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MANAGEMENT PRACTICE FOR HOTEL PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE QUALITY IN CHINA

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Abstract

This study examines the factors influencing service quality and hotel performance in the Chinese hospitality sector by a systematic literature assessment of 15 empirical publications indexed in Scopus. This review consolidates existing research on management strategies, human and psychological capital, leadership styles, and technical innovation to create a cohesive understanding of service performance in a swiftly changing service landscape. The results demonstrate that human capital competencies and psychological resources, specifically professional identity, resilience, and emotional labor management, constitute the fundamental basis of service quality, whereas leadership styles, notably servant leadership, augment employee innovation and adaptability in uncertain circumstances. Moreover, technical advancements such as big data analytics, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, and low-carbon information management systems serve as strategic facilitators that enhance human-centered management techniques instead of supplanting them. The review highlights a notable deficiency in the literature, as the majority of previous studies analyze these elements in isolation rather than within a cohesive framework. This study enhances hospitality management literature by integrating disparate findings into a comprehensive conceptual framework that identifies service quality as the primary mechanism connecting internal management practices to hotel performance, providing both theoretical advancement and practical insights for sustainable competitiveness in the Chinese hospitality sector.

Keywords: Hotel service quality, Hotel performance, Management practices, Technological innovation, Chinese hospitality industry

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1 Introduction

The hotel industry in China is currently operating in a complex environment that has been influenced by digital transformation (Kaliappen & Hassan, 2022; Li & Lv, 2021), heightened consumer expectations (Li & Lv, 2021), sustainability demands (Santos & Marques, 2023), and post-pandemic uncertainty (Lin et al., 2025). The quality and performance of hotel services are no longer solely determined by operational efficiency; rather, they are influenced by the interaction of management practices (Papademetriou et al.,

2023; Tarí et al., 2025), human and psychological capital (Aman-Ullah et al., 2022), leadership effectiveness (Chang et al., 2021), and technological innovation (Jevtić et al., 2024), as demonstrated by recent empirical work. Thus, employee adaptability and service performance are enhanced by psychological resources such as resilience, optimism, and professional identity, while competency-based management frameworks that prioritize digital skills, ethics, cultural service, and lifelong learning have been demonstrated to significantly improve service outcomes. In parallel, advanced technologies, including big data analytics, AI, blockchain, and low-carbon information systems, have emerged as critical enablers of sustainable, reliable, and personalized service delivery (Chaudhary et al., 2025; Eswaran et al., 2025; Kumari & Prakash, 2025; Tariq, 2025). Additionally, servant leadership and trust-based service practices have emerged. Nevertheless, the current body of research frequently investigates these factors in isolation, necessitating a more comprehensive comprehension of the ways in which they interact to affect hotel performance and service quality in the Chinese hospitality domain.

In spite of the increasing scholarly focus on service quality and hotel performance in China, the current research is still fragmented, with a limited integration of technological innovation, leadership styles, psychological factors, and management practices into a single explanatory framework. Numerous studies concentrate on either employee-related variables (Burhan & Fatima, 2025), leadership behavior (Zhu et al., 2025), or digital systems in isolation (Monti et al., 2024), providing a limited understanding of the practical interactions between these dimensions. Therefore, hotel managers encounter difficulties in formulating cohesive strategies that integrate technological investment (Galičić, 2003), psychological support (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2025), and human capital development (Mukarram et al., 2025) to achieve sustainable performance. In the swiftly evolving Chinese hotel industry, the practical application of research findings and the theoretical development in hospitality management are both constrained by the absence of an integrated perspective.

Following the research background, this study raises the following research questions: how management practices and human capital competencies affect service quality and hotel performance in China; the impact of psychological factors and leadership styles on service and performance outcomes; and the interaction between technological innovation and human-centered practices in improving service quality and performance. This study aims to investigate the impact of management practices and human capital on service quality and hotel performance, analyze the mediating roles of psychological factors and leadership, and explore the facilitative role of technological innovation in enhancing service delivery and organizational performance within the Chinese hospitality sector.

