



# Flow Experience as a Mediator between Antecedents and Extra-Role Performance among Hotel Employees in Sarawak, alaysia

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## Abstract

Employees who go beyond their job description are regarded as highly prized employees by organizations. This extra-role performance is often seen as a key indicator of whether employees are performing well in their job. Past studies linked engagement to be positively related to job performance, yet there are a limited number of studies on flow and performance, particularly on extra-role performance. This study was conducted on 290 hotel employees in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia to examine the correlation between flow experience and extra-role performance. In addition, this study also looked into flow as the mediator between the antecedents (job demand and job resources) and extra-role performance. The study hypothesized that flow experience is instrumental in employees' extra-role performance. The results of the study suggested that flow correlated with the employees' directional behaviour at work and flow mediates the correlation between job resources and extra-role performance. It was also discovered that flow did not mediate the correlation between job demand and extra-role performance. The findings indicated the benefits and practicality of flow experience on the employees' extra-role performance and also the pros of retrospective flow experience.

**Keywords:** Extra-Role Performance; Job Demands; Job Resources

## 1. Introduction

In Malaysia, the hotel industry is one of the most competitive of all service industries. The emergence of alternative lodging units, such as B&B (bed-and-breakfast), homestays and service apartments, gave hotel organizations even more competition and took a noticeable chunk from their market share. Such increase in competition has driven conventional hotels to focus on providing exceptional service quality to increase customer satisfaction in order to retain profitable loyal clients for their survival, whilst attracting prospective clients. Also, to remain competitive, increased employee performance is needed to produce increased service quality. Nonetheless, service quality is usually intangible and unstandardized; its evaluation is mainly subjective and relies greatly on the customers. Service quality greatly depends on how effective hoteliers deal with customers and clients (1) while efforts to encourage such quality is to be grounded on managing workforce behavior (2).

In-role and extra role performance have an important aspect in the employee and organisation's success. In-role performance is defined as outcomes and behaviours that are formally required and that directly serve organizational objectives (3). Meanwhile, extra-role performance is generally perceived as the non-essential behaviours and/ or activities that are non-vital in the employees' job but essential for the effectiveness of an organization, such as courteous behaviour, yet its execution is within one's discretion (4,5). In the hotel industry context, in-role and extra role performance are both essential to achieve organisational goals and objectives.

The central aim of the present study is to explore how flow affects one's extra-role performance and whether flow experience will mediate the relationship between antecedents and extra-role performance. Tsaur and Lin (1) has highlighted that a substantial number of researchers have emphasized the importance of customer-contact workforce in producing and providing favourable service quality (6,7). Nevertheless, hotel organizations are encountered with the challenging role of searching effective means of ensuring the attitude and behaviours of its workforce are congruent with the management and customers' expectations (6). More importantly, to the best of the authors' understanding, empirical research on the relationship between flow experience and extra-role performance, and flow as a mediator using the data obtained from the Malaysian hotel industry, has yet to exist in hospitality management literature.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Job Demands-Resources Model

This study utilised the Job Demand-Resources model as its underpinning theory. In brief, the JD-R model (8,9) is a heuristic model that enumerates the manner in which the well-being of the employee can be produced through the two distinguishing arrays of working conditions. Job demands is the first array, which portrays job attributes that has the potential in eliciting strain to the stage of outstripping the adaptive capability of employee. In further precision, job demands illustrate the physical, social and/ or organizational aspects of the job which call for sustaining physical as well