to the guests - “I love talking with people. I love interacting with people and knowing them. That’s why I engage with my customers and do something different for them” (E11).

Another key theme related to openness to change is *branch-out*. In line with Schwartz’s ‘a varied life’ value, this theme refers to the extent to which employees are motivated to challenge something new or something different in their service delivery. Some interviewees reported that being creative and seeking challenge in customer service is their motivation to deliver good service:

I really want to challenge myself. How I can do things differently? How I can do things better? Overcoming challenges and improving my customer service has a big influence on how happy I am at my work. If I don’t get challenged, I’m kind of not being [of] any use to the organisation. (E19)
In contrast to the other three personal value types, openness to change was the least frequently identified from the interviewees. This point will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.3.2.2 Personal values, organisational attributes and employee service delivery

The purpose of Task 2 in Section 2 is to examine ‘how’ personal values influence employee service delivery. Specifically, the current study examined the interactions between personal values and organisational attributes in relation to service delivery. First, I identified the key organisational attributes that influence employee service delivery. These attributes include; hotel’s reputation, hotel as a business and HR practices. Table 5.5 summarises the key themes of organisational attribute, their descriptions, source weightings and reference weightings.

Table 5.5 Key Organisational Attribute Themes Influencing Employee Service Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source weighing</th>
<th>Reference weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel’s reputation</td>
<td>Employee’s work in the four- to five- star hotels with good brand image and high reputation. The reason to deliver good service or rectify the negative incidents is mainly from protecting hotel’s reputation or prestigious brand image.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel as a business</td>
<td>Failure of good service delivery (including not meeting customer's expectation or causing any service failure) may result in the hotel losing customers. In order to maintain the hotel business, employees strive to deliver good service and rectify the negative incidents.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR practices</td>
<td>Induction process, on-going training, in terms of how to deliver quality service and how to deal with complaints from the customers (i.e., more about learning technical skills), facilitate employees to form attitudes and behaviours.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first key theme related to organisational attribute was the hotel’s reputation. The interviewees reported that their fundamental motivation to deliver good service and rectify service failure derives from their sense of obligation to protect the hotel reputation or brand image. It is because their hotel belongs to the prestigious brands (e.g., four-five star international hotel chains) that employees feel that it is their duty to protect such good reputations of the hotels by delivering quality service and rectifying any service failure (E7). For instance, some interviewees mentioned:
I represent a pretty prestigious brand. So if I can improve that or maintain the prestigious nature by providing those attentive personalised services, I’m doing a good job. Not just because I enjoy it, but because I’m representing my hotel. (E4)

The second key theme is an employee’s mindset of the *hotel as a business*. This theme was observed more in the context of service recovery. In contrast to the first theme, *hotel’s reputation* (which is associated with hotel reputation or brand image), this second theme is more related to ‘maintaining repeaters’, ‘preventing negative word-of-mouts’, or ‘avoiding to weaken hotel profits’. It depicts that an employee’s fundamental motivation to put their efforts into service recovery is to avoid their hotels losing their customers due to ineffective service recovery, because failure to manage the service recovery process often results in negative word-of-mouths spreading and revenue dropping (E9). One excerpt suggests:

The customer is central to everything. If we didn’t have customers, we wouldn’t have a business. If you treat them well, they’ll come back. And hospitality can only survive as a repeat business. It’s very difficult to acquire new customers. But it is a lot easier to make sure that existing customers come back again. It’s just good business practice. (E13)

The final key theme associated with organisational attribute is *HR practices*. As investigated in the previous literature and in Study 1, it is not surprising that HR practices have a strong influence on employee service delivery. While there are a number of HR practices, the current study identified that the organisation’s induction process and ongoing training particularly influence employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery (E23). These practices help not only to teach the service delivery process but also to instil organisational values into employee mindsets (E19), which consequently influence their service delivery:

Organisation creates a sense of training with us in terms of how to treat people like they’re people. It’s called ‘peopleology’. We had a whole long induction for it. They say that customers want a real deal and they want you. (E23)

The data analysis process for Task 2 in Section 2 was outlined earlier in this chapter. First, I investigated the strengths of personal value effects on employee service delivery in comparison to organisational effects. To do this, I examined the frequency of
personal value and organisational attribute themes that appeared in the two different service delivery contexts. Then, I investigated whether the strengths of these effects could vary depending on the type of service delivery. Table 5.6 illustrates the frequency of occurring themes of personal values and organisational attributes in two different service delivery contexts.

Table 5.6 Frequency of Personal Values and Organisational Attributes in Two Different Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Personal Values</th>
<th>Each personal value types</th>
<th>Organisational Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Excellent Service</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Self-Transcendence 68</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Enhancement 57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to Change 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Recovery Efforts</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Self-Transcendence 42</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Enhancement 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to Change 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result of the current study demonstrates that personal value themes appeared more frequently than organisational attribute themes. However, while personal values appeared more in the delivery of excellent service, organisational attributes appeared more in employee efforts for service recovery. This result suggests that personal values generally have a stronger influence on employee service delivery than organisational attributes and the strengths of personal value effects vary depending on the type of service delivery. Furthermore, it suggests that employees tend to use different attributes to different types of service delivery. That is, employees attribute personal values to their delivery of excellent service while they attribute organisational attributes to their efforts in service recovery.

The above sections reported the results of Study 2. First, I explored the underlying reasons that explained the Study 1 results (i.e., the marginal effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate). Then, I examined the effects of personal values on employee service delivery, which corresponds to research question 2 in this thesis (What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?). Given the identified results, the next section discusses the findings and implications of Study 2.
5.4 Discussion

This section discusses the key results and findings of Study 2, which addresses two research issues: the reasons that explain Study 1’s results and the relationship between personal values and service delivery. For the first issue, I discuss the organisation’s suppressing factors that mask personal values effects on employee perceptions of service climate, and other possible reasons. For the second issue, I examine the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery in two different types of service delivery contexts.

5.4.1 Interrogation of Study 1 results

5.4.1.1 Organisation’s suppressing factors

Thematic analysis of Task 1 in Section 1 found that four key factors strongly influence the way the interviewees answered the service climate questionnaire. These key themes include (1) leadership, (2) HR practices, (3) information-sharing and (4) effective communication system for service delivery. In line with the situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010), these factors are considered to suppress the personal value effects on employee perceptions of service climate. Among these factors, leadership and HR practices were the two most frequently occurring themes (see Table 5.2 above). This result supports the findings of previous studies suggesting that leadership and HR practices are the key antecedents of employee perceptions of service climate (Hong et al., 2013). Furthermore, it is also consistent with the findings of Study 1, which quantitatively identified the positive relationships between the two organisational attributes and employee perceptions of service climate.

Regarding leadership, many interviewees pointed out that a manager’s skills and knowledge of hotel services and their responsible attitudes and behaviours towards customer service are the key determinants of their positive perceptions of service climate. This result is in line with the findings from previous studies suggesting that the manager’s professional service attitudes and behaviours reflect ‘how much the organisation is serious about good customer service’ (Salvaggio et al., 2007; Wieseke et al., 2011). The current study also confirmed the findings of past studies illustrating that management support is an important factor for the employees to positively perceive organisational service orientation (Hong et al., 2013). An excerpt from one interview states, “I think managers always find the opportunities to talk with me and they try to understand what I
feel and need in working at the hotel” (E20). As such, the results of the current study validated some of the previous findings in relation to the positive relationship between some key aspects of leadership and service climate perceptions.

In relation to HR practices, an effective reward and recognition system and training were frequently re-occurring key themes. Just as in the case of leadership, this result is consistent with the findings from previous studies (Liao & Chuang, 2010; Schneider et al., 2005). As noted earlier, reward and recognition systems are often included in the definition of service climate (e.g., Schneider & White, 2004). Furthermore, many studies report that training is a key element of HR practices and strongly influences employee perceptions of service climate (Rogg et al., 2001; Salanova et al., 2005). For this reason, many organisations strive to develop effective reward and recognition systems as well as training programs. Nevertheless, the current study found a gap between ‘what the organisations think is best practice in HR practices’ and ‘what the employees actually perceive these practices to be’. For instance, the informal conversation with HR managers at target hotels revealed that they believe they are doing their best in HR practices. However, many interviewees are actually dissatisfied with the current reward/recognition systems and training (“We get a lot of compliments [from guests] but nothing is often coming from the organisation. I think it [recognition or rewarding system] has definitely room to improve” – E21). In order to effectively promote employee perceptions of service climate in a workplace, it is therefore essential for the organisations to find the reason that is responsible for this gap. This point will be discussed further in the next chapter, in relation to future research.

5.4.1.2 Other factors explaining Study 1 results

In addition to identifying the suppressing factors, Task 2 in Section 1 sought to identify other possible reasons to explain Study 1’s results. The current study found that three key themes that helped to explain Study 1 results; they include (1) complexity and focus of questionnaire, (2) inculcation of organisational values and (3) self-suppression of personal values effects.

