Comparing the antecedents of manager's and employee's job satisfaction in the housekeeping department

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Abstract

Purpose – Job satisfaction is essential in understanding turnover intentions. Previous studies reveal that highly educated hospitality employees generally have lower levels of job satisfaction, indicating that the antecedents of job satisfaction may be different from hospitality managers and frontline employees. This study compared the different antecedents of job satisfaction for housekeeping managers and employees.

Design/methodology/approach – This study used a mixed-methods approach for a two-part study. The researchers recruited housekeeping managers for the exploratory survey. The results of open-end questions helped us build a custom dictionary for the text mining of comments from Glassdoor.com. Finally, a multilinear regression of themes from housekeeping employees' ratings on Glassdoor.com was conducted to understand the antecedents of job satisfaction for housekeeping managers and employees.

Findings – The results of the exploratory survey indicated that the housekeeping department has an urgent need for organizational support and training. The text-mining revealed organizational support impacts both managers and frontline employees, while training impacts managers more than employees. Finally, the regression analysis showed compensation, business outlook, senior management, and career opportunity impacted both groups. However, work-life balance only influenced managers.

Originality/value – With a large number of employees at low salaries, housekeeping departments have a higher-than-average turnover rate for lodging. This study is among the first to compare the antecedents of managers' and frontline employees' job satisfaction in the housekeeping department, extending Social Exchange Theory. It provides suggestions for the housekeeping department to decrease turnover intentions.

Keywords Housekeeping managers, Housekeeping employees, Job satisfaction, Social exchange theory, Text-mining

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

One of the major issues hotel operators face in the post-pandemic environment is attracting and retaining employees (Yin, Bi, & Ni, 2022). Hotel housekeeping departments traditionally experience a higher-than-average turnover rate (Mest, 2017), which has escalated due to the Great Resignation (Hotel Tech Report, 2022a). The work itself is physically demanding and typically pays less than other departments (Kensbock, Patiar, & Jennings, 2019). While employees may use it as an entry into a company, they do not often plan to build a career in housekeeping (Brunot, n.d.). Furthermore, approximately 67% of total labor costs for a hotel can be attributed to housekeeping departments (Heath, n.d.). Housekeeping service is a high-profile attribute of the property, often mentioned in online reviews (Chang, Chen, Kuo, Hsu, & Cheng, 2016), creating additional pressures for the department to perform well. Coupled with an uncertain future for hospitality employment due to shifting societal mores, housekeeping departments are facing a labor shortage crisis.

Hotel operators need to understand what impacts the job satisfaction and career commitment to keep these valuable housekeeping employees. Researchers have studied the antecedents of career commitment and job satisfaction in hospitality, including the housekeeping department (e.g. Andrade, Miller, & Westover, 2021), but different levels of employees in housekeeping have not been studied. A foundational study related to job satisfaction in hotels in Hong Kong, which combined employees from all departments, found that highly educated employees were less likely to be satisfied with their jobs; these are usually managers. The opportunity for promotion had the most significant impact on job satisfaction (Lam, Zhang, & Baum, 2001). More recent studies have confirmed Lam's findings that promotion opportunities have a significant impact on job satisfaction for hospitality employees (Díaz-Carrión, Navajas-Romero, & Casas-Rosal, 2020), especially for managers, most of whom are required to have a post-secondary degree for their position (Nicely & Tang, 2015). Both of these results indicate that housekeeping managers may have different antecedents of job satisfaction than housekeeping employees. The job duties of housekeeping managers and employees are distinctly different. Instead of day-to-day cleaning, housekeeping managers are responsible for employee management and guest satisfaction (Petersen, 2018). However, researchers have yet to compare the antecedents of job satisfaction for managers and employees in the same department. Despite the recent work by Andrade *et al.* (2021), there is no comprehensive study of U.S. hotel housekeeping departments.

Therefore, the researchers undertook a two-party study to fill this gap. The researchers conducted surveys of housekeeping managers and used the results of that survey to inform a text analysis of online employee reviews. This study examined the factors that impact job satisfaction for both managers and employees in hotel housekeeping departments through the lens of Social Exchange Theory. Social Exchange Theory purports that there is a reciprocal exchange between two parties for fairness (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The Social Exchange Theory also emphasizes the importance of exchanging resources' values (Emerson, 1976). Due to varying needs, these values may differ among individuals, thus influencing the dynamics of social exchange relationships. Hospitality researchers have previously applied this theory to examine the role of organizational support in job satisfaction (e.g. de Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021).

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, beginning with a survey of housekeeping supervisors and managers to determine what impacts their job satisfaction. A dictionary of words related to job satisfaction from the pilot study was used to conduct a text-mining of the online reviews from Glassdoor.com, an online recruitment platform that also serves as an online review site for employees (Glassdoor.com, 2022). Finally, a regression analysis of the antecedents of overall star ratings for housekeeping reviews for both managers and employees was conducted using the data from Glassdoor.com.

From a theoretical perspective, this paper will extend the work on job satisfaction by filling an important gap in the literature related to the differences in antecedents of job satisfaction for employees and managers in the same department. From a practical perspective, these results will inform the industry on how to best recruit and retain talent for the housekeeping department and describe any differences between the needs of managers and employees.

Literature review
Social exchange theory
Social Exchange Theory purports that relationships between people, groups, and organizations can explain the dynamics of power and influence (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Within general management research, Social Exchange Theory was used to explain the relationship between an organization and its employees (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). It is relevant in examining employees' reactions to corporate social responsibility activities (Jones, 2010), employee benefits (Ko & Hur, 2014), and family support from supervisors (Bagger & Li, 2014). Social Exchange Theory illustrates a complex dynamic that can be influenced by the employee's identity orientation (Flynn, 2005), indicating that power dynamics may have varying influences on employees.

