

*Chapter 19*

**CUSTOMERS AS GOOD SOLDIERS: EXTENDING  
ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR  
RESEARCH TO THE CUSTOMER DOMAIN**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this chapter is to extend the OCB framework to the customer domain by developing a theoretical framework that distinguishes between customer in-role behaviors (customer coproduction) and extra-role behaviors (customer citizenship behaviors). Based on prior research in the management and marketing literatures, we develop specific propositions of likely antecedents of these two types of customer behavior. Specifically, we propose customer satisfaction and justice perceptions as antecedents of customer citizenship behaviors and customer socialization, customer motivation, and customer role clarity as antecedents of customer coproduction. Theoretical and practical implications of extending the OCB framework to the service delivery process as well as avenues for future research are discussed.

**INTRODUCTION**

Interest in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has grown rapidly in the management literature (e.g., Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 1997). Over 20 years of research has shown OCBs to be distinct from related employee behaviors, such as in-role task performance and antisocial employee behaviors, and has identified a variety of antecedents and outcomes of OCB. To date, existing conceptualizations and measurements of OCB have focused on employee behaviors that are directed toward other coworkers or at the organization overall (see, e.g., Organ, 1988a; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter, 1990). This is evidenced by Williams and Anderson's (1991) popular typology of OCB-I and OCB-O, which differentiates between those OCBs directed towards individual coworkers and those directed towards the organization in general. Thus, distinguishing between various recipients of OCB has been of some theoretical interest to OCB researchers. Expanding on Williams

and Anderson's (1991) conceptualization, recent research has included customers as potential recipients of OCB. For example, Vaughan and Renn (1999) developed a model of customer-service employee relationships that uses customer service citizenship behavior (CSCB) to explain how service providers' perceptions of fairness and commitment to service quality influence customer perceptions. CSCB is defined as functional extra-role behavior, directed towards customers, that improves service quality. Thus, CSCB is equivalent to OCBs of frontline employees directed at customers. Their proposed model suggests a direct link between CSCB and customer loyalty and perceptions of service quality. Such relationships have been verified empirically in recent years as positive relationships between employee OCB and customer perceptions of service delivery effectiveness as well as service quality have been demonstrated (Bienstock, DeMoranville, and Smith, 2003; Hui, Lam and Schaubroeck, 2001; Yoon and Suh, 2003).

Thus, recent conceptualizations have broadened the OCB framework by including an organization's customers as potential targets of OCB behavior. This is not surprising, given the increased interest in the management literature in customer service issues and the involvement of customers in service organizations (Bowen and Schneider, 1985; Bowen, Schneider, and Kim, 2000; Mills and Morris, 1986). In this chapter we further extend this line of research focusing on customers by developing a theoretical framework that includes customers at the receiving ends of OCB but conceptualizes them as senders of citizenship behaviors. In other words, whereas current OCB frameworks are limited to behaviors of employees directed towards various organizational constituents (i.e., coworkers, organization, customers), we posit that customers who actively participate in service delivery engage in citizenship behaviors that parallel those of employees and that can be conceptualized and managed in similar ways.

In short, the main aim of this chapter is to advance the OCB literature by developing a theoretical framework that extends OCB research to the customer domain. Whereas OCB research traditionally distinguishes between *employee* in-role (i.e., task performance) and extra-role (i.e., OCB) behaviors, we suggest that *customer* in-role behaviors (i.e., customer coproduction) can similarly be distinguished from extra-role behaviors (i.e., customer citizenship behaviors). This proposed typology is shown in Figure 1.

In the following pages, we review evidence from the service management literature that suggests that customers can be viewed and managed as "partial employees" of organizations and, as a consequence, many organizational behavior theories can be extended to customers. We then expand the OCB framework to the customer domain by proposing customer citizenship behavior (CCB) as a construct that is conceptually and theoretically distinct from in-role customer coproduction behaviors and useful in understanding and managing customer behavior. Next, we explore the nomological network of customer behaviors and suggest specific research propositions of the most likely antecedents of particular customer behaviors, based on current management and marketing theories. Finally, we conclude with a general discussion and propose avenues for future research regarding the applicability of the OCB construct to the customer domain.