The interviewees reported that the complexity and focus of service climate questionnaire might have led to the subtle effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate. However, the service climate scale I adopted in this study (i.e., Global Service Climate Scale; Schneider et al., 1998) has been extensively used in
past service climate studies (e.g., Gracia et al., 2010; Greenslade & Jimmieson, 2011; Salanova et al., 2005). With the pilot study, I strived to establish the validity of the scale in the current study. Furthermore, I assessed the scale reliability by checking Cronbach’s alpha (i.e., .84). Built on these premises, I considered the adopted scale was reliable and valid to use in the current study and it should not have any issues for the respondents to answer the questions. However, the results of Study 2 revealed that the questionnaire seems to be overly complex and confusing for employees to answer. One of the reasons might be the involvement of participants whose first language was not English. While the current study informed the survey respondents that answering the questionnaire required a certain level of English proficiency in both oral and written forms, future research may need to locate proper screening questions to assess respondents’ language proficiency prior to sample selection. This would result in more accurate data being collected.

The inculcation of organisational values was another key theme derived from the interviews. In order to maintain the service standard and hotel brand image, good service organisations, such as the samples in the current study, strive to instil organisational values into employee mindsets. In this regard, the interviewees mentioned the concept of organisational culture (“my hotel is so good at educating employees by instilling organisational values and culture and telling employees not to bring their own personal values to the job” –E19). Organisational culture is defined as “the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration” (Schein, 1985, p. 14). It is an organisation’s internal system that reflects shared norms or values held by the members of the organisation (Schein, 1985). As the organisations consistently emphasise their core values through organisational culture, employee mindsets are ‘brain-washed’ and form homogeneous beliefs or values towards their organisation’s mission (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). As a result, such inculcation of organisational values results in masking the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate.

Self-suppression of personal value effects was the last key theme in Task 2 in Section 1. In Chapter 4, this notion was discussed using the notion of ‘creating a facade of conformity’ (Hewlin, 2003). Some interviewees reported that they are very proud of working in the well-known international hotel chains. Contrarily, other interviewees mentioned that they work in the hotel just to earn the money. This reason is commonly observed by employees who are immigrants or university/college students (which reflects
the characteristics of the current sample) (Baum et al., 2007). In either case, they would not mind any discrepancy between their personal values and organisational values, as they are happy as long as they keep working in the current hotels. Thus, these employees engage in 'creating facade of conformity' by suppressing their personal values and pretending to adopt the organisational values (Hewlin, 2003). This, in turn, conceals the effects of personal values on their perceptions of service climate. As such, given a number of different themes extracted from the interviewees, the results of Section 1 suggest that there is no ‘one’ definitive answer to fully explain Study 1’s results; however, it is a combination of all these factors (i.e., suppressing factors, focus and complexity of questionnaire, inculcation of organisational values and self-suppression of personal value effects), which could explain why the effect of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate was subtle in the current study.

The above sections discussed the results of Section 1. The next section provides a discussion of Section 2 results.

5.4.2 Personal values and employee service delivery

5.4.2.1 Types of personal values influencing employee service delivery

Thematic analysis in Task 1 in Section 2 found that four key themes (or personal value types) influence employee service delivery. These themes include: (1) self-transcendence, (2) self-enhancement, (3) conservation and (4) openness to change, which is in line with Schwartz’s taxonomy of four higher-order personal value types (Schwartz, 1992). Built on the cognitive hierarchy theory, this thesis argued that personal values play a pivotal role in employee service delivery. As noted in Chapter 2, the cognitive hierarchy theory suggests that personal values are the most abstract form of the social cognitions, which exist at our deepest level of cognitive hierarchy (Vinson et al., 1977). When these personal values are explicitly conceptualised, they are used as a criteria or guidance for perceptions, selections and judgements of objects or events and are influenced to form certain attitudes and behaviours (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Homer & Kahle, 1988). While a number of past studies observed personal value effects on an employee’s various attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Arthaud-Day et al., 2012; Cohen, 2012), there has been a lack of research examining its effects on service delivery. In this regard, the results of this current study shed light on providing an insight into how personal values influence employee service delivery.
Self-transcendence

Self-transcendence was most frequently observed value type among Schwartz’s four personal value types. This result can be explained by the congruence of nature between the concepts of self-transcendence and hospitality. Self-transcendence is a personal value type that emphasises the concern and welfare of other people (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). On the other hand, the concept of ‘hospitality’ is originally derived from the ‘care’ or ‘help’ that the military monks provided to the pilgrims (mainly providing meals or shelters) (Partner, 1982) and is defined as “friendly and liberal reception of guests and strangers” (Ottenbacher, Harrington, & Parsa, 2009, p. 265). Given the closeness between the nature of self-transcendence and the meaning of hospitality, it is reasonable to observe that self-transcendence is the personal value type most influential on the delivery of hospitality service. In fact, the current study revealed that helping other people was most frequently identified theme among all other key personal value themes. Many interviewees reported that their value of ‘genuinely caring for other people’ motivates them to deliver good service as well as put their efforts into effective service recovery (“It is a kind of ‘hospitality’ inside me that is out there [service delivery]. It is just like the genuine and general feeling” - E19; “a lot of personal motivation that wants to see people become very happy” – E13). In line with this thought, the results of the current study also supported the arguments and findings of previous studies, which suggests positive relationships between self-transcendence and behaviours related to caring for other people, such as engaging in customer-orientation (Coelho & Sousa, 2013) and OCB that is specific to helping and caring for other people.

Self-enhancement

The second key theme derived from the interviewees is self-enhancement. It refers to the value type that emphasises the importance of pursuing one’s own interests and achieving success (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). With this theme, a number of employees discussed the importance of achievement, ambition and capability (“If I provide very good customer service, my manager would be happy and probably there is a chance for me to get promoted. Promotion is a kind of motivation for me” – E10). One of the possible reasons that explain the strong relationship between self-enhancement and employee service delivery is the demographic characteristic of the current sample. As noted in Chapter 1, the dominant generation of workers in the hospitality industry (particularly in
customer-contact employees) has been shifting from previous generations to generation Y (or Millennials) (Solnet & Hood, 2008). Generation Y workers are characterised as achievement-oriented, ambitious, self-centred and entrepreneurial, as well as motivated to demonstrate their capability by handling challenging tasks (Jerome, Scales, Whithem, & Quain, 2014). Given the congruence between self-enhancement and these characteristics of Generation Y workers, the current study might have reflected how the personal values that generation Y workers commonly hold may be affecting their service delivery.

As Table 5.4 depicts, the effects of self-enhancement on employee service delivery were as much as those of self-transcendence. That is, both personal value types had an influence on employee service delivery to the same degree. This result is somewhat incongruent with the theoretical underpinning of personal value conceptualisation developed by Schwartz (Schwartz, 1992), which suggests self-transcendence and self-enhancement create counteractive effects on outcome variables (i.e., employee service delivery). However, Study 2 was exploratory in nature and I had sought to examine the ‘gestalt relationships’ between personal values and employee service delivery. While the study identified the personal value effects on two different types of employee service delivery (i.e., delivery of excellent service and service recovery efforts), it did not capture how conceptually opposite types of personal values counteractively influence these service deliveries. It would therefore require further interrogation to examine the personal value effects on more specific ‘aspects’ or ‘types’ of service delivery. This issue will be further discussed in relation to the limitation of the current study and future research, in the next chapter.

**Conservation**

*Conservation* is the third most frequently occurring theme. *Conservation* embraces the extent to which people are motivated to preserve the status quo and its long-lasting stability, which provides harmonious relationships with others (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). In relation to conservation, reciprocity of favours was the most frequently observed theme (“reciprocity is very important to me. If you take something from people, if you are helped in some way, you help them in return. This thinking may impact the way I think on how delivering good customer service is important.” – E15). It refers to the employee’s belief, ‘if I do good things, it will come back to me later’ or ‘I received good things so I should provide some good things to others’. An intriguing finding in the current study is that
employees attribute ‘virtue’ or ‘spiritual principles’ to their key motivation to deliver excellent service. Studies investigating the influence of these spiritual factors on employees have yet been limited. However, the topic gradually has become important in the management literature (Singh & Singh, 2012), particularly considering the necessity to understand various aspects of workforce diversity. For instance, Singh and Singh (2012) argue that employee karma orientation affects their ability and willingness to perform better in their jobs. Furthermore, an employees’ spiritual belief is considered to bring more joy, commitment and satisfaction to their jobs (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Therefore, by observing the themes, reciprocity of favours or karma (“I believe if I do good things they will come back to me, like the karma.” - E3), the current study has, to some extent, supported the notion that these spiritual principles positively influence employee service delivery.