Furthermore, the researcher aims to examine the hotel sector in China, highlighting organizational management techniques, employee psychological aspects, leadership styles, and technical developments pertinent to service quality and performance. The scope omits wider macroeconomic and regulatory influences, and the study is constrained by its dependence on synthesis empirical data, potentially limiting causal generalization outside the Chinese context. Nonetheless, the study holds considerable theoretical and practical significance: it enriches hospitality literature by amalgamating human capital, psychological capital, leadership, and technology-enabled service perspectives, while offering hotel managers, educators, and policymakers empirical insights for formulating comprehensive strategies that improve service quality, employee performance, and sustained competitiveness.

According to the reviewed studies, this research suggests a framework in which service quality and hotel performance are directly influenced by management practices and human capital competencies, with psychological factors (including professional identity, uncertainty tolerance, and psychological capital) and leadership styles (particularly servant leadership) serving as mediating mechanisms. The relationship between human-centered practices and service outcomes is fortified by technological innovation, which includes big data analytics, artificial intelligence, blockchain systems, and low-carbon information management. Service quality is the primary pathway through which these variables ultimately influence hotel performance in the Chinese hospitality industry.

2 Method

This study utilizes a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology, following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines to ensure a transparent, reproducible, and methodologically rigorous review process. This review focuses on empirical investigations of Management Practice for Hotel Performance and Service Quality in China. A two-stage screening procedure was implemented, consisting of title-abstract review and full-text assessment, both conducted by independent reviewers to reduce potential selection bias. The inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed primary studies published in English between 2021 and 2025. This included quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research that explicitly addressed managerial aspects, such as governance, policy implementation, and digital transformation. Studies that were non-empirical or lacked management, hotel performance, or quality service were excluded. The data were obtained exclusively from the Scopus database due to its comprehensive collection of reputable journals. A refined search query, integrating selected keywords, publication stages, document categories, and country affiliations, was utilized. This study establishes a solid foundation for scholarly discourse and evidence-based policy recommendations by systematically applying these criteria and procedures to synthesize current and pertinent evidence and identify research related to Management Practice for Hotel Performance and Service Quality in China.

3 Results and Discussions

3.1 Results

Table 3.1 Management Practices, Hotel Performance, and Service Quality Within the Context of China

Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Methodology	Summary of Findings
(Zhang, 2025)	Developing a core competency model for hospitality management education: An innovation-driven approach in China	Delphi process with 10 experts and a survey of 300 students/managers across 6 vocational colleges. Analysis via Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).	Identified six key dimensions for hotel management competency: career foundation skills, digital technology application, operations management/leadership, ethics, cultural service, and lifelong learning. The model explains 88.1% of the variance in vocational education quality.
(Yu et al., 2024)	Uncertainty tolerance moderates	Longitudinal questionnaire	Job insecurity impacts service performance through cognitive appraisals (challenge vs.

	the link between job insecurity and service performance: evidence from China's hotel frontline employees	survey of 316 employees at three time points; tested via hierarchical regression and SEM.	hindrance). High uncertainty tolerance helps mitigate the negative impact of job insecurity on service performance.
(Ren et al., 2024)	The impact of servant leadership on team innovative performance: Mediating role of employee innovative behavior	Questionnaire survey of 647 hotel employees; analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).	Servant leadership significantly boosts team innovation performance by fostering employee innovative behavior. This relationship is further strengthened by a positive team innovation climate.
(Xie et al., 2023)	Perfunctory or faithful: The impact of self-professional identity on labor productivity of front-line employees in hotels	Survey of 238 front-line employees in high-star hotels; analyzed via SEM.	Strong self-professional identity positively influences labor productivity. It enhances "deep acting" (genuine emotional labor) and reduces "surface acting," leading to improved service quality and reduced operating costs.
(Liang & Wu, 2022)	Effects of COVID-19 on customer service experience: Can employees wearing facemasks enhance customer-perceived service quality?	Experimental design involving 160 participants in a post-COVID-19 Chinese context.	Wearing facemasks acts as a positive signal, improving perceived service quality. Trust in both the employee and the hotel brand serves as a serial mediator in enhancing the customer service experience.
(Luo et al., 2021)	The effects of psychological capital and internal social capital on frontline hotel employees' adaptive performance	Survey of 304 hotel employees in China; analyzed via mediating variable modeling.	Psychological capital (resilience, optimism, etc.) significantly improves adaptive performance. Internal social capital (workplace relationships) acts as a partial mediator in this process.
(Chan et al., 2021)	Updates in service standards in hotels: how COVID-19 changed operations	Grounded theory methodology with 24 interviews of hotel managers in mainland China and Hong Kong.	Hotels transitioned through outbreak, response, and recovery phases by updating Local Standard Operating Procedures (LSOPs). Success was tied to service innovation and the adoption of new technology in the social servicescape.
(Wang et al., 2021)	Risk management of	Social Network	In the green supply chain context, five-star