In hospitality research, Social Exchange Theory has been used to examine the relationship between hospitality employees and organizations (e.g. de Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Social Exchange Theory allows researchers to better understand the antecedents of job satisfaction; Wang, Fu, Wang, and Wei (2022) found that different dimensions of perceived organizational support have significant impacts on job satisfaction. The leader-member exchange and team-member exchange from Social Exchange Theory were found to have a significant impact on job satisfaction for flight attendants (Chung & Jeon, 2020). Organization-based self-esteem has been found to have a significant impact on the relationship between social exchange and job satisfaction (Dalgic & Akgunduz, 2022). Social exchange with customers has been found to have a significant impact on job satisfaction for hospitality employees (Kim & Qu, 2020). These previous studies support the use of Social Exchange Theory to study housekeeping employees and present an important gap in the literature related to what type of exchange can impact job satisfaction.

Overview of housekeeping departments
Hotel housekeeping departments are responsible for cleaning hotel rooms, public areas, and offices in hotels, as well as laundry operations and the lost and found department (Munroe, 2018). Housekeeping managers are responsible for the largest department in a hotel; in full-service hotels, there are often many levels of staff (line-level, supervisor, etc.) that must be trained, managed, and mentored (Munroe, 2018). With the advent of automatic check-in and check-out, along with the rise of limited-service hotels, a housekeeper may be the only employee a guest encounters during their stay (Gall, 2021). Despite the complex nature of housekeeping departments, housekeeping managers and employees are often the lowest paid and find it hard to be promoted within the hotel organization (Imani, n.d.). Housekeeping is often described as a poor career alternative (Knox, Warhurst, Nickson, & Dutton, 2015) due to the low pay and physical demands that often lead to poor health outcomes for room attendants and housekeeping managers (Krause, Rugulies, & Maslach, 2010).

The executive housekeeper (i.e. housekeeping managers) is responsible for supervising the day-to-day operations of the housekeeping department (Harris, 2010), including guest service, room inspection, training, hiring, coaching, budgeting, scheduling, inventory, payroll, safety, and key control. Despite the level of complexity, executive housekeepers in

hotels with over 400 rooms are the second-lowest paid managers, with only sales managers (who often receive commissions) making lower salaries (Horizon Hospitality, 2022). Room attendants are responsible for cleaning a set number of hotel rooms every day, which includes pushing a heavy housekeeping cart from room to room, repetitive lifting, cleaning bathrooms with chemicals, vacuuming, organizing guest belongings, and some contact with guests (Indeed, 2023). Room attendants usually work independently with intermittent contact with other team members, and they are not required to be fluent in English (Indeed, 2023). They work set shifts during the day, and they often have a set schedule. As hourly employees, they are paid extra for overtime (Indeed, 2023). Housemen or porters clean the public areas like bathrooms and lobbies, often clean the hallways and elevators, and restock the room attendants' carts while also working independently with limited guest contact (Ziprecruiter, 2023). Housekeeping managers, on the other hand, resolve guest complaints, make schedules, inspect rooms, order supplies, conduct inventory, coach employees, hire and train new employees, often maintain the lost and found for the hotel, and act as liaisons to other departments (Petersen, 2018). As salaried employees, they are not paid overtime, have to arrive at work before the room attendants to prepare the room attendants assignments, and often have to stay after the room attendants are done (Petersen, 2018). In hotels with turndown, there may be multiple mangers who have to alternate between day and night shifts (Petersen, 2018).

Housekeepers' job satisfaction

Despite the importance of the housekeeping department, research into this important part of hotel operations is scant. One study found that cross-training was beneficial for retention, job satisfaction, and promotion for supervisors in the front office, housekeeping, and restaurants (Chen & Tseng, 2012). Lai and Baum (2005) proposed that temporary staffing agencies were a possible solution to the different needs of housekeeping employees. However, researchers have found that an overreliance on temporary staffing agencies results in an undertrained workforce (Soltani & Wilkinson, 2010). Factors traditionally leading to high turnover in hospitality include low wages, long hours, lack of appropriate skills, and the working environment (Davidson & Wang, 2011). Housekeeping positions are often described as "just a job," and the career potential is not clearly articulated to the frontline employees (Mogelonsky, n.d.). Although housekeepers believe their contribution to service quality (George & Hancer, 2008), hotel housekeepers in different countries have lower job satisfaction than other hospitality jobs (Andrade *et al.*, 2021, 2022). With high turnover and low budgets, housekeepers complain about staffing and the difficulties of retaining qualified housekeepers (George & Hancer, 2008). Work-life balance, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and coworker relations increase housekeepers' job satisfaction (Andrade *et al.*, 2021). There are also gender differences in housekeepers' and housekeeping managers' job satisfaction (Andrade, Miller, & Westover, 2022). However, physical effort, contact with others, and working from home cannot predict job satisfaction (Andrade *et al.*, 2021).

Measuring job satisfaction in glassdoor

In the U.S., many housekeeping employees are non-native English speakers and, in limited-service hotels, there may only be a single manager (Hsu, Ho, Tsai, & Wang, 2011), so researchers may need to rely on qualitative rather than quantitative methods to review the results. Glassdoor.com provides a large quantity of information, allowing employees to rate employers from different perspectives including compensation, senior management, CEO approval, business outlook, career opportunity, and work-life balance, which are important resources for employees. Glassdoor.com reviews offer an opportunity for researchers to understand employee job satisfaction (Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Chalvatzis, & Buhalis, 2019).

Previous studies also mentioned the importance of organizational support and training (Amissah, Gamor, Deri, & Amissah, 2016; Silaban & Syah, 2018), which were thus included in this study to understand managers' and frontline employees' job satisfaction.

However, the literature measuring the relationship between job satisfaction and online reviews has been well-documented. Jung and Suh (2019) used sentiment analysis for online reviews to understand the antecedents of job satisfaction and validate overall star rating as a proxy for job satisfaction. Specific to hospitality, Stamolampros et al. (2019) also found that star ratings reveal employees' job satisfaction. Furthermore, that study found that a one-star increase in overall rating resulted in an increase in ROA (Stamolampros et al., 2019). These general studies justify using the star rating as the proxy for job satisfaction for a specific department, in this case the housekeeping department. It indicates that Glassdoor.com overall star ratings can represent their employees' satisfaction in the workplace.