In addition, many interviewees also reported that their motivation to deliver quality service and rectify the service failure is to avoid any conflict with managers and customers. Some interviews reported that they are afraid of taking actions that deviate from organisational policy or practices. Employees in the hospitality industry often face a number of unforeseen situations. In such situations, the organisation’s strong policies or clear procedures are likely to provide comfort and a sense of security to the employees who embrace the conservation value type. In this way, conservation influences employee service delivery. This notion also explains past research demonstrating the positive relationship between conservation and OCBs (Arthaud-Day et al., 2012) as well as employee commitment (Cohen, 2009; Cohen & Liu, 2011) in a workplace where strong policies and practices exist.

Openness to change

Last but not least, openness to change is the least frequently occurring theme among the four personal value types. Openness to change embraces the importance of employee’s pursuing intellectual and emotional interests (Schwartz, 1992, 1994a). While some past studies show positive relationships between openness to change and employees’ creativity in service delivery (e.g., Sousa & Coelho, 2011), it has been generally recognised that openness to change has negative relationships with employee extra-role behaviours. For instance, Karabatı and Ucanok (2013) found a negative relationship between openness to change and employee’s engagement in OCBs. Other
researchers also found openness to change negatively influenced employee’s affective commitments to the organisation (Fischer & Smith, 2006; Glazer et al., 2004) particularly in an organisation with a strong policy. Since the current study explored employee motivation to deliver excellent service and accomplish service recovery efforts (rather than how personal values caused the service failure, per se), it is still unknown whether openness to change actually creates negative impacts on the delivery of hospitality service. Nevertheless, given the context of targeting organisations, it is possible to argue that the motivation to deliver customer service in a non-ordinal way (“I want to do something differently.” - E17) (i.e., branch-out) would not be encouraged in a hotel with strong policy or procedures to deliver customer service. It may explain why openness to change was the least identified personal value theme in relation to service delivery in the current study.

5.4.2.2 Effects of personal values and organisational attributes on different types of service delivery

In addition to ‘what’ personal values influence employee service delivery, the current study also revealed ‘how’ personal values influence employee service delivery. Specifically, I examined the strength of personal value effects on employee service delivery, in comparison to organisational attribute effects. Then, I explored whether the strengths of personal values and organisational attribute effects could vary according to the type of service delivery (i.e., excellent service delivery and service recovery). The study identified three key themes of organisational attributes, which influence employee service delivery. These include; (1) hotel reputation, (2) hotel as a business and (3) HR practices. The results of the current study suggest that, in comparison to these organisational attributes, personal values have stronger effects on employee service delivery in general. Nevertheless, when comparing the strength of these effects in different types of service delivery, I found that personal values have more influence on employee efforts to deliver excellent service, while organisational attributes have stronger effects on their service recovery efforts. From this result, it is clear that there is a tendency for employees to use different ‘attributes’ for different types of service delivery. This result can be partially explained by using attribution theory (Weiner, 1985, 2000).

Attribution theory is one of the cognitive theories of motivation and assumes that people try to identify and determine the underlying reasons that explain why they take certain actions or behaviours (Weiner, 1974, 1985). The theory fundamentally explains
that people tend to use different attributes to explain the reasons for their behaviours and these different attributes are largely categorised in internal and external attributes (Heider, 1958). Internal attributes refer to how one attributes the causes of the given behaviour to be within himself/herself (e.g., aptitude, personality traits, or aptitudes) while external attributes indicates that one considers his/her certain behaviour is outside himself/herself (e.g., situational environment, organisation or weather) (Heider, 1958). In the current study, the interviewees tended to use internal attributes (i.e., personal values) as the cause or motivation to deliver excellent service while they used external attributes (i.e., organisational attributes) more frequently as the reasons to rectify the service failure.

Such results may also partially explain that employees utilised self-serving bias when evaluating their service delivery. Self-serving bias refers to the tendency of take personal credit (i.e., internal attribute) for one’s success while attributing any failures to outside sources (i.e., external attributes) (Miller & Ross, 1975). The previous study shows that customer-contact employees often demonstrate self-serving bias in their customer service. For instance, in the study examining an employee’s perceived causes of customer dissatisfaction with hospitality service, Bitner, Booms and Mohr (1994) found that employees seldom attribute customer dissatisfaction to their own attitudes or behaviours in service delivery; instead, they consider external factors (e.g., organisational systems) or even customers as the key attributes to cause customer dissatisfaction. In a similar vein, Chung-Herrera, Goldschmidt and Doug (2004) observed that hospitality employees attribute their success in service recovery to themselves while they blame someone or something external to them when service recovery was unsuccessful. In this study, I found that employees tend to take credit for excellent service delivery. However, the current study did not specifically address the employee’s cause of service failure but focused more on their motivation to take action to rectify those failures. Therefore, whether they used external attributes to explain the outcomes of service failure is still unknown. Nevertheless, what is obvious is that the interviewees used self-enhancing attributes (i.e., personal values) to explain the motivation or cause of excellent service and used external attributes to explain the motivation for rectifying any service failure.

It should be noted that the attribution theory involves a number of relevant concepts or arguments (e.g., covariation model or fundamental attribution error). Providing a detailed discussion of how such a complex theory fully explains the finding of Study 2 is beyond the scope of the current study. Rather, I adopted the attribution theory to explain how employees use different attributes to deliver excellent service and effect service
recovery efforts, and how they possibly create self-serving bias in the case of service excellence. Further investigation on the attribution process in service delivery may clarify this mechanism and provide additional insight into how managers can effectively manage employees to deliver quality service and successfully perform service recovery.

5.5 Summary

This chapter reported the results and implications of Study 2. The study addressed two research issues. First, it explored the underlying reasons for the unexpected results of the first study. Second, corresponding to the second research question, it examined how personal values influence employee service delivery. For the first issue, the results of Study 2 found that there are likely to be organisational factors that suppress personal values effects on employee perceptions of service climate. Some other reasons also explain the results of Study 1; these include, complexity and focus of the service climate questionnaire, inculcation of organisational values and self-suppression of personal value effects. In terms of the second issue, this study found that personal values have a strong influence on employee service delivery but these influences are complex. Personal values generally have a stronger influence on employee service delivery than organisational attributes. However, personal values have more implications for employee efforts to deliver excellent service while organisational attributes appear to have more influence on their service recovery efforts. This result suggests that employees may use different attributes for different types of service delivery. The following chapter, the final chapter of this thesis, integrates the results of the two studies (Study 1 and 2) and interprets them in light of the two, main, overarching research questions of this thesis.
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of this thesis. It begins with an overview of the research. The key findings from Study 1 and 2 are summarised in line with the two research questions. Based on these findings, I present the overarching conclusions of this thesis. Both theoretical and practical implications are discussed followed by the key limitations of this study. Recommendations for future research are provided. Finally, closing remarks are offered to conclude this thesis.

6.2 Overview of Thesis

The growth of the service sector worldwide has facilitated many organisations to regard service quality as the key determinant of their organisational performance. Since service quality is strongly influenced by the way employees deliver service to the customer, it is crucial for organisations to effectively manage employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery. Among a number of strategies to manage employee service delivery, a myriad of literature suggests that organisations can benefit from creating a service climate in a workplace. However, rapid growth of workforce diversity in many organisations presents an array of challenges to create a shared interpretation of service climate. Employees come from different backgrounds and they have different views and motivations toward customer service. Therefore, to effectively promote employee perceptions of service climate and bring about positive outcomes to their organisations, it is important to understand how an employee’s personal attributes might affect their perceptions of service climate as well as their potential subsequent behaviours (e.g., employee service delivery).

While previous studies have examined the effects of some personal attributes (i.e., personality and cultural values) on employee perceptions of service climate, no study has examined the effects of personal values on their perceptions of service climate. Furthermore, the review of literature also revealed that study examining the effects of personal values on employee service delivery is also limited. As employee perceptions of service climate are known to influence their service delivery, it is logically possible to examine the personal value effects on service delivery through their perceptions of service
climate. However, given the scarcity of personal values research in this realm, I considered this approach to be incomplete. Therefore, it was important to also examine personal value effects, not only on employee perceptions of service climate, but also on their service delivery. In this way, this thesis strived to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how personal values influence employee customer service. Accordingly, I addressed two overarching research questions in this thesis.

**RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?**

**RQ 2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service delivery?**

To answer these research questions, I designed a two-phase mixed method study. In Study 1, I used a survey technique and quantitatively examined the relationships between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate (RQ1). Furthermore, following the suggestion of Bowen and Schneider (2014), I investigated the moderating effects of personal values on the relationships between HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. The data was collected from 487 customer-contact employees in nine top-rated (four/five-star) hotels in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Cairns in Australia. In Study 2, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews and qualitatively investigated two issues. First, given the unexpected but interesting results in Study 1 (i.e., marginal effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate), I explored the underlying reasons. Second, I explored the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery (RQ2). With the purposive sampling technique, the data were collected from 23 customer-contact employees in the hotels that participated in Study 1. Critical incident and laddering techniques were used to elicit interviewee recall of their underlying motivations to deliver certain types of customer service. The next section provides the summary of findings from both studies.

