The Effect of Job-Related Demands and Resources on Service Employees' Willingness to Report Complaints: Germany Versus China

Abstract

Service employees' willingness to report complaints (WRC) is an important determinant of firms' long-term growth. Despite its importance, we know little about the factors that drive or hinder employees' WRC. Drawing on the job demands-resources (JDR) model, we propose job resources (supervisor support, employee empowerment) and job demands (perceived customer unfriendliness, workload) as antecedents of WRC. We also examine the mediational role of organizational commitment and customer orientation, and the moderating role of country, in the effect of JDR variables on WRC. Using data from German and Chinese service employees, we show that supervisor support and workload positively affect WRC, whereas employee empowerment and customer unfriendliness negatively affect it. Thus, contradictory to the prevailing assumption that job resources help employees achieve work goals and that job demands inhibit their achievement, we show job resources (supervisor support) and demands (workload) can enhance WRC, whereas other job resources (employee empowerment) and demands (customer unfriendliness) have inhibiting effects. Organizational commitment and customer orientation mediate the impact of all JDR variables on WRC except empowerment. Furthermore, supervisor support has a more positive, while empowerment and customer unfriendliness have a more negative effect for German than for Chinese service employees. Service managers may influence WRC by managing job resources, job demands, and employee–company and employee–customer interfaces. Besides, employees from individualistic countries (Germany) are more sensitive to the JDR environment than those from collectivistic countries (China). Thus, managing job resources and demands may reap more benefits in the form of enhanced WRC in individualistic than in collectivistic countries.

Keywords: China, complaint management, Germany, global service marketing, job demands, job resources, long-term growth, service employees, willingness to report complaints

A key aspect of service recovery entails how service employees deal with customer complaints (Grainer et al. 2014), because mishandled customer complaints cause recovery dissatisfaction, leading to switching behavior, and negative word-of-mouth communications (DeWitt and Brady 2003). Indeed, effectively solving and addressing customers' dissatisfaction can prompt even greater loyalty than if customers never needed to be recovered in the first place (Smith and Bolton 1998).

In recognizing the importance of earning customer loyalty through service recovery, prior research examines the effect of complaint handling processes and employee-directed guidelines, as well as the boundary conditions that may affect the efficacy of these processes and guidelines, such as employees' motivation to adhere to them (Harris and Ogbonna 2010; Homburg, Fürst, and Koschate 2010). Most research implicitly assumes that service employees usually follow reporting standards to relay complaints to their managers, who then log these complaints into a database. In reality, however, employees often choose to withhold complaints from their supervisors (Homburg and Fürst 2007). According to Kasper (1984), managers are not aware of 71.4% of customer complaints.

This phenomenon deserves research attention, because unreported complaints can lead to distorted complaint statistics and misattributions of areas of needed improvement for service firms. For example, if managers receive incomplete information about complaints, they cannot achieve organizational complaint management goals (Homburg and Fürst 2007). It may also cause significant long-term harm to the company, as it precludes opportunities to learn from dissatisfied consumers and refine its service procedures to avoid similar problems in the future.

Recognizing the important role of complaint reporting behavior in firms' long-term strategies, Luria, Gal, and Yagil (2009) introduce a construct of "service employees' willingness to report complaints (WRC)" into the service literature, defined as service employees' proneness to report or

share information about clients' complaints with management. They find that WRC is mainly driven by three factors—organizational citizenship behavior, service climate, and empowerment, all of which are widely acknowledged primary job resource factors (Bakker and Demerouti 2007).

Extending Luria, Gal, and Yagil (2009), the present research examines the effects of both job resources and job demands on WRC. According to Demerouti et al. (2001), job demands are as powerful as, or even more powerful than, job resources in affecting employees' behaviors. Because WRC represents an important aspect of employee behavior that can solidify a firm's ability to retain customers, simultaneously examining both job resources and job demands allows us to investigate their differential effects on WRC and compare their relative power.

The objective of this paper is threefold. First, we identify antecedents that are representative of job demands and job resources in determining WRC from a long list of potential predictors of employee behavior. To this end, we conduct qualitative research on frontline service employees and perform an extensive literature review. Second, based upon the qualitative responses and our literature review, we develop a conceptual model of WRC (Figure 1), which includes job resources and job demands as antecedents. We further examine both direct and indirect effects of job demands and resources on WRC, with organizational commitment and customer orientation as potentially important mechanisms (Zablah et al. 2012). Organizational commitment represents a critical element of the employee–organization interface, and customer orientation is central in the employee–customer interface. Both can exert substantial impacts on WRC but are affected by job resources and demands in the meantime.

Finally, we examine our proposed framework in both Germany and China, the world's two largest exporters of goods and services (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency 2013), to attain new insights for global service marketing strategies. Prior research on employees' WRC has focused mostly on Western economies, with little attention devoted to emerging markets. However, service

recovery is inherently a cultural process, so complaint handling by employees from diverse countries varies (Lorenzoni and Lewis 2004). A cross-country examination in this domain helps clarify national differences in the factors and patterns that determine employees' complaint reporting and thus provide service managers with competitive insights.

------Insert Figure 1 about here------

THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT

Complaint handling research generally investigates how customers respond to firms' service recovery efforts. Equitable and effective complaint handling bolsters customers' perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty (Homburg and Fürst 2005). Such outcomes stem from the efforts of frontline employees, who represent the first contact for dissatisfied customers and who either handle complaints themselves or report them to managers (Grainer at al. 2014; Liao 2007). Because their behavior is typically regulated by service scripts (Bowen and Ford 2002), we would expect service employees to handle complaints in prescribed ways, including reporting them to their superiors. Instead, frontline employees often try to resolve complaints without reporting them and purposely keep supervisors unaware of these complaints (Harris and Ogbonna 2010). Under such situations, service managers cannot achieve their goal of helping the company learn from service failures; so the same issue may repeat in the future. However, we recognize that the choice to report customer complaints can be challenging for employees, because complaints might reflect badly on their performance. The conflicting interests of supervisors and frontline employees in this regard thus may drive employees to act in their own interests, at the expense of the organization (i.e., not forwarding complaints). By examining important antecedents and the process through which these antecedents affect WRC, we aim to discover how service managers can influence WRC by managing job resources, job demands, and employee–company and employee–customer interfaces.

Qualitative Insights into Job Resources and Demands in Relation to WRC

To identify and categorize relevant determinants of service employees' WRC, we conducted 20 individual face-to-face in-depth interviews with German service employees from various service industries. Twelve informants were female; the age range was from 17 to 48 years, with an average job tenure of approximately 3.5 years. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Respondents were asked to talk about their general experiences with customer complaints, the complaint-handling process, and the reasons to report or not to report complaints to their supervisors using specific examples from their work experience. Interviews were content analyzed using the MAXQDA2 software. The results suggested that six variables represent the major influencers of WRC: supervisor support, employee empowerment, perceived customer unfriendliness, workload, organizational commitment, and customer orientation. These antecedents and mediators of WRC are shown with illustrative quotes in Appendix 1.