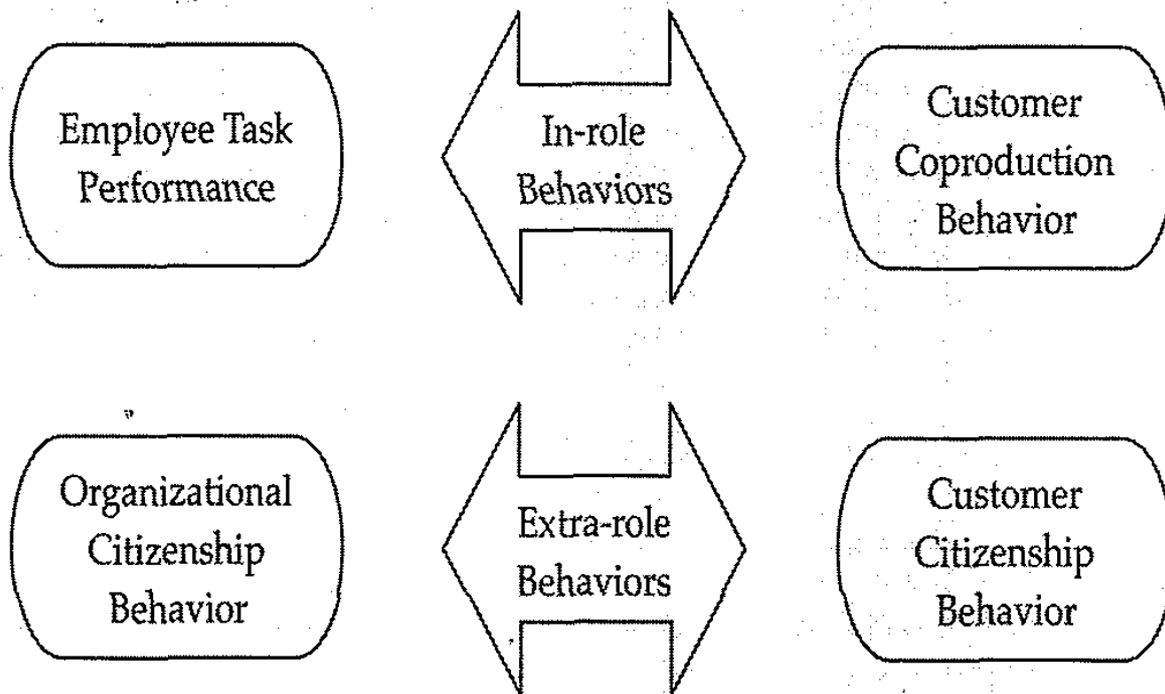


Figure 1. Comparison of Employee In-role versus Extra-Role Behaviors and Customer In-Role versus Extra-Role Behaviors.

## MANAGING UNIQUE SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS AND THE SERVICE DELIVERY PROCESS

It is generally agreed upon among researchers that services differ from products in several aspects. Most importantly, services are more intangible, heterogeneous, are often produced and consumed simultaneously, and require customer participation during the service delivery (Bowen, 1986; Schneider and Bowen, 1992; Shostack, 1977). Each of these differences has important implications for the management of service employees and organizations as explained below.

Schneider and Bowen (1992) point out that the *intangibility* and *heterogeneity* of services make it difficult to measure output, employee performance, and service quality. It further limits objective reference points for customers to judge and evaluate the quality of service. Most people will agree that it is far easier to judge the quality of a TV set compared to judging the quality of service received from one's tax accountant. Therefore, the service *experience*, the subjective perception of service delivery, often becomes a crucial reference point (Bitner, Booms, and Tetrault, 1990). In the absence of objective criteria for judging service quality and employee performance, customers often use tangible cues of the service delivery (e.g., the physical environment, the organization's website, service employees) to evaluate service quality. It has been argued that the service encounter, the interaction between a customer and a service provider, is not only essential in the determination of customer evaluations, but often *is* the service itself in the eye of the customer (Bowen, 1990; Bowen and Schneider, 1985; Bowen, Schneider, and Kim, 2000; Shostack, 1977; Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, and Gutman, 1985).