### 6.3 Conclusions Regarding Research Questions

#### 6.3.1 RQ1: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and their service climate perceptions?

The first research question investigates how personal values influence employee perceptions of service climate. A series of hypotheses were developed based on the
relevant literature – service delivery, service climate and personal values (to review, the results of hypotheses testing are summarised in Table 4.2).

The results of hypothesis testing provided several findings. The current study confirmed previous studies suggesting that HR practices and leadership, in particular those focusing on customer service, have a strong relationship with employee perceptions of service climate (H1 and H2) (Hong et al., 2013). It also identified the relationships between certain personal values and perceived service climate (H5 and H6); however, these relationships were not significant. Otherwise, I found no relationship at all (H3) or the result was opposite to what I expected (H4). Furthermore, I found no moderating effect of personal values on HR practices, service leadership and perceived service climate. In sum, while the current study supported previous studies in suggesting strong relationships between HR practices, service leadership and employee perceptions of service climate, it did not identify any notable effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate.

Having identified these unexpected but interesting results in Study 1, Study 2 provided several possible explanations for these findings. First, four organisational factors suppressed the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate. The notion of situational strengths suggest that environmental factors imposed psychological pressure on individuals to take certain courses of action and reduce the effects of personal attributes on their attitudes or behaviours (Meyer et al., 2010). In the current study, ‘HR practices’ and ‘leadership’ were identified as two strong factors that suppressed the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate. This result is consistent with the findings from Study 1, which suggests strong relationships between HR practices, leadership and employee perceptions of service climate. Furthermore, the study also found that ‘information-sharing’ and ‘effective communication system for service delivery’ are the other strong factors that mask the effects of an employee’s personal values. These two factors may illuminate the nature of hospitality service, which requires seamless communication and information-sharing among employees to provide a flawless customer service (Kuslivan, Buyruk, Ilhan, & Kuslivan, 2010). In addition to these suppressing organisational factors, the study also identified other reasons that explain the marginal effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate; these include the ‘complexity and focus of the service climate questionnaire’, ‘inculcation of organisational values’ and ‘self-suppression of personal values’.
In answering RQ1, the results suggest that personal values have only marginal effects on employee perceptions of service climate. The effects of personal values are likely to be diminished by the factors identified and discussed above. Given this result, I conclude that the organisations are able to craft and promote service climate in a workplace without taking the effects of an employee’s personal values into consideration.

6.3.2 RQ2: What are the relationships between employees’ personal values and employee service delivery?

To address the second research question, I explored the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. In line with cognitive hierarchy theory (Vinson et al., 1977), the results revealed that an employee’s personal values had strong implications for their service delivery. This thesis found that all four of Schwartz’s higher-order personal value types (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation and openness to change) appear to influence employee service delivery. Specifically, the study confirms that the ‘conceptual closeness’ between the self-transcendence value type and ‘hospitality’ (both concepts are associated with ‘care for other people’) strongly affected employees to deliver quality service and rectify service failure. The relationship between self-enhancement value type and employee service delivery reflected how the demographic characteristics of hospitality workers (i.e., predominantly Generation Y) affected their attitudes and behaviours in customer service. The conservation value type, particularly ‘reciprocity of favour (if I do good things to others, it will come back to me)’ or ‘conflict avoidance (not to cause any troubles with customers/managers)’, strongly motivated employees to deliver good service as well as to follow the organisational rules to avoid any service failure. However, in contrast to these three value types, the openness to change value type had very minimal influence on employee service delivery.

Also, the results of this thesis revealed a tendency for employees to use different attributes (i.e., organisational attributes and personal values) for different types of service delivery (i.e., excellent service delivery and service recovery). Specifically, employees tend to attribute the motivation to deliver quality service to their personal values while they tend to attribute their service recovery efforts to organisational factors. In line with this thought, the current study also partially suggests that employees tend to use self-serving bias when evaluating their service delivery, which refers to the tendency of taking personal credit for one’s success while attributing failure to outside sources (or trying to rectify any failure in
the case of this thesis) (Miller & Ross, 1975). These results suggest that an employee’s service delivery is strongly influenced by two types of attributes: personal and organisational attributes. That is, to effectively manage employee service delivery, managers are required to have deep understanding the effects of both attribute types on employee customer service.

In sum, in relation to RQ2, this thesis demonstrated that personal values do influence employee service delivery but their effects are complex. Furthermore, employees use different attributes (i.e., personal and organisational) in different types of service delivery (i.e., service excellence and service recovery effort). The results of two studies conducted in this thesis are depicted in Figure 6.1. Based on the findings of these two studies, the next section provides an overarching conclusion of this thesis.

**Figure 6.1 Summary of Findings Associated with The Both Studies in This Thesis**

### 6.3.3 Overarching conclusion of this thesis

With the growth of workforce diversity in a workplace, the success of hospitality organisations largely depends on how they can understand the effects of an employee’s
personal attributes and effectively utilise their motivations, unique ideas or competences to deliver quality service to the customers (Manoharan & Gross, 2014). Among various employee personal attributes, this thesis focused on the concept of personal values and provided an insight into how they affect employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery; both are crucial to determine service quality. The findings of this thesis suggest that organisations can promote service climate without considering the effects of personal values. However, personal values have strong implications for employee service delivery. Building on this finding, it is possible to conclude that organisations must pay close attention to proactively seek and understand the effects of personal values on employee attitudes and behaviours in service delivery; although, they should keep promoting employee perceptions of service climate by focusing on the key organisational factors (i.e., HR practices, leadership, information-sharing and effective communication systems).

Given this notion, I contend that organisations must adopt a ‘dual-level’ approach to effectively manage employee customer service (i.e., at organisational level, by promoting service climate and at an individual level, by proactively understanding/utilising personal values). By adopting this approach, organisations are not only able to achieve and maintain high service standard but also effectively facilitate individual employees to add ‘personal touch’ to their customer service. This personal touch makes service more personal to the customers and transforms ‘good service’ to ‘memorable service’. While this notion is not new, many practitioners and researchers still predominantly focus on organisational attributes (e.g., policies, practices and procedures). By identifying the effects of personal values on employee service delivery, this thesis urges managers to pay more attention to employees’ personal attributes so as to effectively achieve the mission of service excellence. Ultimately, the dual-level approach of more holistically managing employee service delivery would not only help to increase customer perceptions of service quality but would also help to increase employee motivations or commitment to their jobs or organisations.

6.4 Theoretical Implications

While this research has yielded a number of important theoretical implications, its most important overarching contribution is to improve our understanding of the effects of personal values on employee perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in relation to customer
service. In contrast to other types of personal attributes such as personality traits and cultural values, knowledge about the way personal values influences service is very limited, particularly in the service literature (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). Personal values are important because they act as guiding principles and impact perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in a workplace (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994). Therefore, for an organisation to achieve high quality service, understanding the effects of employees’ personal values on their customer service is crucial. By critically investigating the role of personal values in relation to employee perceptions of service climate and service delivery, this thesis aimed to fill important theoretical gaps in the literature.

Specifically, there are four important theoretical contributions that this thesis offers. First, the study clarified the relationship between personal values and employee perceptions of service climate. Much previous research in service climate has focused on identifying key organisational factors that promote employee perceptions of service climate. However, the great majority of these studies treat the sample (e.g., employees or managers) as a homogeneous group, thereby neglecting to examine the effects of employees’ personal values on their perceptions of service climate. In theory, many researchers would agree on which employees’ personal values, to some extent, influence the way they perceive organisational internal functioning. However, the extant literature does not provide information on ‘how personal values actually influence employee perceptions of service climate’ and ‘how strong such effects are’. In this regard, this thesis contributes to filling an important theoretical gap in the literature by assessing the effects of personal values. Clarification of the ‘marginal effects’ of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and its underlying reasons offers valuable insights to climate researchers in terms of how they should treat the concept in future research.

Second, this study adds to understanding about how personal and organisational attributes interact with each other to impact employee perceptions of service climate. Bowen and Schneider’s (2014) recent review of service climate research points out a notable lack of research examining the interaction effects of organisational and employees’ personal attributes on perceived service climate. Responding to this call, this thesis addressed this research gap and found that the effects of personal values seem to be, interestingly, suppressed by several key organisational factors (i.e., HR practices, leadership, effective communication system for service delivery, and information sharing). These findings contribute to the ongoing understanding of the complex mechanism of service climate antecedents. Specifically, the study offers the important insight of which,
under the circumstance in which organisations possess well-developed policies or practices for customer service, those policies or practices can mask the effects of personal values. Therefore, organisations could actually benefit from treating employees like a homogeneous group to promote service climate. This notion of ‘suppressing effects’ also helps us to understand how the benchmark service organisations successfully craft and promote service climate despite the diversity in their workforce.