The identified factors map well with Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) job demands-resources (JDR) model, in which job resources and demands reflect aspects of the job that positively or negatively affect employees' ability to achieve work goals and shield them from the effects of job stress. Job resources generally encourage favorable appraisals of job experiences that enhance employees' attachment to the organization and compliance with its expectations (Bakker and Demerouti 2007). In contrast, job demands decrease employees' sense of obligation (Chang, Rosen, and Levy 2009) and perhaps their willingness to act in accordance with organizational goals. As one such organizational goal, complaint reporting behaviors likely resonate with the JDR model. Accordingly, we next develop hypotheses related to both the direct and the indirect effects of JDR variables on WRC.

Direct Effects of Job Resources and Demands on WRC

In line with the results of our qualitative research, we focus on two job resources (supervisor

support and empowerment) and two job demands (customer unfriendliness and workload) to investigate the effects of JDR factors on WRC. These resources and demands are among the most important elements for service providers (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Zablah et al. 2012).

Supervisor support. Supervisor support is the degree to which employees perceive that supervisors are supportive, encouraging, and concerned (Pazy and Ganzach 2009). Supervisors act as agents of the organization, with responsibility for directing and evaluating subordinates' performance. Supportive supervisors help service employees deal with the stress inherently created by customer complaints (Bell and Luddington 2006) and reduce workplace stress by providing insights into how to handle complaint situations (Chan and Wan 2012). In contrast, unsupportive supervisors typically fail to communicate sufficiently with subordinates, which prevents employees from learning how to deal most effectively with complaints (Heaney, Price, and Rafferty 1995). In the absence of supervisor support, employees face uncertainty and worry about reporting complaints, especially if supervisors fail to provide feedback (Jokisaari and Nurmi 2009).

Hypothesis 1: Supervisor support positively affects WRC.

Employee empowerment. We expect a negative association between empowerment and WRC. Empowerment is a service employee's "perception of latitude and authority in dealing with job-related tasks and control over decisions that affect those tasks" (Singh 2000, p. 19). Service employees who have responsibility and control for deciding how to carry out tasks (e.g., handling customer complaints) may report to their supervisors less. These empowered employees are independent in their decisions, stay in control of the situation, and act flexibly (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1988). Moreover, empowered employees show initiative and determination regarding what actions to take and tend to be motivated by a sense of ownership of or responsibility for their work (Seibert, Wang, and Courtright 2011). These characteristics of empowered employees suggest that such employees have a strong sense of "complaint ownership" which makes them act

independently and less likely to convey responsibility for the recovery process to others.

Hypothesis 2: Employee empowerment negatively affects WRC.

Perceived customer unfriendliness. Demerouti et al. (2001) maintain that job demands arise from the interactions with demanding, unfriendly customers. Perceived customer unfriendliness is the degree to which customers are perceived as impolite or abrasive toward a service employee (Walsh 2011). These perceptions negatively affect service employees' psychological resources and performance and enhance their desire to gain mental distance from such stressful situations (Wegge, Vogt, and Wecking 2007). In general, frontline customer-contact service jobs are associated with high demands, because service employees must regulate their emotional expressions when interacting with customers (Ashforth and Humphrey 1995). Over time, social stress caused by unfriendly customers translates into poor worker performance (Zablah et al. 2012), in that employees become less able or willing to engage in rule-consistent behavior. If service interactions appear characterized by customer rudeness, service employees may develop a belief that customers do not deserve their service recovery efforts. Although behavioral guidelines and display rules keep employees from responding to customer unfriendliness with uncivil behavior (Schneider and Bowen 1993), depriving customers of redress by choosing not to report their complaints is a covert way to vent negative emotions.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived customer unfriendliness negatively affects WRC.

Workload. The volume of work that employees perceive is a common job demand and work stressor associated with various outcomes, including emotional strain (Yang et al. 2012) and turnover intentions (Fritz and Sonnentag 2006). High workloads can exhaust employees' mental and physical resources (Demerouti et al. 2001) and induce negative organizational outcomes, such as neglecting noncore tasks (e.g., reporting complaints) in an attempt to focus on core job tasks (e.g., serving customers). Furthermore, psychological depletion brought about by high workload can lead

to negative affective reactions (Gorgievski and Hobfoll 2008), such as decreased motivation to perform job duties conscientiously. In this case, workload might deplete employees' ability and willingness to report complaints.

Hypothesis 4: Workload negatively affects WRC.

Indirect Effects of Job Resources and Demands on WRC

We also predict indirect effects of job resources and demands on WRC, through organizational commitment and customer orientation. Organizational commitment is the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization (Sheldon 1972), whereas customer orientation refers to the importance the employee places on meeting customers' needs and expectations (Liao and Subramony 2008). Previous research suggests that both factors mediate the effects of job resources and demands on organizational outcomes, such as organizational citizenship behavior and service performance (Lavelle et al. 2009). In a job environment where employees feel valued, supported, and conducive to their well-being, employees' identification with the organization likely flourishes, and they are more likely to engage in activities that benefit the firm both immediately and in the long run, such as complaint reporting behavior. Because complaint reporting behavior relates to both employee–company and employee–consumer interfaces, we consider organizational commitment and customer orientation to be the likely mechanisms through which job resources and demands affect WRC.

Supervisor support. Supervisor support, which encourages positive emotional associations with the organization (Eisenberger et al. 2001), is a key job resource that should increase both organizational commitment and customer orientation. When employees perceive that their supervisor is interested in them, they feel encouraged to use their skills to deliver good service to clients (Schneider, White, and Paul 1998), leading to higher performance outcomes (Clugston, Howell, and Dorfman 2000). In addition, supervisors' support buffers motivation and performance

decrements and, as such, represents a social contextual resource that helps employees replenish their depleted resources and behave in ways consistent with organizational goals (Wang et al. 2011). Therefore, supervisor support fosters employees' willingness to dedicate effort and abilities to the work task and organizational well-being (Bakker and Demerouti 2007), and therefore contribute to both the employee–company and the employee–customer interfaces.

Hypothesis 5: Supervisor support positively affects (a) organizational commitment and (b) customer orientation.

Empowerment. We expect empowerment to be positively associated with organizational commitment and customer orientation. Empowerment provides a resource that helps employees deal with job-related strain (Rupp et al. 2008) and improves such outcomes as employee well-being and job performance (Maynard, Gilson, and Mathieu 2012). Similarly, Seibert, Wang, and Courtright (2011) find that an empowered work environment enhances employees' affective responses and increases their commitment to their job and the company. In the same vein, these affective responses should spill over to the employee–customer interface, leading to a greater level of customer orientation.

Hypothesis 6: Employee empowerment positively affects (a) organizational commitment and (b) customer orientation.