Organizational support

Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, hospitality researchers have investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support and outcome variables such as job satisfaction (Cheng & Yi, 2018), job performance (Karatepe, 2015), and turnover intentions (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017). To solve the labor shortage problem and increase employee commitment, employers try to increase job satisfaction (Wang, Xu, Zhang, & Li, 2020). Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) proposed that organizations need to provide multiple types of exchanges between the organization and its employees to realize the full benefit of social exchange. Organizational support is an important resource to increase job satisfaction and work efficiency and to reduce employee stress (Zhao, Wang, Law, & Fan, 2020). Perceived organizational support has been found to have a significant impact on employee empowerment in a study of frontline hotel employees, supporting the concept of organizational support as a part of Social Exchange Theory (de Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Researchers proposed that organizational support also provides better work-life balance for managers (Ma, Wu, Yang, & Xu, 2021), decreasing their turnover intentions (Asghar, Tayyab, Gull, Zhijie, Shi, & Tao, 2021) and increasing job satisfaction (Zhao et al., 2020).

H1. Organizational support impacts housekeeping managers' and frontline employees' job satisfaction.

Training

Training is viewed as a social exchange resource provided by employers (José Chambel & Sobral, 2011). Previous studies suggest businesses use the training as an investment to exchange employees' commitment (José Chambel & Sobral, 2011; Khan & Iqbal, 2020). Training has been found to increase job satisfaction (Amissah et al., 2016). Housekeeping employees face a high risk of physical injury, and training programs can help them prevent physical hazards (Hsieh, Apostolopoulos, & Sönmez, 2013). The amount and quality of training (Gu & Siu, 2009; Chiang, Back, & Canter, 2005) significantly impacted job satisfaction among frontline employees. However, safety training alone is insufficient for managers, who are required to have a high level of adaptive competency to deal with unforeseen customer issues (Sigala, 2005).

Hotel managers perceive training as one of the most important activities to help their careers (Brunet, 2019). They face more stress and manage more employees than frontline employees (Munroe, 2018). Compared with the training for frontline employees, training might also help managers maintain physical health and deal with the daily stress of these intense interactions with others; they are more likely to perceive the importance of training.

H2. Training impacts housekeeping managers' job satisfaction more than frontline employees' job satisfaction.

Compensation

Although housekeeping managers and frontline employees have different duties, all of the work is demanding and requires competitive pay (Jones, 2010). High salaries increase hotel employees' job satisfaction; pay needs to remain competitive to prevent dissatisfaction (Amissah *et al.*, 2016). Previous research examined the fairness of compensation and proposed that pay fairness impacted employees' work effort and performance (Wu, Sturman, & Wang, 2013). Due to repetitive job duties, frontline employees are more likely than managers to evaluate their employers based on financial rewards (Bustamam, Teng, & Abdulah, 2014). The external incentives, including compensation, are effective for organizations to establish social exchange relationships with their employees (Yin, 2018). With advanced degrees, potential hospitality managers are also attracted by competitive salaries (Brown, Arendt, & Bosselman, 2014). Well-compensated employees will provide high star-rating online reviews for their employers and share their compensation experience to show their job satisfaction (Jung & Suh, 2019; Sinha, Rajendran, Nazareth, Lee, & Ullah, 2020).

H3. Compensation has a significant impact on star rating for both housekeeping managers and employees.

Upper management

Glassdoor.com's surveys for current and former employees measure two relatively underexplored antecedents of job satisfaction (Glassdoor, 2021), the impact of senior management and CEO approval. Previous studies drew on Social Exchange Theory to examine the positive association between employee interactions with managers and job satisfaction (Seo, Nahrgang, Carter, & Hom, 2018). Leadership's performance can increase the quality of social exchange between organizations and members (Chun, Cho, & Sosik, 2016). The growth of limited-service and select-service hotels in the U.S. has decreased the number of on-property managers (Mandelbaum, 2018), allowing property-level employees to have greater access to senior management and exposure to the CEO. Research into the impact of senior management has largely focused on policies rather than people. Senior management has been found to impact the tone of the company and prepare department managers for success, leading to increased job satisfaction at all levels (Niehoff, Enz, & Grover, 1990). Managers are more likely to be exposed to these policies, especially in housekeeping departments where the intense daily workload may prevent frontline employees from focusing on these aspects of the operation (Krause *et al.*, 2010).

H4. Senior management has a significant impact on star rating for housekeeping managers but not for frontline employees.

H5. CEO approval has a significant impact on star rating for housekeeping managers but not for frontline employees.

Business outlook

Business outlook is another variable measured on Glassdoor.com, and it indicates the organizational ability to continue their social exchanges with employees in the future. An examination of 150,000 reviews on Glassdoor.com for a variety of companies found that many frontline employees actively read, react, and share information related to the business outlook of their company (Hales, Moon, & Swenson, 2018). Employees' impressions of the business' outlook are not isolated to Glassdoor.com but are also discussed on social media (e.g. Twitter)

and are especially efficient predictors of a poor business outlook (Huang, Li, & Markov, 2020). While the relationship between the general economic outlook and job seekers and employees have been well-documented both in industry publications (US Bank, 2023) and peer-reviewed research (Hamouche, 2023), literature regarding the impact of business outlook on employee job satisfaction has been scant. However, one study found that using the business outlook score on Glassdoor.com can accurately predict stock price (Snow, 2016); therefore, this rating has repercussions unique from other antecedents. Researchers have found that the future of a business can impact employees' job satisfaction in a variety of fields (Huang *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, researchers have found that when employees have a positive outlook on labor efficiency, the firm is more likely to attract job applicants in a timely manner and allow for a more efficient investment in labor capital (Jung, Wang, Wei, & Zhang, 2021).

H6. Business outlook has a significant impact on star rating for both housekeeping managers and employees.