Third, the study suggest the degrees of impact on employee perceptions of service climate varies by the type of personal attributes (e.g., personal values, cultural values and personality traits). Previous research identified that personality traits have a significant impact on employee perceptions of service climate (Auh et al., 2011) while cultural values did not (Baytalskaya, 2011). In this study, the effects of personal values on perceived service climate was only marginal. The findings from these studies imply that one’s personality traits would have stronger impact on employee perceptions of service climate than his or her ‘value orientations’ (both personal and cultural). Furthermore, given the underlying reasons offered for the marginal effects of personal values (‘inculcation of organisational values’ and ‘self-suppression of personal values’), I argue that an employee’s value orientations are more likely to be concealed or suppressed by other factors (e.g., a strong organisational culture), than personality traits. Although not conclusive, the current study provides important insights into the strength of different personal attributes in relation to employee perceptions of service climate.

Fourth, in relation to service delivery, this study contributes to further understanding about the role of personal values in relation to service delivery. A large extent of literature focuses on the discussion of organisational policies or practices (e.g., ‘scripting’) in the effective management of employee service delivery. However, we have limited understanding of how employees’ personal attributes influence their service delivery. Although some prior research has examined the effects of personal values on areas such as creativity and customer orientation (Coelho & Sousa, 2013; Sousa & Coelho, 2011), no study has empirically examined the direct relationships between personal values and service delivery. This thesis is the first study to address this important research gap. It facilitates our knowledge of how different types of personal values (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, and openness to change) influence employee service delivery and also clarifies underlying reasons why employees put their efforts into certain types of service delivery (i.e., excellent service and service recovery efforts). In addition, this thesis helps to improve our knowledge about how different sets of attributes (i.e.,
personal values and organisational attributes) create impacts on different types of service delivery (i.e., excellent service and service recovery efforts). This finding suggests the applicability of attribution theory and the notion of self-serving bias to examine the underlying factors that influence employee service delivery.

6.5 Practical Implications

The result drawn from this thesis have five important implications for managerial practices in the service and hospitality industry. First, the study provides an important insight of which organisations are able to craft and promote service climate without taking the effects of personal values into consideration. In this thesis, I found that the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate is suppressed by several strong organisational policies and practices (i.e., HR practices, leadership, effective communication system for service delivery, and information sharing). That is, despite employees embracing a strong belief of certain values, once they are indoctrinated into a strong service culture, their personal values seem to be somewhat diluted and hidden behind the employees’ adherence to the ‘corporate way’ and employees perceive the organisational internal functioning similarly. Thus, to effectively promote service climate in a workplace, service managers must strive to create a strong service culture within the organisation that has the potential to ‘override’ employees’ personal values. To do this, the managers should first revise the current corporate mission, goals and values, and align them with the mission of service excellence. Then, they can develop training programs and reward systems in line with those mission, goals and values. Through strong leaderships, storytelling, promotion schemes and various rituals, the organisations can nurture organisational core values in employee mindsets (Ford et al., 2008).

Second, in contrast to service climate, the identification of strong effects of personal values on employee service delivery provides strong evidence to managers to proactively seek and understand their employee’s personal values. One way to do this is to carefully observe how employees’ dominant personal values appear in their routine works (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). For instance, employees who embrace the self-transcendence value tend to demonstrate more ‘genuine care’ for the customers than those who hold other personal value types. Such employees would more frequently seek advice from a manager as to whether they can offer ‘customised’ service to accommodate the customer needs or to solve any problems the customers may have. Those employees would also proactively
support their colleagues when effective coordination is required (e.g., busy time at hotel check-in/out or large banquet events). Those attitudes and behaviours are often driven from employees’ fundamental values (Milfont et al., 2010). By carefully observing employee attitudes and behaviours in a workplace, managers would have some ‘clues’ to understand employees’ personal value orientations.

Nevertheless, to deeply understand employees’ personal value orientations, developing informal communication is crucial. In work settings (e.g., in front of the customers at a lobby or restaurant), employees’ behaviours are somewhat similar (for example, all employees at front desk greet and register the guests, perform check-in/out functions, provide room keys, inform the hotel facilities and so on). Furthermore, the communication between managers and employees is often limited in work-related matters. Under such circumstances, it may not easy for the managers to ‘fully’ capture employees’ value orientations by simply observing their attitudes and behaviours. Contrarily, in informal settings (e.g., lunch/dinner break at the staff canteen or outside the workplace), employees tend to more freely express their ideas or concerns (or even complaints!) (Fay, 2011). As such, the informal communication provides the managers a greater opportunity to understand an employee’s fundamental thoughts or values, which may not appear in the formal settings. In Japan, for example, it is common practice that managers regularly take their subordinates to bars after work and develop solid relationships through informal communication. Developing informal communication not only allows the managers to effectively understand employees’ value orientations but it also provides opportunity for the managers to share their values with employees. As a result, managers are able to develop more effective organisational practices and increase internal service quality, which brings about a number of benefits to the organisations such as reduction of unwanted turnover, and increased employees’ organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) and organisational commitment (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 2008).

Third, results of this study suggest that managers should undertake more effective deployment of the workforce by understanding personal value orientations. This thesis found that various types of personal values affect the way employees deliver customer service. For instance, self-transcendence, which values ‘helping other people’, affects the way employees proactively go beyond the call of duty and strive to fulfil the guest needs. Self-enhancement, characterised by the achievement, ambition and capacity, urges employees to deliver quality service so as to gain recognition or rewards. While the strong effects of openness to change did not appear in this study, conservation, emphasising the
avoidance of conflict with managers or customers, influences employees to stick to formal procedures so as to ensure consistency in their customer service. These results indicate, while all customer-contact employees deliver the same customer service, their fundamental motivation varies by their value orientation. Therefore, to gain the maximum effectiveness through the deployment of the workforce, managers should strive to strategically assign the relevant tasks, which match to employees’ personal value orientations (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). For instance, for guests who requires more individual attention (e.g., VIPs or patrons), managers can assign employees who embrace self-transcendence value as those employees are more likely to be attentive, proactively detect the signals of customer’s unexpected wishes, and willingly spend more time with one guest (Coelho & Sousa, 2013). On the other hand, for those who embrace conservation, the managers can assign the tasks, which requires more consistency and structure in customer service (e.g., banquets or functions, which often requires speedy and systematic approach to customer service). In addition, where possible, managers should strategically design work teams by taking the members’ personal value orientations account. As Schwartz’s conceptualisation of personal values depicts, some values are incongruent with other values (e.g., self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement or conservation vs. openness to change). Such incongruence in value orientations could cause conflicts in teamwork while working with colleagues who embrace similar value orientation often maximise the efficiency and productivity in their work (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997; Klein, Knight, Ziegert, Lim, & Saltz, 2011).

Fourth, this research also suggests an alternative way of achieving person-organisation (P-O) fit in recruiting and hiring practices. The congruence between employees’ personal values and organisational values often lead higher job satisfaction, loyalty, OCBs and lower stress (McShane, Travaglione, & Olekalns, 2012). One’s personal value orientation is stable and unlikely to change throughout his/her life (Rokeach, 1973). Therefore, hiring people who have similar values to the organisational values is so important to achieve maximum efficiency in customer service. To achieve P-O fit, organisations often conduct personality tests in their hiring practices (Tsai, Chen, & Chen, 2012). While personality tests might be still useful, the current study offered an alternative way of seeking P-O fit; that is, the use of personal values tests (such as Schwartz’s value survey). By conducting personal values tests, human resource managers are able to identify the dominant personal value of prospective employees. Such information can be utilised determining the selection of the ‘right’ employees. For example, if the hotel is a
newly built independent hotel and ‘innovation’ or ‘creativity’ of customer service is part of their corporate values, they can select employees with higher openness to change. Hiring the ‘right’ employees has always been a challenge for most organisations and the consequence of maladjustment is often substantial. In this regard, the current study, in addition to personality tests, offers an alternative way of achieving P-O fit and helps the service and hospitality organisations to improve hiring practices.