Perceived customer unfriendliness. We predict that perceived customer unfriendliness negatively affects both organizational commitment and customer orientation. Service employees often need to regulate their emotional expressions (Ashforth and Humphrey 1995). Customer unfriendliness turns this requirement into an additional burden and can diminish their job engagement, performance, and feelings toward the customer (Wang et al. 2011). Negative work demands in general and negative customer emotions in particular drain employees' psychological resources, influence their job-related affective and performance reactions, reduce motivation, and

prompt mental disengagement (Demerouti et al. 2001; Walsh 2011). Such forms of demotivation likely reduce employees' task accuracy and willingness to help customers (Wegge, Vogt, and Wecking 2007). Because employees in negative customer encounters experience depletion, which reduces their interest in and ability to fulfill customers' service-related needs (Groth and Grandey 2012), lower levels of identification with the service organization and customer orientation likely ensue.

Hypothesis 7: Perceived customer unfriendliness negatively affects (a) organizational commitment and (b) customer orientation.

Workload. We forecast a negative impact of workload on organizational commitment and customer orientation. Previous studies often associate workload with higher levels of stress and emotional exhaustion, as well as reduced job satisfaction and motivation (Kammeyer-Mueller, Simon, and Rich 2012). Workload-induced resource depletion can activate employees' coping mechanism such that they purposely refuse to invest further effort or resources on behalf of the service firm (Suh et al. 2011). Employees that decrease their investments tend to experience a corrosion of emotional attachment and reduced commitment toward the firm (Schaufeli 2006). Such employees may also engage in coping in the form of reduced customer orientation (e.g., abbreviated or hurried service episodes).

Hypothesis 8: Workload negatively affects (a) organizational commitment and (b) customer orientation.

Impact of organizational commitment on WRC. Organizational commitment, which manifests as high identification and involvement and willingness to work toward organizational goals (Meyer and Allen 1991), pertains to various organizational and job outcomes, including organizational effectiveness (Angle and Perry 1981) and employee performance (Jaramillo, Mulki, and Marshall 2005). Because customer complaints affect organizational goals and are ultimately critical for the

success of service firms (Liao 2007), service employees with a higher commitment should be more likely to report complaints to management.

Hypothesis 9: Organizational commitment positively affects WRC.

Impact of customer orientation on WRC. Satisfying customers' needs is a primary goal in any service relationship. Customer-oriented employees respond to customers' expectations and needs and help them solve problems (Brown et al. 2002). Such customer-oriented behaviors require a customer-oriented attitude and the adoption of the customers' perspective (Stock and Hoyer 2005), which then enhance the engagement between service employees and customers (Zablah et al. 2012). In this sense, reporting customer complaints to management reflects service employees' attempts to support the customer by triggering faster service recovery and avoiding similar mistakes in the future (Luria, Gal, and Yagil 2009).

Hypothesis 10: Customer orientation positively affects WRC.

Cross-National Differences in the Effects of Job Resources and Demands on WRC

Culture guides the direction and trend of socialization goals and organizational behaviors (Tsui, Nifadkar, and Ou 2007). The socialization goal in mainstream Western cultures is to develop an individual sense of identity and self-sufficiency (Triandis 1995). With this foundation, employees are considered well-prepared to make decisions about various issues, from job goals to the mode of job execution (Hill 1998). By contrast, the socialization tasks in Far Eastern cultures are mainly to (1) control individualistic acts and reduce unique characteristics; (2) develop collectivistic ideals and cooperative skills and behaviors, including obedience, conformity, and interdependence; and (3) become integral to the larger group and contribute to its welfare (Chen 2000). Such socialization goal differences are manifested through several dimensions at the country level, including collectivism–individualism, power distance, long-term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 2001). Compared with Germany, China is characterized by more collectivism orientation,

higher power distance, more long-term orientation, and less uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 2001).

Such differences also should produce differential effects of job resources and demands on WRC

across cultures.

Resources. We posit that interpersonal resources, such as supervisor support, should have a

stronger impact on WRC for German than for Chinese employees. Employees from Western

countries (e.g., Germany) are less socialized to value group goals over individual goals, and they

display lower loyalty and commitment to supervisors than do employees from Eastern countries

such as China (Jung, Bass, and Sosik 1995). Furthermore, loyalty and commitment in Eastern

countries often result from relational resources, including trust, personal reputation, and advice,

which supervisors can provide to employees (Jacobs, Belschak, and Krug 2004). Thus, employees in

Eastern countries tend to internalize supervisors' beliefs and goals (Triandis 1995).

In contrast, employees from Western cultures have lower expectations of receiving relational

resources than their Eastern counterparts (Earley 1989). This notion suggests that employees in

Western countries receive less support from both coworkers and supervisors. If, however, the

employees from Western countries obtain relational resources, they should appreciate them and

respond by acquiescing to organizational demands. In a complaint-handling context, we predict that

the behavior of German frontline service employees who receive supervisor support, compared with

their Chinese peers, will align better with the organization's goals.

Hypothesis 11: The positive effect of supervisor support on WRC is stronger for German

than for Chinese service employees.

We further predict that employee empowerment, as an impersonal resource, should exert a

stronger impact on the WRC of German employees than of Chinese employees. The socialization

goals of Chinese society include getting along with others, conforming to the group, and respecting

seniors and leaders; those of German society emphasize independence, assertiveness, and

individuality (Triandis 1995). These differences then establish the expectation that empowered German employees will make decisions about various issues, from job goals to the mode of job execution (Hill 1998). German employees also are responsible for adverse consequences arising from these decisions, which may explain their orientation toward high performance and their stern interpersonal relations (Brodbeck, Frese, and Javidan 2002). In this sense, German employees can operate as relatively independent decision makers because they know they will be held personally accountable for their actions and work outcomes.

In contrast, Chinese employees are less comfortable with empowerment than their Western counterparts (Fock et al. 2013). Empowered Chinese employees tend to be reluctant to accept responsibility, even if they have authority (Mwaura, Sutton, and Roberts 1998). Also, they exhibit independence in tasks with clear scripts, but for issues that have not been fully described in manuals, supervisors remain responsible for protecting, governing, teaching, and disciplining employees (Littrell 2007). Thus, when Chinese employees make mistakes, their supervisors may be required to take responsibility (Cheng et al. 2004). In such an environment, the strength of the link between empowerment and WRC should be weaker.

Hypothesis 12: The negative effect of employee empowerment on WRC is stronger for German than for Chinese employees.

Demands. Interpersonal demands, such as perceived customer unfriendliness, should have a stronger impact on WRC among German service employees than among Chinese service employees. The behavior of people in Western cultures is motivated by the pursuit of individual gains and is less conformity oriented than that of those in Eastern cultures (Triandis 1989). Therefore, a decrement of psychological gain caused by perceived customer unfriendliness should cause more psychological depletion among German than among Chinese employees. Furthermore, people in Western cultures (e.g., Germany) are generally worse at taking the perspective of others than are people in Eastern

countries (e.g., China) (Wu and Keysar 2007), so they attribute stressful situations more to themselves or to the company and struggle to focus on situation-specific goals rather than on their current feelings of distress (Chan and Wan 2012). As a result, German service employees may have trouble differentiating any form of unfriendliness and other people's moods. In contrast, Chinese service employees are less apt to take customer unfriendliness personally or relate it to themselves. In addition, social norms for conformity likely make Chinese service employees more prone to endure unpleasant treatment from customers (Wang et al. 2011). German employees thus might be more likely to subvert norms of complaint handling than their Chinese counterparts as a means of retaliating against the customer.