al., 2024)	green supply chains for agricultural products based on social network evaluation framework	Analysis (SNA) and improved TOPSIS method applied to Chinese enterprises (Case: CDYBIT).	hotels were found to have the lowest risk compared to supermarkets and group catering. Managing these supply chain risks is vital for the stability and performance of high-end hotel operations.
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3.1.1 Synthesis of Table 3.1

a. Service Quality

To guarantee the service quality of hotels in China, they manage six key dimensions for hotel management competency: career foundation skills, digital technology application, operations management/leadership, ethics, cultural service, and lifelong learning (Zhang, 2025). Besides, according to Xie et al. (2023) strong self-professional identity positively influences labor productivity. It enhances "deep acting" (genuine emotional labor) and reduces "surface acting," leading to improved service quality and reduced operating costs. Moreover, promoting the costumer service experience, wearing facemasks as a positive signal while simultaneously building trust in employee and hotel brand are parts of improving the quality of service (Liang & Wu, 2022). In addition, Yu et al. (2024) high uncertainty tolerance helps mitigate the negative impact of job insecurity on service performance.

b. Hotel Performance

With regard to the hotel performance, Luo et al. (2021) found that psychological capital (resilience, optimism, etc.) significantly improves adaptive performance. Internal social capital (workplace relationships) acts as a partial mediator in this process. Similarly, the role of hotel leaders can foster the performance of hotels as stated by Ren et al. (2024) that servant leadership significantly boosts team innovation performance by fostering employee innovative behavior. A positive team innovation climate further strengthens this relationship. Additionally, in the green supply chain context, five-star hotels were found to have the lowest risk compared to supermarkets and group catering. Managing these supply chain risks is vital for the stability and performance of high-end hotel operations (Wang et al., 2024).

Table 3.2 Technological Innovations, and Psychological Factors for the Service Quality in the Chinese Hospitality Sector.

Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Methodology	Summary of Findings
(Mu et al., 2025)	Revolutionizing Hospitality: Unraveling the Transformative Potential of Big Data	Big data analytics of traveler behavior (social media, travel sites, and booking systems).	Big data analysis is critical for designing customized strategies that enhance brand loyalty. It allows hotels to derive actionable insights into explicit and implicit customer preferences, providing a competitive edge in optimized service delivery.
(Tong & Liu,	The construction of hotel	System design and testing (PLSR	The new information-based management system improved the