Fifth, the findings of this study inform the managers about not only how to facilitate employees to deliver excellent service but also how to urge them to proactively engage in effective service recovery. The current study indicates that employees attribute personal values to their delivery of quality service while they attribute organisational factors (e.g., hotel’s reputation or hotel as a business) to their efforts into effective service recovery. Thus, to facilitate employees to deliver quality service, managers should respect, understand and effectively utilise employee personal values with the strategies mentioned above. On the other hand, to urge employees to proactively engage in effective service recovery, this study emphasises the importance of increasing employees’ affective commitment in the workplace. Study 2 identified that employees’ motivation to put their efforts in effective service recovery is associated with their concern for the ‘hotel’s reputation’ and ‘hotel as a business’. That is, if employees have low commitment or attachment to their organisations, they would not be too concerned about the consequence of a service failure (or even they could possibly take recovery actions). The consequence of ‘double deviation’ (failing on the recovery effort after the initial failure) (Johnston & Fern, 1999), can lead to a loss of existing customers, negative word-of-mouth, negative image of the hotel, and decrease in future profitability. As such, it is crucial for the organisations to increase employee commitment in the workplace, particularly their affective commitment; that is, “emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation” (Meyer et al., 2012, p. 226). Increases in an employee’s affective commitment can be achieved by the organisation to provide extensive support for employees’ job tasks, develop a constructive and quality exchange relationship between the managers and employees, and establishing a cohesive work group (Vandenberghe, Bentein, & Stinglhamber, 2004). By understanding employees’ personal values and increasing their affective commitment in a workplace, organisations are able to facilitate employees to deliver quality service and urge them to proactively engage in effective service recovery.
6.6 Limitations

As in many other studies, this thesis has a number of limitations. One of the limitations is associated with the research design. In Study 1, following the previous studies (e.g., Auh et al., 2011), I treated perceived service climate as an outcome variable. However, to more comprehensively investigate the relationships between personal values, employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery, I could have included employee service delivery in Study 1 as an outcome variable, then resolved to investigate the moderating effects of perceived service climate on the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. It is possible that treating perceived service climate as an outcome variable in Study 1 resulted in a limited provision of a comprehensive insight into the relationships between personal values, employee perceptions of service climate perceptions and their service delivery.

Furthermore, given the limited research examining the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery, I designed Study 2 as an exploratory study and sought to identify the personal value effects on a broad range of service delivery; however, I made the decision to divide it into only two categories—excellent service delivery and service recovery. In other words, I did not specify a more comprehensive range of aspects or types of service delivery. This approach has provided somewhat ‘fuzzy’ results to illustrate the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery. For instance, in theory, an opposite pole of Schwartz’s personal value type should provide contradictory effects on outcome variables (Schwartz, 1992). However, the result of the current study demonstrated that opposite types of personal values (i.e., self-transcendence and self-enhancement) actually influenced employee service delivery to almost the same degree. Furthermore, while the current study demonstrates that the effects of personal values vary depending on the types of service delivery, it is still unknown how each type of personal values create impacts on more specific type of service delivery or different nature of service (e.g., front office, F&B, concierge, or housekeeping). To more effectively and precisely observe the personal value effects on employee service delivery, it would be important to specify the aspects or types of service delivery. In this regard, the current study is limited in scope to explain how personal values influence specific or different types of employee service delivery.

Methodological limitations in this thesis are associated with the data collection procedure in Study 1; specifically, the location and timing of the survey. In a survey, the contextual factors often influence the way in which respondents answer the survey.
questionnaire (Brener et al., 2006). In the current study, I conducted the survey at the staff canteens (i.e., organisation setting). It is therefore possible that employees had work-mindsets even during their break time, which influenced the way they interpreted the survey questionnaire. Furthermore, it is common that the respondents provide socially desirable answers to the organisations in the setting where their colleagues or managers are present or nearby (Brener et al., 2006). In addition, the timing of survey (i.e., during their 30-45 minute lunch or dinner break) might also have influenced the way the respondents answered the questionnaire. The respondents had a lot of things to do during their break time (e.g., having their meals, talking with colleagues, calling/texting to the friends, using the Internet). Thus, they might have answered the survey questionnaire under the pressure of limited time. This could have led to some inaccuracy in their responses. While I strived to address these issues as common method biases (see Section 3.4.1.6), I must acknowledge that it is possible that an environment of conducting Study 1 might have hindered employees to carefully think and reflect on their honest opinions.

6.7 Future Research

The results of this thesis provide a number of potential avenues in the realm of personal values, service climate and service delivery studies. First, any future study should examine the effects of personal values on more specific aspects and/or types of service delivery. As mentioned earlier, this thesis examined the effects of personal values on only two types of service delivery (i.e., service excellence and service recovery). Although it provides a ‘big picture’ of the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery, we still do not know how these personal values influence specific aspects (i.e., attitudes or behaviours) or types (i.e., front office, food and beverage, or concierge) of service delivery. Given a number of different attributes are related to employee service attitudes (i.e., cognitive, affective and behavioural Kuo et al., 2012) and behaviours (i.e., in-role behaviours and extra-role behaviours Tsaur & Lin, 2004), future research could examine the effects of personal values on these specific aspects and types of service delivery. The results of such studies will provide more comprehensive and deeper insights into the relationships between personal values and employee service delivery.

Second, future study could examine the mechanism of employee service delivery by using attribution theory. This thesis found that the employees used different attributes
for different types of service delivery. That is, employees tended to attribute the motivation to deliver quality service to their personal values. In contrast, they often attributed their service recovery efforts to organisational factors. In order to explain this finding, the current study adopted only the fundamental principle of attribution theory. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the theory involves a number of concepts that explain ‘why people use different attributes to evaluate their certain behaviours’. By further investigating the attribution process of service delivery in different situation or cases, future research could contribute to unfolding the complex mechanism of employee service delivery. The results of those studies would provide an additional insight for managers into how they can effectively motivate and facilitate employees to deliver quality service.

Third, in relation to employee perceptions of service climate, future research can examine factors that explain the gap between ‘what organisations think as the best practice to promote service climate’ and ‘how employees actually perceive those practices’. As briefly noted in Chapter 5, the managers at target hotels in this thesis believed they were doing their best to create customer-orientation in a workplace (by developing strong HR practices, leadership and reward/recognition systems—the key factors to promote service climate). However, the results of Study 1 and 2 suggest that many employees are not fully satisfied with such practices. That is, a gap still exists between an organisation’s belief in their best practices and an employee’s actual perceptions of these practices. To effectively promote employee perceptions of service climate, it is critical to identify the factors causing such gaps. The results of the current study imply that it may not be personal values but some other personal factors (e.g., personality traits or cultural values) that may be able to provide some explanations or solutions to fill this gap.

Fourth, future research may incorporate an employee’s other types of personal attributes into the current model and examine their relationships. As the growth of workforce diversity in the hospitality industry (and service industry in general) escalates, it becomes more and more important to understand the effects of employees’ personal attributes on their customer service. The current study examined the effects of personal values; however, as noted in Chapter 2, other personal attributes may also influence an employee’s cognition and behaviour (e.g., personality traits or cultural values). Those attributes are theoretically related to personal values and incorporating them into the current model would enhance our understanding of how various types of personal attributes interact and create impacts on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery. For instance, future research can examine how the combination of these
various personal attributes influences employee perceptions of service climate or their service delivery. Alternatively, as discussed in Section 6.4 above, a future study could compare the strengths of different personal attributes in relation to these outcome variables.

Last but not least, in order to more comprehensively understand the personal value effects on employee service delivery, future research could include various samples. Due to the restrictions on time, budget and accessibility, I selected only nine 4-5 star hotels in Queensland, Australia (all of them are categorised as ‘luxury’ or ‘full-service’ hotels). However, other types of hotels in/outside Australia (e.g., B&B, backpackers, motel, casino hotels, or boutique hotels) have demographic and operational characteristics that vary considerably from the current sample. In order to generalise the results of the current study, future research could collect data from these other types of hotels. Specifically, it would be worthwhile to replicate this study targeting employees working at lower-rated hotels (e.g., 2-3 star). One of the reasons that explain the subtle effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate is that several organisational factors (e.g., leadership or HR practices) may suppress impact of personal values. Therefore, if the effects of personal values become more salient in lower-rated hotels, the findings of current research would be validated.

6.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter provided the conclusion of this thesis. An overview of the current study was first outlined. The key findings of this study were summarised in line with two main research questions. Then, an overarching conclusion was presented. Several important implications for the research and managerial practices were discussed. Key limitations of the current study and recommendations for the future research were outlined.

The rapid growth of workforce diversity in the service industry presents an array of challenges to organisations in effectively managing their employees to deliver quality customer service. Traditionally, organisations strive to achieve this by developing strong policies, practices and procedures. However, employees from different backgrounds have different ‘lenses’ to see their world and their fundamental motivations to deliver customer service could vary. ‘Truly great service’ that goes beyond customer expectation is often derived from an employee’s fundamental motivations. In this light, personal values, which act as ‘guiding principles’ of one’s life and fundamentally influence the way employees
think and behave in their customer service, play a crucial role.