>   *Hypothesis 13:* The negative effect of perceived customer unfriendliness on WRC is stronger
>   for German than for Chinese service employees.

Similarly, we posit that the negative effect of workload on WRC is stronger for German than for Chinese employees. Cognitive appraisals of impersonal job demands, such as workload, likely vary across cultures (Bandura 2002). In Western countries, people view work as a means for personal achievement and growth, but they also seek a work–life balance and time to invest in family and private relationships (Roberts 2007). A demanding workload and efforts devoted to work pursuits thus may be detrimental to employee well-being and job performance. In Eastern countries, work demands and perceived stress exhibit a weaker relationship; as Spector et al. (2004) report, employees in Eastern countries indicate only a weak positive relationship between work hours and stressors. Working hard is often viewed as a necessary path to success in China (Zhao 2013).

>   *Hypothesis 14:* The negative effect of workload on WRC is stronger for German than for
>   Chinese employees.

METHOD

Sample and Procedures

The original questionnaire was prepared in English, then translated into German and Chinese using standard back-translation approaches and pretested with 60 German and 47 Chinese service employees to ensure clarity, comprehension, and ease of completion.

The samples consisted of German and Chinese service employees who engaged in face-to-face customer contacts on a daily basis. We purposefully focused on such frontline employees because they are likely to be the recipients of complaints from customers with whom they have had direct interactions. Research assistants recruited employees of various service sectors by distributing questionnaires; each assistant was briefed on the purpose of the study and equipped with cover letters to give to respondents, which explained the nature of the study and provided details about the data collection procedures. The recruitment process relied on a snowballing technique: the research assistants recruited the initial pool of service employees with whom they have social links (so-called seeds) and then enlisted their help to recruit at least two other service employees they knew. Because complaint management is a sensitive topic, all information remained anonymous and confidential, and no information related to identity (e.g., name, addresses, employer name) was collected. These procedural remedies also help control for common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

The final sample included 363 German and 213 Chinese employees. The German service employees' average age was 33.19 years (SD = 10.3), and 54.0% were women. Their mean job tenure was 5.62 years (SD = 5.9). The service industries in which the German service employees worked included hotel (40.9%), telecommunications (37.2%), travel agents (8.5), retail (6.5%), and others (6.9%; e.g., hairdressers, restaurants, cosmetic sales). The Chinese service employees' average age was 26.44 years (SD = 4.7), and 66.7% were women. Their mean job tenure was 1.44

years (SD = 1.6). The service industries in which they worked included telecommunications

(29.7%), retail (21.5%), hotel (26.4%), and others (22.4%; e.g., travel agents, hairdressers,

restaurants, cosmetic sales).

Measures

All measures (see Appendix 2) were anchored at 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly

agree." Four items on WRC came from Luria, Gal, and Yagil (2009). Supervisor support was

measured by three items adapted from Babin and Boles (1996). Five items adapted from Singh

(2000) measured employee empowerment. The perceived customer unfriendliness measure included

three items adapted from Walsh (2011). For the workload measure, we used five items from

Notelaers et al. (2007). We measured organizational commitment with four items adapted from

Maltz and Kohli (1996). Finally, five items from Homburg, Wieseke, and Bornemann (2009)

assessed customer-oriented behavior.

Because organizational variables, such as hierarchical status barriers, complaint reporting

guidelines, and leaders' advocacy of a complaints-reporting culture (Edmondson 2004), are likely to

affect WRC, we treated them as covariates in the model. We captured hierarchical status barriers

with number of hierarchical levels above the respondent. Complaint reporting guidelines was

captured by Homburg and Fürst's (2005) 14-item measure of mechanical approach to service

recovery (e.g., "In our company/business unit, guidelines for registering and processing customer

complaints include instructions to record complaint information in a fast, complete, and structured

manner"). This measure was reliable ($\alpha = .93$), and the 14 items were averaged to form a composite

score of complaint reporting guidelines. We assessed leaders' advocacy of a complaints-reporting

culture using Homburg and Fürst's (2005) 18-item measure of organic approach to service recovery

(e.g., "Managers are, with regard to customer complaints, primarily interested in preventing failures

from reoccurring rather than blaming employees for problems"). We derived a composite score for

leaders' advocacy of a complaints-reporting culture (α = .83). We also included items to measure respondents' job tenure, gender, age, and industry and treated them as covariates in the model.

RESULTS

Assessment of Measures

We analyzed the measurement model by testing its construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, following Fornell and Larcker (1981) and using a pooled sample of German and Chinese respondents' data. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the principle constructs and their correlations. The Cronbach's alphas for all model constructs reached the suggested threshold of .70 (Nunnally 1978), so the constructs are internally consistent. We assessed their convergent and discriminant validity with four methods. First, the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) of all constructs were greater than all other cross-correlations. Second, the AVEs were greater than .50, with the exceptions of customer unfriendliness and workload, which implied that the constructs captured higher construct-related variance than error variance. Third, the correlations among all constructs were well below the .70 threshold, so they were distinct from one another. Fourth, all items revealed the highest loadings on their intended constructs, and all factor loadings were greater than .60 (with significant *t*-values). Therefore, the constructs have adequate convergent and discriminate validity.

----- Insert Table 1 about here -----

We also evaluated the potential threat of common method bias. When we performed Harman's one-factor test to assess common method variance (Podsakoff et al. 2003), we derived a one-factor model that yielded a χ^2 of 3436.9 (df = 394), compared with a χ^2 of 749.9 (df = 373) for the measurement model. Because the one-factor model fit was significantly worse than that of the measurement model ($\Delta\chi^2$ = 2687.0, Δdf = 21, p < .001), we concluded that common method bias was not a serious threat.

Testing the Direct Effects of Job Resources and Demands on WRC

The direct effect model, which contains the four JDR antecedents and the dependent variable (WRC) but no mediators, fit the data well (χ^2 = 377.3, df = 188, χ^2/df = 2.01, p = .000, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .042). Consistent with Hypothesis 1, supervisor support emerged as positively related to WRC (b = .123, t = 2.37, p < .05). The results also showed that the path from empowerment to WRC (b = –.105, t = –2.01, p < .05) was negative, supporting Hypothesis 2 but in contrast with Luria, Gal, and Yagil's (2009) finding of a positive empowerment–WRC link. The difference between our finding and that of Luria, Gal, and Yagil (2009) may be attributable to the different cultural contexts—Israel vs. Germany/China. However, it is noteworthy that Luria, Gal, and Yagil (2009, p. 167) also allude to a potential negative empowerment–WRC link in reporting the results of a qualitative study: "At times, empowered workers will prefer to handle service recovery themselves rather than involve a manager in the process." Future studies could explore under what conditions empowerment influences WRC positively or negatively.