Career opportunities

Career opportunities are defined as potential chances for employees to change to new positions matched with their career goals, including promotion, salary increase, and personal development (Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011). Career opportunities reflect the organizational investment in employees' long-term career and are a key part of long-term social exchange (Kraimer *et al.*, 2011). Although career opportunities are contingent on many external factors, they can influence employees' long-term job performance because those who do not feel that they may be promoted are more likely to stop putting in extra effort (Prince, 2003). Researchers have found that increased career opportunities can increase career adaptability and mitigate the effect on turnover intention (Rasheed, Okumus, Weng, Hameed, & Nawaz, 2020), indicating high levels of job satisfaction (Iverson & Deery, 1997). Entry-level managers with hospitality degrees (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005) are more likely to leave their job and the industry when there are inadequate career opportunities (Brown *et al.*, 2014), while future development opportunities are one of the most important factors for students with degrees from higher education to decide to stay in the hospitality industry (Richardson & Butler, 2012). Some even perceive that career opportunities are more important than starting salaries (Harkison, Poulston, & Kim, 2011). Frontline employees, on the other hand, perceive high job uncertainty (Chen & Eyoun, 2021), and they care more about salary and compensation than they care about opportunities (Amissah *et al.*, 2016). As frontline employees tend to have short tenure (Han, Bonn, & Cho, 2016), long-term social exchange may not entice them.

H7. Career opportunity has a significant impact on star rating for housekeeping managers but not for frontline employees.

Work-life balance

Finally, an often-studied key component of job satisfaction in hotels has been work-life balance, which is a critical resource for employees (Beauregard, 2014). Lack of work-life balance increases turnover intentions (Deery, 2008) and absenteeism (Deery & Jago, 2015). For hotel employees, a lack of work-life balance leads to increased levels of stress and alcohol abuse (Deery & Jago, 2015). Hospitality employees who perform a high amount of emotional labor feel they have less work-life balance and have lower job satisfaction (Hofmann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2017). This indicates that housekeeping managers, whose jobs are mostly related to handling guest complaints and managing employees (Petersen, 2018), may be more likely to have a negative view of work-life balance as their daily activities include high levels of interaction with different levels of employees, including conflict resolution and disciplinary

action (Harris, 2010). On the contrary, housekeeping employees are usually hourly employees (Indeed, 2023). They may not be as concerned about work-life balance as they are compensated for overtime work away from home (Indeed, 2023). It also indicates that frontline housekeepers relatively less emphasize the work-life balance.

H8. Work-life balance has a significant impact on star ratings for housekeeping managers but not for employees.

Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach. First, an exploratory pilot study was conducted using a survey. Next, the survey results informed the design of the second phase, which used text analysis techniques to evaluate hotel housekeeping employee comments posted on Glassdoor.com. Finally, a regression analysis of the star ratings for these reviews on Glassdoor was conducted to contrast the antecedents of job satisfaction for managers and employees.

Phase 1 – exploratory survey

The first phase of the study employed both an online survey and a paper-and-pencil format to establish key elements of the housekeeping manager's career commitment. Participants first indicated their position, the size of the hotel, and their length of employment. The survey was organized into seven sections (Table 1). The scale items were adapted from Blau's (1989) career commitment scale and Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa's (1986) scale for perceived organizational support. Open-ended questions provided a deeper understanding of employees' needs and company support for advance.

The survey was administered to members of the International Executive Housekeepers Association (IEHA), as well as to other hospitality professionals who had been employed in a housekeeping management position within the previous five years. The study's participants were from all levels of housekeeping management, including inspectors, supervisors, assistant managers, managers, and executive housekeepers. While housekeeping departments tend to have the largest staff in most hotels, their management structures vary. Thus, the population of housekeeping managers is difficult to determine but is substantially smaller than housekeeping personnel.

The survey was administered online from July to November 2019. The IEHA members received an email invitation with the survey link; these participants were not provided any incentive to complete the survey. The IEHA hotel housekeeping membership was 100; the

Description	Source
Open-ended questions to elicit the participant's journey in the housekeeping profession (3)	Exploratory
Training provided (6)	Exploratory, nominal categories
Organizational support, using 7-point Likert-type scale (9)	Eisenberger *et al.* (1986)
Open-ended questions regarding motivations, company support, participant's needs (5)	Exploratory
Career commitment, using 7-point Likert-type scale (7)	Blau (1989)
Overall commitment to profession and turnover intentions using 7-point Likert-type scales (3)	Exploratory
Demographics (11)	
Source(s): Author's own work	

Table 1.
Survey components

member participation rate in the study was 25%. These individuals were invited to participate in the survey and asked to forward the survey link to anyone they knew who would meet the qualifying profile in a snowballing method. The researchers also administered an identical paper version of the survey at two housekeeping industry events in Las Vegas, Nevada: *The Housekeeping Olympics* in October 2019, and the *ISSA North America* conference in November 2019, an international conference for the cleaning industry. Participants in the snowballed sample were incentivized with the opportunity to enter a drawing to win one of ten Amazon Echo Dots. The data sample was screened in the data cleaning stage and any responses from ineligible respondents were removed. A total of 55 surveys were collected (Table 2).

	Frequency	Percent
Age		
<18	1	2%
18–24	3	5%
25–34	12	22%
35–44	7	13%
45–54	12	22%
55–64	5	9%
Prefer not to answer	1	2%
Missing data	14	25%
Total	55	
Gender		
Female	22	40%
Male	17	31%
Prefer not to answer	2	4%
Missing data	14	25%
Total	55	
Income		
<$10,000	1	2%
$10,000–19,999	1	2%
$20,000–29,999	5	9%
$30,000–39,999	3	5%
$40,000–49,999	13	24%
$50,000–59,999	12	22%
$60,000–69,999	1	2%
$70,000–79,999	3	5%
$80,000–89,999	3	5%
$90,000–99,999	1	2%
$100,000–149,999	2	4%
Missing data	10	18%
Total	55	
Education		
<High school	1	2%
High school	8	15%
Associates	4	7%
Some college	14	25%
Bachelors	9	16%
Professional degree	4	7%
Doctorate	1	2%
Missing data	14	25%
Total	55	

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 2.
Demographics

The data were analyzed using descriptive, frequency, and content analyses to explore opportunities for future research into the effect of several independent variables on two outcome constructs: the housekeeping manager's commitment to the housekeeping profession and the manager's commitment to his/her job and current employer. The independent variables are "bundled" together in a configurational type of human resources research approach recommended by Guchait and Cho (2010). Content analysis was used for the open-ended questions.