In this thesis, I examined the effects of personal values on employee perceptions of service climate and their service delivery: both are crucial in determining customer perceptions of service quality and organisational performance. The results of this study provided critical insights into how personal values play (or do not play) a pivotal role in promoting service climate and influencing employee service delivery. I anticipate that this thesis opens avenues for future research that investigates the importance of employee personal values in various types of customer service and will be in light of developing effective workforce diversity management for achieving organisational service excellence.


outcomes in a business-to-business setting. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(8), 1593-1620.


Appendix A: Letter to the Gatekeepers of the Participating Hotels

Invitation Letter

**Name of Project:** The effects of personal values on hotel employee’s service climate perceptions and service delivery in the hospitality industry

**Investigator:** Mr. Hiroaki Saito (Doctoral student, University of Queensland)

**Background and Research Topic:**
I am undertaking a study which seeks to examine how employees from different personal background perceive organisational practices, policies, leadership and procedures specifically related to the customer service.

The result of this study will offer insights for hotel managers about how employees’ particular personal values impact their workplace perceptions and service delivery.

Such understanding aims to facilitate more effective communication, training and improved leadership practices to maximise the benefits of a multicultural workforce. It will ultimately foster a more harmonious workplace, thereby improving employee attitudes about the workplace and service standard while also reducing the likelihood of unwanted staff turnover.

**The research consists of two parts:**

1. A **paper/online questionnaire** given to customer-contact employees (I am open to your interpretation of customer contact employees, but I generally classify them as concierge/bellmen, front desk, food and beverage / bar attendants and housekeepers). The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes.
2. The second phase will be **face-to-face interviews** with a small sample of employees who participated in phase 1 and show their interests to participate in the interview. Willingness to be interviewed (later) will be asked during the survey.

**What I would need from your hotel:**

1. (If possible) A **generic list of employee demographic data** (e.g., the data of employees’ countries of origin and its percentage in a workplace).
2. To allow me to be in the staff canteen and distribute the survey questionnaire to relevant staff (*Online survey is also available when it is convenient and appropriate).*
3. To allow me to interview a few key customer-contact employees.

It is very important that management not only consents to this research but supports it so that participation rates are increased. It is vital that I obtain participation of a significant majority of customer-contact employees in order for the research to be valid.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Once the information is collected, I would be more than happy to provide a summary of my findings to the managers. This information might be particularly useful, as it is a measure of how employees from various personal background differently perceive the hotel’s policies, practices and procedures aims to deliver quality service to the guests.

Should you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor, Associate Professor David Solnet (see contact details below).

Lastly, if possible, I would like to get a referral to other hotels managers and/or HR staff to continue and valid my study.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance with this research project.

Hiroaki Saito

**Principal Researcher**
Hiroaki Saito
The University of Queensland
Ph: (04) 1525 6441
Email: h.saito@uq.edu.au

**Supervisor**
Associate Professor. David Solnet
The University of Queensland
Ph: (07) 3346 8716
Email: d.solnet@uq.edu.au
Appendix B: Survey Promotion Poster

CHANCE TO WIN
iPad Mini with Retina Display!!

HOW: By participating in doctoral research project:
  • Phase 1: Survey (10-15min)
  • Phase 2: Interview (to be announced)

WHEN: XXXX ~ XXXX

WHERE: Hotel Staff Cafeteria

*Currently, we are welcoming the staff to participate in Phase 1. Only staff who participate in Phase 1 is eligible to participate in Phase 2.

*In EACH phase, you have a chance to win a iPad mini with Retina Display
Appendix C: Prize Draw

😊 Prize Draw 😊

Thank you for completing the survey!!

For the great appreciation to your contribution, I would like to invite you to the Prize Draw (an iPad Mini with Retina display)!! To be eligible to win the prize, please write your name and email address below (CAPITAL). I will use those information only for two purposes, which are: 1) When I need to contact prize winners 2) When I contact those who show an interest in participating in an interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My study also involves face-to-face interview. If you are willing to participate in the interview, you will have ANOTHER CHANCE to win an iPad Mini with Retina display!! Plus, iTunes Gift Card will also be offered. Please circle one below to express your interest.

I am willing to participate in the interview.

YES / NO

In order to have an interview with staff from a variety of cultural background, the researcher may need to select interview participants based on their cultural background. Please write below which country you lived in for the most of your time, between 0 – 15 years of age.

_____________________

This is all for survey and prize draw!
Thank you for your participation and valuable input!

*In order to keep anonymity, the researcher will DETACH this prize draw page from your survey answers. Then, store them SEPARATELY. Thank you very much! 😊

***** END ****
Appendix D: Employee Survey Questionnaire

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Respondent

This questionnaire is a part of doctoral research project, which will ask you about your personal values and how you perceive your hotel’s practices, policies and procedures in relation to the delivery of service to guests. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and requires certain level of English language proficiency.

This study adheres to guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the principal investigator (h.saito@uq.edu.au or 0415256441), you may also speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study. If you wish to do so, you may contact the School of Tourism Ethics Officer, Associate Professor Ian Patterson (ian.patterson@uq.edu.au or 0733460753).

All information provided will be treated in strict confidence. Your anonymity will be fully protected. Data will be securely stored and only accessible to the researcher and his university advisors. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse to participate, or to withdraw at any time from the study without any penalties. By completing the survey you are agreeing to participate in this study.

PhD Candidate: Hiroaki Saito (h.saito@uq.edu.au)
Principal Advisor: Associate Professor David Solnet (d.solnet@uq.edu.au)
School of Tourism, The University of Queensland

Q1 At what department/division you work?
   □ Front Office
   □ Personal Concierge/Porter
   □ Food and Beverage (e.g. Waiter/Waitress/Bar staff)
   □ Housekeeping
   □ Other (Please type your department/division) ____________________

Q2 How long have you been working in the hotel industry (including outside Australia)?
   ______ (year) ______ (month)

Q3 How long have you been working in your current hotel?
   ______ (year) ______ (month)
Q4 There are TWO Values Lists below (another one is next page). First, please read all values on Values List 1. Then, rate how important each value is for you as a GUIDING PRINCIPLE in YOUR LIFE (-1 = opposed to my values; 0 = not important; 7 = of supreme importance). Ordinarily, there are NO more than TWO “7 = Of Supreme Importance” values in Values List 1.

### Values List 1

**AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE, this value is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opposed to my values</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Of Supreme importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQUALITY (equal opportunity for all)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INNER HARMONY (at peace with myself)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL POWER (control over others, dominance)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLEASURE (gratification of desires)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREEDOM (freedom of action and thought)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A SPIRITUAL LIFE (emphasis on spiritual not material matters)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENSE OF BELONGING (feeling that others care about me)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL ORDER (stability of society)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN EXCITING LIFE (stimulating experiences)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEANING IN LIFE (a purpose in life)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITENESS (courtesy, good manners)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEALTH (material possessions, money)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL SECURITY (protection of my nation from enemies)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF RESPECT (belief in one's own worth)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECIPROCATION OF FAVORS (avoidance of indebtedness)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVITY (uniqueness, imagination)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A WORLD AT PEACE (free of war and conflict)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPECT FOR TRADITION (preservation of time-honored customs)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATURE LOVE (deep emotional &amp; spiritual intimacy)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF-DISCIPLINE (self-restraint, resistance to temptation)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIVACY (the right to have a private sphere)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY SECURITY (safety for loved ones)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL RECOGNITION (respect, approval by others)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITY WITH NATURE (fitting into nature)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A VARIED LIFE (filled with challenge, novelty and change)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISDOM (a mature understanding of life)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTHORITY (the right to lead or command)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUE FRIENDSHIP (close, supportive friends)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A WORLD OF BEAUTY (beauty of nature and the arts)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL JUSTICE (correcting injustice, care for the weak)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q5 Now, please read all values on Values List 2. Then, rate how important each value is for you as a GUIDING PRINCIPLE in YOUR LIFE (-1 = opposed to my values; 0 = not important; 7 = of supreme importance). Similar to the Value List 1, there are ordinarily NO more than TWO “7 = Of Supreme Importance” values in Values List 2.