In support of Hypothesis 3, we found a negative link from customer unfriendliness to WRC (b = –.273, t = –4.69, p < .001). However, inconsistent with Hypothesis 4, we uncovered a positive link from workload to WRC (b = .257, t = 3.92, p < .001), as shown in Table 2. A plausible reason for the unexpected finding is that the employees in our sample might view their workload as reasonable (M = 3.97, SD = 1.27) or that employees who have higher workloads do not have time to solve the customer problems themselves, but pass them on to their supervisors.

-----Insert Table 2 about here-----

Testing the Indirect Effects of Job Resources and Demands on WRC

Next, we added the two mediators (organizational commitment and customer orientation) to the direct effect model. The mediated model showed good overall fit (χ^2 = 749.9, df = 373, χ^2/df = 2.01, p = .000, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .042). As Table 2 indicates, supervisor support was

significantly related to organizational commitment ($b = .498$, $t = 7.82$, $p < .001$), in support of Hypothesis 5a, but was not related to customer orientation ($b = -.054$, $t = -.93$, $p > .15$), offering no support for Hypothesis 5b.

The links from employee empowerment to organizational commitment and customer orientation were in the hypothesized direction, but the coefficients did not reach statistical significance, so we cannot confirm Hypothesis 6a or Hypothesis 6b. Customer unfriendliness was related to organizational commitment ($b = -.213$, $t = -3.75$, $p < .001$) and customer orientation ($b = -.186$, $t = -3.87$, $p < .001$), in the hypothesized directions, offering support for Hypothesis 7a and Hypothesis 7b.

The links of workload with organizational commitment ($b = .519$, $t = 7.22$, $p < .001$) and customer orientation ($b = .203$, $t = 3.22$, $p < .001$) were positive, failing to support Hypothesis 8a or Hypothesis 8b. Considering appraisal theory, it may not be surprising that we found a positive link between workload and organizational commitment. Our finding is broadly in agreement with Yoon and Thye (2002), who report a positive effect of workload on job satisfaction. When a cognitive appraisal occurs, enhanced job engagement triggered by high workload can strengthen the employee's psychological bond with the service organization (Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli 2006). Service employees' acceptance of challenges also relates positively to their customer orientation (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005), indicating that enhanced job engagement may motivate employees to align their on-the-job behavior with organizational values and goals.

In addition, both organizational commitment ($b = .132$, $t = 2.33$, $p < .05$) and customer orientation ($b = .541$, $t = 8.16$, $p < .001$) were significantly related to WRC, in support of Hypothesis 9 and Hypothesis 10, respectively.

Next, we conducted mediation analyses with the bootstrapping method, using Hayes' (2012) PROCESS macro. We obtained a 95% confidence interval of the parameter estimates by running

resampling 5000 times. The results indicated that the indirect effect of supervisor support on WRC through both organizational commitment (95% CI = .09 to .20) and customer orientation (95% CI = .03 to .12) were significant, but the difference in the strength of these two indirect routes did not reach statistical significance (95% CI = −.09 to .14). Moreover, employee empowerment only exerted a direct effect on WRC, without passing through either organizational commitment (95% CI = −.02 to .04) or customer orientation (95% CI = −.03 to .06). As expected, the effect of perceived customer unfriendliness on WRC was significantly mediated by both organizational commitment (95% CI = −.13 to −.02) and customer orientation (95% CI = −.15 to −.04) with a similar magnitude (95% CI = −.08 to .03). Also consistent with our expectations, the impact of workload on WRC was significantly mediated by both organizational commitment (95% CI = .01 to .08) and customer orientation (95% CI = .06 to .15), with a stronger indirect path from customer orientation (95% CI = .02 to .11). Therefore, organizational commitment and customer orientation mediate the effect of all job demands–resources variables except empowerment.

With regard to the control variables, we found that except for the link between leaders' advocacy of a complaints-reporting culture and customer orientation ($b = .177$, $t = 2.68$, $p < .01$), none of the organizational variables (i.e., number of hierarchical levels above the respondent, complaint reporting guidelines, and leaders' advocacy of a complaints-reporting culture) had significant impact on WRC, organizational commitment, or customer orientation (all $ps > .15$). These findings are in line with our qualitative research findings and provide validation for our proposed model. Furthermore, there was no impact of gender or job tenure on organizational commitment, customer orientation, or WRC ($ps > .10$). Age related positively to organizational commitment, such that older employees appeared more committed to their firms. However, age did not affect customer orientation or WRC. We also found differences across industries in organizational commitment and customer orientation: Employees working in smaller-scale service

settings (e.g., travel agents, hairdressers, restaurants) were more committed to their firms and more customer-oriented than those working in retail stores, telecommunication firms, or hotels. Importantly, including or excluding these control variables did not alter the pattern or the significant level of our results.

Relative Contributions of the Mediators

To examine the importance of including organizational commitment and customer orientation as core mediators, we compared our proposed model against a direct effect model (with only JDR as predictors, omitting all mediators), using Cohen's (1988) formula for calculating effect size (f^2, or the degree to which the phenomenon appears in the population):

$$f^2 = (R^2_{included} - R^2_{excluded}) / (1 - R^2_{included}).$$

Dropping organizational commitment and customer orientation from the model significantly reduced the variance explained in WRC (from $R^2 = .351$ to $.118$; $f^2 = .36$). In addition, the direct-effect model without mediators offered significantly lower predictive validity than the proposed model, as shown by the substantial effect sizes (Cohen 1988).[1]

A further analysis of the total, indirect, and direct effects of the antecedents on WRC showed that more than 80.9% of the total effect of supervisor support on WRC flowed through mediation processes, especially organizational commitment (indirect effect $= .07$, $t = 2.22$, $p < .05$; customer orientation indirect effect $= .03$, $t = 1.03$, $p = .30$). In addition, 58.6% of the total effect of customer unfriendliness on WRC was mediated, mainly through customer orientation (indirect effect $= -.13$, $t = -3.50$, $p < .001$; organizational commitment indirect effect $= -.03$, $t = 1.97$, $p < .05$). Finally, 95.9% of workload's total effect on WRC was mediated, mainly through customer orientation (indirect effect $= .19$, $t = 3.32$, $p < .001$; organizational commitment indirect effect $= .07$, $t = 2.20$, $p < .05$).

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[1] Effect sizes of .02 are small, .15 are medium, and .35 are large.

Testing the Moderating Effects of Culture

Using the AMOS program, we next tested whether the proposed framework remained invariant across German and Chinese employees. Before undertaking model invariance tests, we needed to establish separate baseline models for each sample. Then we introduced two levels of constraints (i.e., measurement and structural) to test their equality simultaneously. Following Byrne's (1994) procedure, we tested two baseline structural models, one for the German ($n = 363$) and the other for the Chinese ($n = 213$) samples. In both cases, the measurement model paths were significant, and causal paths were in the hypothesized direction.