2024)	information management mode under the trend of low carbon tourism	method) comparing a new informatization model against existing systems (Green Cloud, Opera).	read/write rate by over 8% and the service optimization rate by 8.03% compared to the Opera system. It directly improves service quality by aligning management activities with low-carbon tourism demands.
(Hu et al., 2023)	Evaluating emotional labor from a career management perspective	Survey of 387 frontline employees at two luxury hotel brands in China; analyzed via SEM.	Organizational support positively mediates emotional labor. "Sound handling" of emotional labor (genuine emotional input) boosts career competence and commitment, which are essential for maintaining high service quality and reducing turnover in luxury hotels.
(Wang et al., 2021)	Understanding the perceived satisfaction and revisiting intentions... in a restricted service scenario	Questionnaire of 250 lodgers who experienced quarantine hotels in Mainland China and Taiwan; analyzed via SEM.	In restricted "contactless" scenarios, the reliability and responsiveness of staff were the most significant predictors of customer satisfaction. Even under strict quarantine, service perception dimensions remained the primary driver for future revisit intentions.
(Zhou et al., 2022)	A Novel K-Means Clustered Support Vector Machine Technique for Prediction of Consumer Decision-Making	Machine learning (KMC+SVM) and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) on hotel internet evaluations.	Segmenting customers based on online reviews using AI can accurately predict decision-making behaviors. This allows management to prioritize specific service quality enhancements that align with real-time customer feedback.
(Zhang et al., 2021)	Interoperable multi-blockchain platform... for reliable tourism management	Case study on hotel booking using Winding Tree and Hyperledger Fabric frameworks.	A multi-chain blockchain architecture improves transaction privacy and processing capability. For hotels, this ensures more reliable booking management and builds stakeholder trust, indirectly enhancing the guest service experience through data security.
(Lin & Choe, 2022)	Impact of Luxury Hotel Customer Experience on Brand Love and Customer Citizenship	Quantitative study of the Asian luxury hotel market (including China).	Service excellence and Return on Investment (ROI) values are major contributors to "brand love." When customers feel this emotional connection, they exhibit "citizenship behavior" (positive

3.1.2 Synthesis of Table 3.2

a. Technological Innovation

Technology is crucial for a hotel's performance and maintenance. As an illustration, Mu et al. (2025) discovered that big data analysis is critical for designing customized strategies that enhance brand loyalty. It allows hotels to derive actionable insights into explicit and implicit customer preferences, providing a competitive edge in optimized service delivery. Besides, updating the new information-based management system can also support and improve the service quality of hotels by managing activities with low-carbon demands (Tong & Liu, 2024). Furthermore, to prioritize specific service quality enhancements that align with real-time customer feedback, the hotels segment customers based on online reviews using AI that can be used further to predict decision-making behaviours (Zhou et al., 2022). Additionally, Zhang et al. (2021) unearthed that a multi-chain blockchain architecture improves transaction privacy and processing capability. For hotels, this ensures more reliable booking management and builds stakeholder trust, indirectly enhancing the guest service experience through data security.

b. Psychological Factors

In this aspect of psychological factors the further escalate the service quality, Hu et al. (2023) found that organizational support positively mediates emotional labor. "Sound handling" of emotional labor (genuine emotional input) boosts career competence and commitment, which are essential for maintaining high service quality and reducing turnover in luxury hotels. Indeed, the service quality is highly related to the staff performance because staff were the most significant predictors of customer satisfaction. Even under strict quarantine, service perception dimensions remained the primary driver for future revisit intentions (Wang et al., 2021). As a consequence, Lin & Choe (2022) discovered that service excellence and Return on Investment (ROI) values are major contributors to "brand love." When customers feel this emotional connection, they exhibit "citizenship behavior" (positive word-of-mouth and cooperation), which reduces the hotel's marketing costs and improves performance.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Human and Psychological Capital as the Core Drivers of Service Quality and Performance

The results consistently suggest that the quality and performance of hotel services in China are founded on human and psychological capital. The structural foundation for service excellence is provided by competency-based management, which encompasses professional skills, ethics, digital literacy, and continuous learning (Zhang, 2025). Nevertheless, competencies alone are insufficient in the absence of robust psychological resources. In volatile service environments, employees' adaptive performance is considerably improved by psychological capital, which includes optimism and resilience (Luo et al., 2021).

Additionally, emotional labor management and self-professional identity are critical mechanisms that establish a connection between employee well-being and service outcomes. Employees who possess a robust professional identity exhibit profound acting, as opposed to surface acting, which leads to increased

productivity, improved service quality, and reduced operating costs (Hu et al., 2023) (Xie et al., 2023). These results indicate that service quality in Chinese hotels is not solely a procedural outcome, but a psychologically embedded process that is influenced by organizational support, career development, and identity construction..