**Values List 2**

**AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE, this value is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opposed to my values</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Of Supreme importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODERATE (avoiding extremes of feeling &amp; action)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOYAL (faithful to my friends, group)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBITIOUS (hard-working, aspiring)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROADMINDED (tolerant of different ideas and beliefs)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMBLE (modest, self-effacing)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DARING (seeking adventure, risk)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT (preserving nature)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFLUENTIAL (having an impact on people and events)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONORING OF PARENTS AND ELDERS (showing respect)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOOSING OWN GOALS (selecting own purposes)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTHY (not being sick physically or mentally)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPABLE (competent, effective, efficient)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCEPTING MY PORTION IN LIFE (submitting to life's circumstances)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONEST (genuine, sincere)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESERVING MY PUBLIC IMAGE (protecting my &quot;face&quot;)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBEDIENT (dutiful, meeting obligations)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTELLIGENT (logical, thinking)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HELPFUL (working for the welfare of others)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENJOYING LIFE (enjoying food, sex, leisure, etc.)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVOUT (holding to religious faith &amp; belief)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSIBLE (dependable, reliable)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURIOUS (interested in everything, exploring)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORGIVING (willing to pardon others)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUCCESSFUL (achieving goals)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEAN (neat, tidy)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF-INDULGENT (doing pleasant things)</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q6 Please think of **THE HOTEL YOU WORK IN** and answer the following questions (1 = Very Low; 7 = Very High). Please select one answer in each line across.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Relatively Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Relatively High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the job knowledge and skills of employees in your business to deliver superior quality work and service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate efforts to measure and track the quality of the work and service in your business?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the recognition and rewards employees receive for the delivery of superior work and service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the overall quality of service provided by your business?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the leadership shown by management in your business in supporting the service quality effort?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the tools, technology and other resources provided to employees to support the delivery of superior quality work and service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7 Please think of **THE HOTEL YOU WORK IN** and state the level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a true commitment to service, not just “lip service”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers are viewed as “opportunities to serve” rather than as “sources of revenue”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is believed by employees that this hotel exists to serve the needs of its customers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management in this hotel constantly communicates the importance of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management in this hotel regularly spends time “in the field” or “on the floor” with customers and front-line employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management in this hotel constantly measures service quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management in this hotel shows that they care about service by constantly giving of themselves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management in this hotel provides resources (not just “lip service”), to enhance employee ability to provide excellent service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers in this hotel offer leadership in creating quality service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 Please think of **YOUR JOB** and indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with statements below (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extensive training programs are provided for individuals in customer contact or front-line jobs</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees in customer contact jobs will normally go through training programs every few years</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are formal training programs to teach new employees the skills they need to perform their job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal training programs are offered to employees in order to increase employees' promotability in the organisation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees have few opportunities for upward mobility (i.e. promotion)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees do not have any future in this organisation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion in this organisation is based on seniority</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Employees have clear career paths in this organisation</td>
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<td>Employees in customer contact jobs who desire promotion have more than one potential position they could be promoted to</td>
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<td>The duties of your job are clearly defined</td>
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<td>This job has an up-to-date description</td>
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<td>The job description for a position accurately describes all of the duties performed by individual employees</td>
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<td>Performance is more often measured with objective quantifiable results</td>
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<td>Performance appraisals are based on objective quantifiable results</td>
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<td>Employee appraisals emphasise long term and group-based achievement</td>
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<td>Employees in this job are often asked by their supervisor to participate in decisions</td>
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<td>Individuals in this job are allowed to make decisions</td>
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<td>Employees are provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done</td>
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<td>Supervisors keep open communications with employees in this job</td>
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Q9 Are you?: Male / Female

Q10 How old are you? ________________________________ years old

Q11 What is the highest education level you have completed?

☐ Less than High School
☐ High School
☐ Trade/Post School Qualification
☐ University Degree
☐ Post-Graduate University Degree

Q12 How long have you been living in Australia?

______________ year ____________ month

Q13 What is your nationality?

_______________________

Q14 Which country did you live in for the most of your time, between 0 – 15 years of age?

_______________________

Q15 What is your Father's country of origin?

_______________________

Q16 What is your Mother's country of origin?

_______________________

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Now, please go to the next page for participating in prize draw
Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Before starting the interview

- Introduce myself to the participant
- Explain the nature and purpose of the study
- Explaining the ethical implications
  - Volunteering participation – not-answering Qs, withdrawing,
  - Audio-recording – Permission & the use of data
  - Confidentiality, privacy & anonymity (coding)
- [DOCUMENT] Obtaining the CONSENT from the participants
- [DOCUMENT] Giving the INFORMATION SHEET to the participants
- Encouraging the participant to provide their honest responses and opinions

Ice-breaking Questions - approx. 5min

- How long have you been working in the hotel industry?
- Have you worked in the other hotel before?

First section (Service Climate) – approx. 20-25min

- Question 1: Using service climate questionnaire to find out the reasons of Study 1
- Question 2: Directly asking why personal values had only subtle effects in Study 1

Second section (Service Delivery) – approx. 20-25min

- Question 1: Excellent service
- Question 2: Service Recovery
Appendix F: Interview Participant Information Sheet

Investigators: Mr. Hiroaki Saito

Project title: Personal Values and Hotel Employee Service Delivery

Objectives:
This study seeks to identify what factors influence hotel employees’ service delivery, when their personal values are likely to emerge in a workplace and how they influence their service attitudes and behaviour. The principal researcher, Hiroaki Saito, is undertaking this research as part of his PhD thesis with the University of Queensland, Business School.

Outcomes and feedback
The findings of this study will generate understanding about the factors influencing customer-contact employee's service behaviour and when and how their human values emerge and influence service behaviour. A report summarising the findings of this study may be obtained by contacting Hiroaki Saito at h.saito@uq.edu.au. This report will not reveal the identities of individual employees.

Involvement of participants
Participation will involve answering interview questions and will take approximately 45 minutes (or maximum one hour). The interview will be conducted by the principal investigator, Hiroaki Saito. The interview will be audio taped. Participants may request that the tape is stopped at any time and may choose not to answer certain questions.

Participant confidentiality
Participant confidentiality is assured and participants will not be identified in the reported research. All responses will be coded and will contribute to a pool of data, so no individual responses will be made available. The information will be stored in a secure environment and access to the data will be made available only to the members of the research team. Your comments will be kept confidential and any information provided will only be used for the purposes of this research.

Withdrawal from study
Participation in the interview is voluntary. The participant may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or prejudice from the principal researcher or their employer, by contacting the principal researcher, Hiroaki Saito (see contact details, below). Data that has been collected from a participant who withholds from the study will not be used in the analysis and will be destroyed immediately.

You are welcome to discuss your participation in this study with the student or his academic advisor (see contact details, below) or to impose conditions, or withdraw from the study at any time.

If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in this study, you may contact the University’s Ethics Officer on 336 53924.

Researcher Contact Details
Principal Researcher: Mr Hiroaki Saito, UQ Business School, The University of Queensland, St. Lucia 4072. Email: h.saito@uq.edu.au

Principal Advisor: Dr David Solnet, UQ Business School, The University of Queensland, St. Lucia 4072. Office contact number (07) 3346 6245 or email: d.solnet@uq.edu.au
Appendix G: Interview Participant Consent Form

Dear Participant

Re: The effects of personal values on hotel employee’s service climate perceptions and service delivery in the hospitality industry

By completing this consent form, I ________________________________ (participant’s full name) agree that I have read and understood the “Participant Information Sheet” for this research project. I agree to participate in this investigation through this interview and understand that I may withdraw at any time.

I understand that my confidentiality is assured and I will not be identified in the reported research. All responses will be coded and will contribute to a pool of data, so no individual responses will be made available. I understand that the interview will be audio taped and that I may request for the tape to be stopped at any time. I understand that I may choose not to answer certain questions. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the research at any stage without penalty or prejudice from my employer or the principal investigator.

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (see contact details below), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinator on 3365 3924.

__________________________________________  ______________
Signature of participant                                Date

Researcher Contact Details
Principal Researcher: Mr. Hiroaki Saito, UQ Business School, The University of Queensland, St. Lucia 4072. Email: h.saito@uq.edu.au

Principal Advisor: Associate Professor, David Solnet, UQ Business School, The University of Queensland, St. Lucia 4072. Office contact number (07) 3346 6245 or email: d.solnet@uq.edu.au
Appendix H: List of Interview Questions

Section 1: Service Climate
Q1: Could you please read these questions on the paper (i.e., service climate questionnaire) and give the rates to each question? Then, write a couple of keywords that came to your mind when determining those ratings.

Q2: What would you think it might be the reasons to explain the weak effects of personal values on answering those questions?

Section 2: Service Delivery
Q1: Could you please tell me the story about the Most Excellent Customer Service you (or your team) have ever delivered?
   • What were the motivations to deliver such an excellent customer service?
   • Where did those motivations come from?

Q2: Could you please tell me the story about the Worst Customer Service you (or your team) have ever delivered?
   • How did you rectify that negative situation?
   • What were the motivations to rectify the situation?
   • Where did those motivations come from?
Appendix I: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Perceived Service Climate, HR practices and Service Leadership

Graphic Display of the Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis
### Model Fit Summary of Perceived Service Climate, HR practices and Service Leadership

#### AMOS Output

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Appendix J: Assumption Testing for Multiple Regression Analysis

Distribution of the Service Climate

Constant Variance of the Error Terms of Service Climate Construct
Independence of the Error Terms and Normality of the Error Term Distribution
Assumptions of Service Climate

Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: Mean Service Climate