Next, we introduced measurement-level constraints (i.e., configural invariance, metric invariance, factor covariance invariance, and error variance invariance) to test the equality of the measurement models across samples. Using chi-square difference tests, we identified the best model that could represent common measurement properties for the two samples. The results showed that our German and Chinese employee samples exhibited the same factor patterns, factor structures, and factor covariances.

To test for differences in the strengths of the relationships between the JDR variables and WRC across cultures, we simultaneously derived the total effects (including both direct and indirect effects) and the standard errors of all JDR variables on WRC using the "estat teffects" procedure (Stata 13), and then conducted invariance tests to compare the difference in the magnitude of the coefficients across German and Chinese samples using an online statistics calculator (Soper 2014). The invariance test indicated that the total effect of supervisor support on WRC was stronger among German ($b = .195$) than among Chinese ($b = .046$; $t_{572} = 1.32$, $p_{one\text{-}tailed} < .10$) employees, in support of Hypothesis 11 (Table 3). Empowerment's total impact on WRC was greater in the German ($b = -.199$) than in the Chinese ($b = .051$; $t_{572} = 1.79$, $p_{one\text{-}tailed} < .05$) sample, in support of Hypothesis 12. In addition, in support of Hypothesis 13, the invariance tests showed that the total effect of customer

unfriendliness on WRC in the German model ($b = -.719$) was greater than that in the Chinese model ($b = -.312$; $t_{572} = 1.67$, $p_{one\text{-}tailed} < .05$). Finally, a similar total effect of the link between workload and WRC for the German ($b = .444$) than for the Chinese ($b = .291$; $t_{572} = .79$, $p_{one\text{-}tailed} > .20$), which was not consistent with Hypothesis 14.

-----Insert Table 3 about here-----

DISCUSSION

By introducing the JDR framework to the domain of complaint handling in service sectors, we theorize about the role that job resources and demands play in affecting WRC in both Germany and China. The findings show that supervisor support positively affects WRC, whereas customer unfriendliness negatively affects it. Also, employee empowerment has a negative effect on WRC, whereas workload positively affects it. Thus, it is not only job demands that challenge WRC, as observed in the case of customer unfriendliness, but also job resources, such as employee empowerment, that can jeopardize firms' WRC goals.

Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to JDR research and complaint handling domains in three ways. First, whereas prior research links the JDR variables to various job attitudes and performance, few studies have connected the JDR framework to employees' complaint-reporting behavior. Extending the JDR framework to the service recovery domain, we shed light on different job resources and demands that either foster or inhibit this important service-related outcome. A prevailing assumption in JDR research holds that job resources help employees achieve work goals and that job demands inhibit their achievement. We show that some job resources (supervisor support) and demands (workload) can enhance WRC, whereas other job resources (employee empowerment) and demands (customer unfriendliness) have inhibiting effects.

Second, we examine how organizational commitment and customer orientation may mediate

the effect of JDR variables on WRC. Our findings suggest that 80.9% of supervisor support's total effect, 58.6% of the total effect due to customer unfriendliness, and 95.9% of workload's total effect on WRC flow through some mediation process. Supervisor support affects WRC primarily by influencing employees' organizational commitment, whereas customer unfriendliness and workload affect it mainly through employees' customer orientation. This study represents the first attempt to theorize and empirically test the indirect effects of JDR on employees' complaint-handling behavior. Studying the underlying mechanisms by which job resources and demands affect WRC provides service scholars and managers with a better understanding of why employees might not follow firm guidelines for reporting customer complaints, despite their importance in the firm's long-term growth.

Third, we contribute to service recovery literature by examining the moderating role of country in the relationships between JDR variables and WRC. Service researchers have documented the behavior of service customers and service employees in different countries (Hui, Au, and Fock 2004; Schumann et al. 2010). We extend such efforts by showing that all four job resources and demands have stronger effects on WRC in Germany than in China. Relative to those in Eastern cultures, service employees in Western cultures thus appear more sensitive to job resources and demands.

Managerial Implications

Our findings indicate that international service managers must be cognizant of the effects of JDR variables on WRC. For example, supervisor support affects WRC mainly by influencing organizational commitment. To enhance employees' complaint-reporting behavior, firms should invest in expanding this interpersonal resource. Training programs for the supervisors of frontline employees need to be developed, focusing on aspects of global servant leadership (Ehrhart 2004), such as how to form relationships with subordinates and help them grow and succeed.

Furthermore, employee empowerment has a direct, negative effect on WRC, without going through the mediation process. Empowerment thus may be a double-edged sword, helping employees deal with complaints directly but also tempting them to thwart established procedures and sacrifice firms' long-term goals. Therefore, firms need to develop systems and processes that incentivize these employees to report customer complaints to management after directly resolving the issues. One approach is to create well-structured monetary awards for rational suggestions from employees that can improve the procedures in the company.

Because customer unfriendliness negatively affects WRC both directly and indirectly through organizational commitment and customer orientation, service firms could try to understand what makes customers unfriendly as that has a negative effect on many outcomes beyond WRC. Moreover, firms should consider launching programs to help employees deal with this interpersonal job demand. Skilled and effective emotion regulation may buffer its negative effects on WRC. Our findings suggest that employee-oriented workshops should enhance perspective-taking skills. Companies can use role-playing scenarios that would help employees cope with the emotional labor demanded by unfriendly customers. When recruiting new employees, firms also might develop mechanisms to screen for perspective-taking skills.

In addition, our research suggests that workload positively influences WRC by affecting organizational commitment and customer orientation. This is good news for many firms. However, companies should be aware that workload in our study context remained in the reasonable range in both countries ($M = 3.97$ on a seven-point Likert scale, $SD = 1.27$). Excessive workload may be detrimental. Armed with this information, firms could increase frontline employees' perceptions of their workload by changing the work design instead of increasing actual workloads by, for example, enriching their responsibilities or extending the range of their duties.

Furthermore, organizational commitment and customer orientation serve as critical mediators

in the JDR–WRC relationships and positively affect WRC, which implies they are critical job attitudes for service recovery management. Supervisor support affects WRC primarily by influencing employees' organizational commitment, whereas customer unfriendliness and workload affect it mainly by influencing their customer orientation. Therefore, service firms might benefit from allocating customer orientation–enhancing resources to frontline employees who often deal with unfriendly customers and/or feel greater pressures. Stress-relieving programs or training in how to be customer-oriented but still emotionally detached from service encounters should be particularly useful. Prioritizing greater customer orientation also can be beneficial in the short run, because higher levels of customer orientation can be achieved quickly, whereas organizational commitment requires more time. Thus, regular performance management processes should incorporate the identification and positive reinforcement of customer-oriented behavior that enhances WRC.

The findings also suggest that German employees are more sensitive to the JDR environment than Chinese employees. Therefore, firms investing in job resources (e.g., supervisor support) may reap more benefits in the form of enhanced WRC in Germany than in China, where the deployment of such resources is more commonplace and less likely to prompt notable changes in employee behavior.