3.2.2 Leadership, Trust, and Adaptive Service Practices in a High-Uncertainty Context

Organizational climate and leadership are critical factors in the conversion of human potential into quantifiable performance. Servant leadership encourages employee innovation, which in turn improves team innovation performance, particularly when it is accompanied by a positive innovation climate (Ren et al., 2024). This underscores a transition in Chinese hotel management from control-oriented leadership to relational and empowerment-based models.

Concurrently, the significance of psychological preparedness in post-pandemic hospitality operations is underscored by the fact that employees' uncertainty tolerance mitigates the adverse impacts of job insecurity on service performance (Yu et al., 2024). Trust is also a central mediating factor in customer perceptions. The perceived quality of service was improved by adaptive service signals, such as the use of facemasks during the COVID-19 pandemic, which reinforced trust in both hotel brands and employees (Liang & Wu, 2022). Collectively, these results indicate that trust-based service practices and adaptive leadership are indispensable for preserving service consistency in the face of uncertainty.

3.2.3 Technology as a Strategic Enabler of Personalized, Sustainable, and Trustworthy Service

Technological innovation serves as a strategic enabler rather than a solitary determinant of service quality. Hotels can develop personalized service strategies and enhance brand loyalty by identifying explicit and implicit customer preferences through AI-driven customer segmentation and big data analytics (Mu et al., 2025; Zhou et al., 2022). At the operational level, the integration of sustainability into service quality expectations is reflected in the significant improvement of service optimization and efficiency that information management systems aligned with low-carbon tourism achieve (Tong & Liu, 2024).

Additionally, the reliability of transactions and the security of data are improved by blockchain-based booking systems, which indirectly improves the service experience and client trust (Zhang et al., 2021). Moreover, the results suggest that technological investments are most effective when they are accompanied by strong psychological capital, supportive leadership, and competent employees. Consequently, technology enhances human-centered service administration, rather than supplanting it.

3.2.4 Implications of the Study

This study's findings present significant theoretical and practical consequences. This study enhances hospitality and service management literature by synthesizing human capital theory, psychological capital, leadership theory, and technology-enabled service frameworks into a cohesive explanatory model. This comprehensive viewpoint transcends disjointed methods that analyze these variables independently and illustrates that service quality and performance are generated systemically. The study indicates that hotel managers ought to focus the development of employee competencies, psychological well-being, and servant leadership in conjunction with digital transformation efforts. Investments in emerging technology like AI and big data analytics can produce optimal results only when coupled with proficient, adaptable

workers and conducive organizational environments. The findings emphasize the significance of trust-building service practices and adaptive leadership in navigating uncertainty, offering practical guidance for hotel operators, educators, and policymakers seeking to improve service excellence and sustainable performance in the Chinese hospitality sector.

3.2.5 Future Recommendation

Future investigations should empirically validate the proposed research framework through quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches to ascertain causal relationships among management practices, psychological factors, leadership styles, technological innovation, service quality, and hotel performance. Comparative analyses across various areas or hotel classifications (e.g., budget versus luxury accommodations) might augment the generalizability of the results. Longitudinal study is advocated to document the evolving changes in employee psychology, leadership efficacy, and technology adoption across time. Future research may also include external variables such as government policy, cultural values, and sustainability regulations to enhance the knowledge of hotel performance in China. Ultimately, broadening the research to encompass cross-national situations would provide significant comparisons between China and other rising or developed hospitality industries.

4 Conclusion

The results of this investigation indicate that the strategic alignment of human capital, psychological resources, leadership practices, and technological innovation is the primary factor influencing the quality and performance of hotel services in China. The primary drivers of service excellence are human and psychological factors, while the extent to which employee potential is translated into innovation and performance is determined by leadership and organizational climate. Technology is a potent enabler that improves sustainability, efficiency, personalization, and trust; however, it is unable to independently guarantee superior service outcomes. Service quality serves as a fundamental mechanism that connects internal management practices to the overall performance of a hotel. Hotels in China can increase their resilience, improve customer satisfaction, and establish a sustainable competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive and intricate hospitality industry by implementing a management approach that is integrated, human-centered, and technology-supported.

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Ethical Considerations

Not Applicable

Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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