Phase 2 – content analysis of employee reviews
Previous studies showed that employees' comments can help us understand their job satisfaction (Young & Gavade, 2018). This study used online employee reviews from Glassdoor.com to understand the differences in job satisfaction between housekeeping managers and employees. As a third-party recruitment platform, Glassdoor.com does not allow employers to delete or modify employee reviews (Glassdoor.com, 2021). These anonymous reviews have high credibility in reflecting the real working environment (Könsgen, Schaarschmidt, Ivens, & Munzel, 2018).

Reviews from Hospitality Net's list of *136 Lodging Companies* for a total of 8,313 reviews were mined. Reviews listing job titles that were not housekeeping-related were deleted. Reviews listing vague job titles (i.e. manager, team member) were examined to determine if the reviewer was in the housekeeping department. In total, 396 reviews were used, of which 169 were housekeeping managers while 227 were housekeeping employees.

The text-mining process used R 4.10 and Python to analyze the managers' and employees' reviews separately. The following packages in R were used: "tm," "SnowballC," "wordcloud," and "RColorBrewer". After uploading the files, the "tm" package was used to clean the data. First, the researchers transferred all words to lower letters. Then, the following was deleted: numbers, English common stop words (e.g. the, and), special characters, extra white spaces, and punctuations. Finally, the researchers ran the word frequency for all reviews and drew word clouds for the first 20 words for managers' and employees' reviews using R 4.10, based on the cleaned data. Since "hotel" and "hotels" have the same meaning, the researchers consolidated these two words in the word clouds.

To align the results from the survey and further understand the different attitudes toward the workplace between managers and employees, the researchers used the sensitivity test through Jupyter Notebook 6.0.0 with Python to count the frequency of each word in the customized dictionary and through SPSS to compare the reviews with keywords from managers and employees. The researchers used the "pandas" package in Python for the sensitivity test.

Regression analysis
Finally, a regression analysis of the quantitative data from Glassdoor.com was run. The researchers examined the impact of individually rated items (compensation, senior management, CEO approval, business outlook, career opportunities, and work-life balance) on overall star rating. Reviews that did not include ratings for all categories were eliminated from the analysis, leaving the total sample for the regression at 333. First, assumptions tests were run to ensure that the data was linear, homoscedastic, generally normal, lacking multicollinearity, and lacking auto-correlation. Then, regression analysis was conducted separately for the managerial reviews and the frontline reviews.

Results
Phase 1 – exploratory study
Some consistent themes emerged for *current needs* and *support needed for advancement* (Table 3). *Training* was the top item listed under current needs, and the fourth item listed as a

	N	%
Current needs		
Training	9	36%
More employees	7	14%
Nothing	6	12%
Advancement	4	8%
Equipment and supplies	4	8%
Support	4	8%
Increased budget	3	6%
Pay	3	6%
Incentives	2	4%
Communication	1	2%
Consistency	1	2%
Hiring freedom	1	2%
Realistic expectations	1	2%
Support for advancement		
Mentorship	9	20%
Support	7	16%
Nothing	5	11%
Training	5	11%
NA	3	7%
Rewards/recognition	3	7%
Opportunities to advance	2	5%
There is no opportunity	2	5%
Believe in me	1	2%
Cross-training	1	2%
Education	1	2%
English classes	1	2%
Equipment and supplies	1	2%
Open opportunities to everyone	1	2%
Organization	1	2%

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 3.
Results of open-ending
questions from
exploratory study

need for advancement. *Support* was the sixth most important current need and was the second most important need for advancement. *Nothing* was the third most common current need and the third most listed need for advancement, indicating that some organizations are doing a good job in both areas. Finally, *advancement* was listed as a current need in fourth place, indicating that it is an important topic for many in housekeeping management. Based on the answer to the open-ending questions, the researchers built a dictionary using the keywords from organizational support, training, compensation, business outlook, management, opportunity, and work-life balance (Table 4).

Phase 2 – content analysis of employee reviews
Text-mining was used to determine what impacts job satisfaction for housekeeping managers and housekeeping employees. A total of 396 reviews, 169 from managers and 227 from employees, were analyzed to identify the different impacts of the seven keywords mentioned above. Figures 1 and 2 below show the two-word clouds generated by this analysis.

For managers, the top 20 words in order were: work, company, great, management, employees, people, good, pay, hotel/hotels, get, job, team, benefits, hours, can, many, time, will, staff, and managers. These results indicate that managers care about organizational

Nature	Keywords
Organizational support	Support
	Help
	Labor
	Budget
	Supplies
	Equipment
	Freedom
Training	Train
	Mentor
	Educate
	Class
Compensation	Pay
	Benefit
	Money
	Reward
	Incentive
Business outlook	Organization
Management	Upper Management
	Expect
	Leadership
	Communicate/Communication
	Recognition
	Believe
	Consistent/Consistency
Opportunity	Opportunity
	Growth
	Advance
	Potential
Work-life balance	Time

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 4.
Customized dictionary for text-mining

Figure 1.
Word cloud for manager reviews

support based on the frequency of the words "company", "management", "employees", "people", "hotel", "team", "staff", and "managers". Compensation is important for managers based on the "frequency of pay" and "benefits". Work-life balance was also shown to be significant by using the words "hours" and "time."

The employee reviews' top 20 words in order were: "work", "good", "great", "company", "management", "people", "employees", "working", "job", "staff", "team", "can", "like", "pay", "really", "get", "time", "hotel", "one", and "place". These results indicate that organizational support is important when using "company," "management," "people," "employees," "working," "staff," "team," "hotel," and "place". Compensation was mentioned with the use of the words "pay"; "benefits" was notably at the 21st spot. Finally, "time" was the only word mentioned that related to work-life balance for employees.