Another interesting finding pertains to employee empowerment, which has a negative effect on WRC in Germany but not in China. Supervisors in German operations should combine empowerment techniques with a formal complaints-reporting process. Because customer unfriendliness has negative effects on WRC in both countries, with a stronger effect in Germany, we argue that it is extremely important for service firms in Western countries to find ways to help their employees deal with this job demand. Teaching them psychological techniques for absorbing negative emotions might help them buffer the effect of unfriendly customers. Furthermore, the

positive effects of workload on WRC appear stronger in Germany. Within reasonable boundaries, service firms, especially in Western countries, thus should increase employees' workload perceptions when WRC has been identified as a problem.

Limitations and Further Research Directions

We acknowledge that there are several limitations in this study. First, we used a snowball sampling approach and cross-sectional convenience samples, which provided good representations of different types of service occupations but prevented us from measuring true causality and achieving fully equivalent data across the two countries. It is conceivable that this sampling approach is less appropriate for individualistic than collectivistic cultures, where individuals have a greater ability to network. Further studies could use probability sampling or collect longitudinal data from service employees to verify our framework.

Additional work should test our model with larger samples and data from different contexts, ideally using completely randomized samples, to enhance the generalizability of our model. Relatedly, our moderation hypotheses are based on the country differences. We encourage future researchers to measure culture at the individual level to examine the role of each specific dimension (collectivism-individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation) in moderating the JDR–WRC links.

Further research might also consider additional antecedent variables that we did not include in our framework, such as incentives. That is, prior research shows that organizational incentives increase employees' willingness to share knowledge with coworkers and supervisors (Foss, Laursen, and Pedersen 2011). If well-designed incentive programs can increase knowledge sharing, they should also drive WRC.

Additional avenues exist that can help improve understanding of WRC. An excellent next step is to investigate the relationship between WRC and customer outcomes. High levels of WRC, and

subsequent service recovery, should increase customer complaint satisfaction and overall satisfaction with the firm. Using dyadic data, studies might consider complaint processes from the customer perspective and determine if low levels of WRC in a service organization spark negative customer outcomes.

Another worthwhile avenue for further inquiry involves our finding that empowerment negatively affects WRC. We might surmise that empowered employees learn from complaints, which increases the likelihood that they would take personal responsibility to solve future problems (i.e., complaints), which in turn may render reporting complaints less pertinent from their point of view. Indeed, Tucker and Edmondson (2003) show that organizations in which service employees are encouraged to assume ownership of complaints, may, inadvertently, create barriers to organizational improvement because employee independence subverts organizational learning efforts. Researchers could investigate WRC in relation to organizational learning.

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Appendix 1. Qualitative Evidence on the Antecedents and Mediators of WRC

WRC-related Job Resources and Demands Category and Mediators	Number of Instances (% of total JDR instances)[a]	Key Quotes
Supervisor Support	21 (9.4%)	"Again, it depends on the supervisor. For example, I had supervisors who encouraged me to contact them when having problems. In contrast, other supervisors gave me the feeling I should try to solve the problem on my own." (Matthew, 24 years, bank clerk, 1 year job experience) "If I have a supervisor who gives me a dressing down for every reported mistake, I think twice about reporting the complaint." (William, 21 years, sales consultant, 1 year job experience)
Employee Empowerment	72 (32.3%)	"Supervisors always like it when their backs are watched. So, I do decide whether to tell them about a problem, and I decide whether it's relevant or not." (Mary, 29 years, dental assistant, 4 years job experience)
Perceived Customer Unfriendliness	22 (9.9%)	"So, it always depends on the customer's attitude, how he enters the shop. Let's say, he behaves objectively and calm and tells me what the problem is about or he is rather loud and cheeky." (Michael, 24 years, sales assistant, 3 years job experience)
Workload	15 (6.7%)	"When the store is busy I ask customers to file their complaint by writing a letter or calling the service hotline." (William, 21 years, sales consultant, 1 year job experience) "If I have no time I don't report complaints." (Christoph, 25 years, pizza delivery boy, 2 years and 3 months job experience)
Organizational Commitment	13 (5.8%)	"Yes of course, I want my company to be positively perceived by customers. That's why I want the customers to say: "Well okay, they care about my problems even though it might be annoying. But they care, you know. I would come back again." The most important thing is, my company is doing well." (Emma, 17 years, salesperson, 4 months job experience)

WRC-related Job Resources and Demands Category and Mediators	Number of Instances (% of total JDR instances)[a]	Key Quotes
Customer Orientation	67 (30%)	"Of course, we want, and that is basically our interest, to make our customers really happy. And that's why we report complaints to make sure that we always satisfy our customers." (Julia, 24 years, retail saleswoman, 8 years job experience) "Well, that's motivating for me if I know that a customer's problem is going to be solved or if I can help the customer even if I only report the complaint and as a result the customer is satisfied." (Sophia, 22 years, salesperson, 1 year and 6 months job experience)

Notes: [a] This column displays the number of instances in each of the JDR categories and the percentage of the total number of JDR categories. About 223 quotes were identified in 20 face-to-face in-depth interviews and related to the JDR categories.

Appendix 2. Measures

Willingness to report complaints (adapted from Luria, Gal, and Yagil 2009)
I report to management about incidents in which customers complain about serious problems.
I report to my direct manager about problems customers encounter even if a customer has not told me that he or she wants to complain about service.
I feel comfortable discussing problems encountered with a dissatisfied customer with my direct manager.
I am willing to tell my direct manager about difficulties I had when serving customers.
Supervisory support (adapted from Babin and Boles 1996)
Supervisors tend to talk down to employees (r).
Supervisors often criticize employees over minor things (r).
Supervisors expect far too much from employees (r).
Supervisors really stand up for people.
Organizational commitment (adapted from Maltz and Kohli 1996)
I feel emotionally attached to this organization.
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
I really feel this organization's problems are my own.
Employee empowerment (adapted from Singh 2000)
In my job I have little control over the tasks I perform (r).
In my job I have little say in decisions that affect my work (r).
In my job I have no control over what is happening in my work area (r).
In my job I have little say in top management's decisions that affect me (r).
In my job I do not have the authority to do what is required (r).
Customer orientated behavior (adapted from Homburg, Wieseke, and Bornemann 2009)
I try to figure out what a customer's needs are.
I usually have the customer's best interests in mind.
I take a problem-solving approach in selling products or services to customers.
I recommend products or services that are best suited to solving problems.
I try to find out which kinds of products or services would be most helpful to customers.
Perceived customer unfriendliness (adapted from Walsh 2011)
Customers are generally very friendly and pleasant. (r)
Customers lose their temper quickly.
Customers often take my comments and deeds in the wrong way.
Customers do not greet me or my colleagues.
Workload (adapted from Notelaers et al. 2007)
I often have to work extra hard to complete the tasks at hand.
I usually have to hurry at work.
My workload is heavy from [an] emotional viewpoint.
The emotions created in my job often affect my personal life.
My work often put me in emotional situations.