A sensitivity test was conducted using additional text-mining with a custom dictionary created from the results of the exploratory survey to understand the impact of the seven antecedents used on Glassdoor.com and from previous studies – organizational support, training, compensation, business outlook, management, opportunity, and work-life balance – on housekeeping managers and employees. The content analysis compared the frequency of online reviews that mentioned these words in the managers' reviews and frontline employees' reviews with a Chi-square test (Table 5). The Chi-square results showed that managers and employees did not have different preferences in mentioning words related to organizational support ($\%_{managers}$ = 17.75%; $\%_{employees}$ = 15.42%, χ^2 = 0.38, p = .54). Thus, H1 was supported. Managers discussed training more often than employees in reviews ($\%_{managers}$ = 15.38%; $\%_{employees}$ = 8.81%, χ^2 = 4.08, p = .04), indicating training has a more significant relationship with job satisfaction for managers than frontline employees. H2 was also supported. Also, the frequency related to compensation ($\%_{managers}$ = 42.01%; $\%_{employees}$ = 32.60%, χ^2 = 3.70, p = .05), business outlook ($\%_{managers}$ = 1.78%; $\%_{employees}$ = 0.44%, χ^2 = 1.73, p = .19), and work-life balance ($\%_{managers}$ = 24.85%; $\%_{employees}$ = 21.15%, χ^2 = .76, p = .38) mentioned by managers and employees in reviews are similar. The results also showed that managers care more about the management team ($\%_{managers}$ = 30.18%; $\%_{employees}$ = 15.86%, χ^2 = 11.59, p = .001) and career opportunities ($\%_{managers}$ = 21.30%; $\%_{employees}$ = 10.13%, χ^2 = 9.53, p = .002) than frontline employees.

Regression analysis. To test H3–H8, the researchers ran a multilinear regression of these variables impacting star ratings on Glassdoor.com. The results of regression could provide insights into specific impacts on overall star ratings, representing job satisfaction (Stamolampros *et al.*, 2019), with the numeric information from online employee reviews. First, the researchers tested the statistical assumption in skewness, kurtosis, and outliners.

	Keywords	Managers		Employees		
		N	%	N	%	Chi-square
Organizational support	Support	15	8.88%	9	3.96%	4.10*
	Help	8	4.73%	19	8.37%	2.02
	Labor	3	1.78%	4	1.76%	0.00
	Budget	5	2.96%	1	0.44%	4.12*
	Supplies	2	1.18%	3	1.32%	0.02
	Equip	1	0.59%	1	0.44%	0.04
	Freedom	1	0.59%	0	0.00%	1.35
	Total	30	17.75%	35	15.42%	0.38
Training	Train	23	13.61%	17	7.49%	4.00*
	Mentor	3	1.78%	1	0.44%	1.73
	Educate	2	1.18%	1	0.44%	0.71
	Class	1	0.59%	1	0.44%	0.04
	Total	26	15.38%	20	8.81%	4.08*
Compensation	Pay	41	24.26%	43	18.94%	1.64
	Benefit	35	20.71%	39	17.18%	0.79
	Money	9	5.33%	9	3.96%	0.41
	Reward	3	1.78%	3	1.32%	0.13
	Incentive	2	1.18%	0	0.00%	2.70
	Total	71	42.01%	74	32.60%	3.70†
Business outlook	Organization	3	1.78%	1	0.44%	1.73
	Total	3	1.78%	1	0.44%	1.73
Management	Upper Management	17	10.06%	6	2.64%	9.74**
	Expect	9	5.33%	8	3.52%	0.77
	Leadership	12	7.10%	7	3.08%	3.42†
	Communicate/Communication	7	4.14%	12	5.29%	0.28
	Recognition	6	3.55%	1	0.44%	5.40*
	Believe	4	2.37%	3	1.32%	0.61
	Consistent/Consistency	1	0.59%	4	1.76%	1.06
	Total	51	30.18%	36	15.86%	11.59**
Opportunity	Opportunity	12	7.10%	8	3.52%	2.58
	Growth	18	10.65%	6	2.64%	10.91**
	Advance	9	5.33%	7	3.08%	1.26
	Potential	3	1.78%	4	1.76%	0.00
	Total	36	21.30%	23	10.13%	9.53**
Work-life balance	Time	42	24.85%	48	21.15%	0.76
	Total	42	24.85%	48	21.15%	0.76

Table 5.
Chi-square tests

Note(s): †, *, **, Denote significance at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels
Source(s): Author's own work

Skewness (range from −0.36 to −0.65) and kurtosis (range from −0.75 to −1.26) are within the acceptable ranges. The data were graphed and found to be generally linear with no outliers. Any reviews missing ratings for the antecedents were removed from the analysis.

Finally, 167 managers' ratings and 139 employees' ratings were analyzed. The model explanations for managers' ratings ($R^2 = .87, F = 162.38$) and employees' ratings ($R^2 = .87, F = 161.85$) were significant. For managers, compensation (B = .16, $T = 3.20, p = .002$), business outlook (B = .25, $T = 5.23, p = .000$), senior management (B = .22, $T = 3.59, p = .000$), career opportunities (B = .24, $T = 4.06, p = .000$), and work-life balance (B = .15, $T = 2.76, p = .007$) were all positively related to star ratings. Only CEO approval was insignificant for managers (B = .05, $T = 1.32, p = .187$). For employees, compensation (B = .29, $T = 5.15, p = .000$), business outlook (B = .11, $T = 2.36, p = .020$), senior management (B = .47, $T = 6.37, p = .000$), and career opportunities (B = .11, $T = 2.06$,

$p = .041$) were positively related to star ratings. However, CEO approval (B = .07, $T = 1.48$, $p = .140$) and work-life balance (B = .00, $T = 0.02$, $p = .983$) were insignificant. Table 6 shows the results of the regression analysis.