Notes: (r) indicates reverse scored.
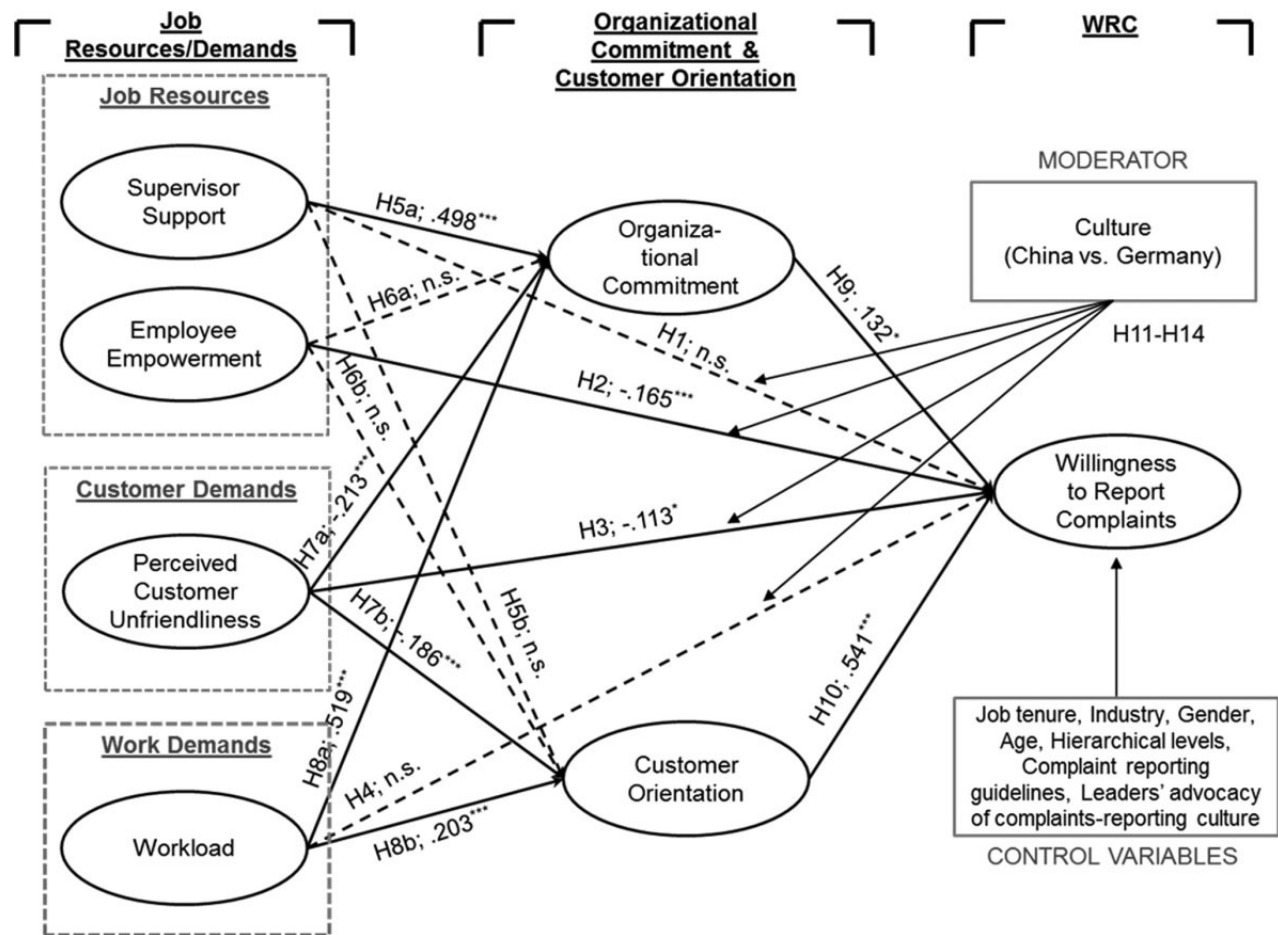
Figure 1. Conceptual Model with Results

Note: Values associated with each path are standardized regression coefficients. Non-significant paths are represented by dashed lines.
***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05; n.s. = Not significant.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and AVE

Constructs	M (SD)	Cronbach's α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Supervisor support	5.14 (1.30)	.78	**.73**						
2. Empowerment	4.62 (1.49)	.82	.35	**.72**					
3. Customer unfriendliness	2.90 (1.16)	.70	−.23	−.12	**.63**				
4. Workload	3.97 (1.27)	.72	−.24	−.24	.13	**.66**			
5. Organizational commitment	4.77 (1.49)	.82	.44	.15	−.25	.14	**.72**		
6. Customer orientation	5.77 (1.08)	.83	.16	.07	−.21	.20	.37	**.72**	
7. Willingness to report complaints	5.15 (1.34)	.80	.12	−.10	−.19	.14	.29	.45	**.82**

Notes: The diagonal elements (in bold) represent the square root of AVE.

Table 2. Results of Direct Effect and Mediation Models

Independent Variables	Direct Model		Mediation Model			Results
	WRC	**Results**	Organizational Commitment	Customer Orientation	WRC	**Results**
JDR						
Supervisor support	.123*	**H₁** supported	.498***	−.054	.027	**H₅ₐ** supported, but **H₅ᵦ** not supported. The supervisor support–WRC link is supported by both the direct path and the indirect path through organizational commitment.
Empowerment	−.105*	**H₂** supported	.033	.082	−.165***	**H₆ₐ** and **H₆ᵦ** not supported.
Customer unfriendliness	−.273***	**H₃** supported	−.213***	−.186***	−.113*	**H₇ₐ** and **H₇ᵦ** supported. The customer orientation–WRC link is supported by both the direct path and the indirect paths through organizational commitment and customer orientation.
Workload	.257***	**H₄** not supported	.519***	.203***	.011	**H₈ₐ** and **H₈ᵦ** not supported.
Mediators						
Organizational commitment	N/A		N/A	.273***	.132*	**H9** supported
Customer orientation	N/A		N/A	N/A	.541***	**H10** supported
Variance Explained (R²)	11.8%		34.5%	25.7%	35.1%	
Fit Indices	$\chi^2 = 377.3$, df = 188, χ^2/df = 2.01, p = .000, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .042		$\chi^2 = 749.9$, df = 373, χ^2/df = 2.01, p = .000, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .042			

Notes: CFI = confirmatory fit index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Table 3. Invariance Tests of the Total Effects of JDR on WRC

JDR Variables	Germany	China	Z-value (p-value; one-tailed)	Results
Supervisor support → WRC	.210***	.073	1.61 (.05)	**H11** supported
Employee empowerment → WRC	−.172**	−.015	1.83 (.04)	**H12** supported
Customer unfriendliness → WRC	−.444***	−.119*	4.12 (.00)	**H13** supported
Workload → WRC	.440***	.243***	2.58 (.00)	**H14** not supported

Notes: All effects include both direct and indirect effects.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.