Discussion

This study aims to understand the antecedents of job satisfaction for housekeeping managers and employees. H1 proposed that organizational support positively impacts housekeeping managers' job satisfaction, which was supported by the results from the survey and text-mining analysis. Housekeeping managers mentioned that they care about organizational support in the exploratory survey and online reviews. Housekeeping managers generally face a high workload and have high stress. Organizational support helps them deal with the issues mentioned above and increases their job satisfaction. The text-mining revealed that both managers and employees mentioned information related to "organizational support" in online employee reviews. In the top words of manager and employee reviews, words related to organizational support, such as "company," "employees," "people," and "hotel," were mentioned by both managers and frontline employees. The results of sentiment analysis with the customized dictionary also reveal the fact that managers and employees are concerned about overall support. Although frontline employees may not need close interaction with supervisors from other departments, they still need support from other team members and managers to achieve their shared goal (Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2014). Finally, in the regression analysis, career opportunities and senior management both had a significant impact on star rating for both groups. Kraimer et al. (2011) discussed the impact of career opportunities on perceived organizational support while Baranik, Roling, and Eby (2010) found that the perception of senior management is a key factor in perceived organizational support. The findings from the regression analysis indicate that organizational support is significant for both managers and employees.

H2 examined the impact of training on job satisfaction for managers and frontline employees. The survey's results demonstrated that training was important for housekeeping managers' job satisfaction, as they frequently mentioned training for both their current needs and their needs for advancement. The text-mining results found that the training-related words were mentioned 40 times by managers and 24 times by employees; in that, 26/169 manager reviews and 20/227 frontline employee reviews include training-related words. This supports previous research in hospitality, which found that managers were more likely to find training important than frontline employees (Brunet, 2019). While the research related to hotel housekeeping operations is scant, there have been previous studies related to training in

	Managers' reviews ($N = 167$)			Employees' reviews ($N = 139$)		
	B	t	Sig	B	t	Sig
Constant	0.920	0.804	0.423	0.101	0.523	0.602
Compensation	0.163	3.195	0.002**	0.287	5.151	0.000***
Business outlook	0.245	5.231	0.000***	0.112	2.357	0.020*
Senior management	0.216	3.592	0.000***	0.465	6.368	0.000***
CEO approval	0.052	1.324	0.187	0.071	1.484	0.140
Career opportunity	0.236	4.063	0.000***	0.113	2.063	0.041*
Work-life balance	0.146	2.755	0.007**	0.001	0.022	0.983
	$R^2 = 0.871$			$R^2 = 0.867$		
	$F = 162.380$			$F = 161.851$		

Note(s): †, *, **, ***Denote significance at the 0.10, 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels
Source(s): Author's own work

Table 6.
Regression analysis

housekeeping, and these results add to that body of work. Kyalo (2023) did skills assessment of 4,000 housekeeping employees after they completed a training course at Kenya Utalii College and found that the skills taught in the course were universally applied on the job. That case study demonstrates the value of job-related training for both housekeeping managers and employees, which supports these results. Additionally, an examination of newly enhanced training programs in a post-pandemic environment found that including pandemic-relevant training for housekeeping employees increased satisfaction and lowered turnover intentions (Shahane & Fernandes, 2021), therefore training continues to be an impactful part of the housekeeping department. Previous research supports the conclusion that training is more important for managers in the post-pandemic environment because they feel that have an increased responsibility to protect their employees from the virus (Shahane & Fernandes, 2021) and they feel that training is needed to allow them to advance within the organization (Kumar, Ghosh, & Mondal, 2021). While none of the factors for regression were directly related to training, training does have an indirect impact on career opportunities (Ko, 2008); therefore the significance of career opportunities for both managers and frontlines employees supports the results from the other two parts of the study.

H3 proposed that compensation impacts overall online employee review star ratings for both housekeeping managers and frontline employees. The results of the online review regression supported the hypothesis. The results of the text-mining indicate that both managers and employees care about payment and compensation, which strongly impacts the overall image of the employers (Jung & Suh, 2019). Overall star-rating for both managers and employees was significantly impacted by compensation; employers should consider this when making compensation decisions (Sinha *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, hospitality employers need to provide satisfactory compensation and payment for both frontline employees and managers to increase their job satisfaction (Amissah *et al.*, 2016). Indeed, these results support previous research findings that salary is a key component of job satisfaction for housekeeping professionals (Kumar & Singh, 2015).

H4 proposed that senior management has a significant impact on star-rating for managers but not for employees. This was partially supported as it was significant for both managers and employees. While previous literature suggested that employees' job satisfaction would not be impacted by senior management (Krause *et al.*, 2010), that research may have been conducted in a full-service environment where there are many layers of management. There has been a proliferation of limited-service hotels over the past 20 years. Three limited-service brands (Home2Suites by Hilton, Holiday Inn Express, and Fairfield Inn) made up 20% of the hotel development pipeline as of the fourth quarter of 2021 (Saunders, 2021); this has led to hotels with fewer layers of management. Employees in these hotels would have more contact with senior management, which in turn would impact their job satisfaction.

The regression analysis results partially supported H5, which proposed that CEO approval has a significant impact on star-rating for housekeeping managers but not for frontline employees. The CEO's duties are primarily to interact with the leaders of each major corporate-level department, such as research and development and strategic planning (Farkas & De Backer, 1996). CEOs usually do not communicate closely and interact with frontline employees, including housekeeping employees (Buzzz, 2021). However, the impact of CEO approval on housekeeping managers was not significant. This is likely due to the many layers of managers between department managers and the CEO, including general managers, presidents, and directors (Quain, 2019). The department managers (e.g. housekeeping managers) also have limited opportunities to work directly with the CEO.

H6 proposed that business outlook would significantly impact the star-rating for both housekeeping managers and employees. This hypothesis was supported, as business outlook had a significant impact at the $p < 0.05$ level for both managers and employees. This supports previous work on the impact of business outlook on hospitality employees (Huang *et al.*, 2020).

Indeed, the *Society for Human Resources Management* found that the employer's financial security has a positive impact on job satisfaction at all levels (LumApps, 2022). This study confirms that these findings are applicable to housekeeping employees at all levels.

H7 proposed that career opportunities impact housekeeping managers more significantly than frontline employees in housekeeping. This hypothesis was partially supported, as career opportunities were significant for both managers and employees. This suggests that the stereotype of frontline housekeeping employees is not correct; they are ambitious and seek opportunities to advance their careers. A qualitative study of housekeeping managers and room attendants in Turkey found that the time for advancement for a room attendant to move into management was considerably faster than that for a front office employee (Devrim Yilmaz, 2017), which supports the findings of this study. On Glassdoor.com, in general, career opportunities have a significant impact on job satisfaction (Chamberlain, 2017) and the current study supports these findings.

H8 stated that work-life balance significantly impacts star-rating for housekeeping managers but not for employees. The regression results supported this hypothesis. Due to the heavy workload in the housekeeping department, managers are often required to work overtime without additional pay because they are salaried employees (Warhurst, Lloyd, & Dutton, 2008). It is necessary for them to have a good work-life balance to provide high star ratings for employers. However, housekeeping frontline employees typically have a fixed schedule of eight hours per day (Hotel Tech Report, 2022b). Many hotels only provide one housekeeping service per room per day, thus these housekeeping employees only work the day shift (Hotel Tech Report, 2022b). Even when overtime is needed during peak season, those hours are voluntary and provide opportunities for increased pay. Therefore, it is less of a concern for frontline employees to achieve work-life balance.

Conclusion

Hotel housekeeping departments are vital to the success of the hotel. Reducing turnover for this key department is often a goal of hotel management (Ohlin & West, 1993). The purpose of this study was twofold. First, this study sought to understand the factors that impact job satisfaction for housekeeping managers and employees. Second, this study sought to compare the antecedents of satisfaction for managers and employees to determine if there were differences based on the level of responsibility of the team members. The results of this study indicate that most housekeeping managers feel some support from their current organizations, but there is room for improvement. Housekeeping managers called for additional mentorship, support, and training to help them advance. The text-mining results revealed that many of the priorities from the exploratory study were also discussed in online reviews for managers and employees. Although training is more important for housekeeping managers, both managers and frontline employees care about organizational support. The results of the regression analysis found that both managers' and employees' job satisfaction (embodied in star ratings) were influenced by a variety of factors, including senior management, compensation, business outlook, and career opportunities. However, work-life balance was only related to housekeeping managers' job satisfaction but unrelated to frontline housekeepers' job satisfaction, echoing previous findings (Andrade *et al.*, 2021).

Practical implications

This study has practical implications for hotel operators. The housekeeping department is usually the largest department in any hotel; the ability to decrease turnover in this department can have a profound effect on the expenses for hotels (Rosenthal, 2018). As of 2022, hotel housekeeping turnover was at 103% despite an 11% increase in wages (Hotel Tech Report,

2022a). This study revealed that housekeeping managers most commonly want training to help them in their current roles and to help them to advance. The regression coefficients suggest that the business outlook for the hotel and career opportunities have the most impact on job satisfaction for housekeeping managers. Therefore, it is suggested that hotels focus on these areas for housekeeping managers. However, hotels should also consider the areas of work-life balance, senior management, and compensation, which had a statistically significant impact on star-rating. In terms of retaining frontline employees, senior management and compensation had the most statistically significant impact on star-rating; however, career opportunities and business outlook are also important for frontline employees.

This study also has implications for both managers and frontline employees. The results of multiple regressions indicate that compensation, business outlook, senior management, and career opportunities all had a significant impact on job satisfaction for both managers and frontline employees. Therefore, when looking at online reviews from websites like Glassdoor or Indeed, a housekeeping employee at any level can be assured that the authors are most likely to share the same priorities regardless of position. However, for managers who value work-life balance, they need to be more reliant on fellow housekeeping manager reviews than on frontline employee reviews. These results also indicate that frontline employees who seek to be promoted into management should be aware that while they may have been satisfied with work-life balance in their current position, this may change when they are promoted. Finally, these results indicate that both housekeeping managers and frontline employees have similar concerns which they should communicate to upper management in order to improve working conditions.

Theoretical implications

This study also has significant theoretical contributions. It is among the first to differentiate the antecedents of job satisfaction for hospitality managers and frontline employees. Although previous studies examined the factors impacting hospitality employee satisfaction (e.g. Amissah *et al.*, 2016; Chen & Tseng, 2012), they ignored the different impacts on managers and frontline employees. The hospitality industry has unique characteristics, like working on holidays and many part-time, hourly employees. Managers and frontline employees face different challenges. This study fills this gap by initially exploring the needs of managers and frontline employees separately.

Additionally, Lamminmaki (2011) noted that the relationship between employees and employers could be considered as a mutually beneficial exchange. This study drew on Social Exchange Theory to further understand the factors impacting this relationship in the housekeeping department. This study extends the work in Social Exchange Theory by making an application of the theory to a specific department in a hotel, and it demonstrates that the theory is applicable at different levels within an organization. The findings do support previous research into Social Exchange Theory that found organizational support was an important component of social exchange (de Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021). Increasing employee job satisfaction is an effective approach for employers to maintain a mutually beneficial exchange relationship with their employees (Choi, 2006). To bridge the gap between Social Exchange Theory and various approaches to increase this relationship for the housekeeping department, this study explored antecedents for housekeeping employers to maintain a long-term relationship with their agents (e.g. housekeeping managers and frontline employees) by increasing their job satisfaction.

Limitations and future research

This study is not without limitations. Despite the best efforts of the researchers to gather a sufficient sample size for the first part of the study, it was challenging to recruit participants.

Future researchers are encouraged to build relationships with lodging organizations to achieve a larger sample size and replicate the first part of the study. The text-mining of the housekeeping reviews is also limited as the reviews are only in English. Housekeeping departments in the U.S. often employ immigrants (Sarosi, 2017); therefore, examining reviews only in English may exclude a large part of the population. Additional studies could also be conducted in different departments in hotels to determine if there are differences in what impacts job satisfaction for employees and managers. Also, due to the anonymous nature of the reviews, this paper was unable to control for whether or not the property had a union. This might be a fruitful area for future research. Finally, while the regression analysis was robust, the anonymous nature of online reviews prevents analysis by demographic information or location. While location can be recorded on Glassdoor.com., there was insufficient information to include in this study. Future researchers are encouraged to include reviews from other sites to try to gather some of the missing information.

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