The simultaneous nature of production and consumption of services and the need for customer participation in the production of services also has important implications for the management of service organizations. Simultaneous production and consumption makes it difficult to buffer production functions from the customer's view, therefore involving customers in the experience of the service delivery. It also makes it difficult to balance supply and demand, which often leads to idle time of employees or customer waiting. These factors can have an important influence on customer reactions, as waiting has been shown to be a significant factor in customers' assessment of service quality, fairness, and satisfaction (Clemmer, 1993; Groth and Gilliland, 2001; Maister, 1985).

### **MANAGING CUSTOMERS AS PARTIAL EMPLOYEES**

Based on the unique characteristics of services discussed above, one central premise of our conceptual framework is that, to some degree, customers of service organizations should be viewed as part of, rather than external to, the organization because of the crucial role that they play in the service delivery process. The call to view customers as "partial employees" can be traced back to the early beginnings of the management literature (Barnard, 1938, 1940, 1948; Parsons, 1956, 1970), although it has become more refined in recent years (Bowen and Jones, 1986; Bowen, Schneider, and Kim, 2000; Mills, Chase, and Margulies, 1983; Mills and Morris, 1986). As discussed above, one unique feature of services, as opposed to products, is customer involvement in the production of services. Whereas buying a refrigerator (product) is a fairly passive process from the customer's point of view, meeting with a lawyer or attending a college course (service) requires customers to be physically present while the service is 'produced' in front of their eyes. Furthermore, customers often need to be actively engaged in the process and in doing so partly determine its outcome and quality. For example, if a patient at a doctor's office does not adequately describe his or her symptoms or does not follow the doctor's directions, the service delivery is hindered and ultimately the service quality will be reduced. To view customers as partial employees therefore acknowledges the importance of their role as "co-producers" and participants in the service process. Customer participation has been defined as the resources and actions supplied by customers for the production and/or delivery of services (Rodie and Kleine, 2000). Mills and Morris (1986) argue that customer co-production can decrease production costs for organizations and concordantly increase customers' involvement and sense of obligation and responsibility as their role expands. Rodie and Kleine (2000) suggest that customer participation can fill market niches, reach underserved markets, enhance customer loyalty and retention, and facilitate value-added services that would be too expensive to provide otherwise. Furthermore, customers can be valuable sources of new ideas for business strategies (Juttner and Wehrh, 1994) and can even act as organizational consultants (Wolstenholme, 1988). This is especially the case for online service businesses, whose reputation is often largely built on customer recommendations and can benefit from customer participation by means of word-of-mouth and referrals to friends and family. Empirical evidence has generally supported the benefits of customer participation and has successfully linked it to service quality, customer satisfaction (Cermak, File, and Prince, 1994; Kelley, Skinner, and Donnelly, 1992; Kellogg, Youngdahl, and Bowen, 1997), as well as purchase intentions (Cermak et al., 1994).

Despite the obvious advantages of customer participation, it can also have negative effects on organizations and customers. For example, customers' behaviors have been identified as a major source of their own dissatisfaction and negative perceptions of the service delivery process (Bitner, Booms, and Mohr, 1994; Mohr and Bitner, 1995). By behaving in ways inconsistent with their expected role, customers may be an impediment to the actualization of quality service. Customers who do not perform in the desired way can become angry and frustrated and may require additional organizational resources, therefore increasing costs for the organization. For example, an airline passenger who did not prepare for a long flight by bringing reading materials and wearing warm clothing may become restless and start complaining to the crew. Especially in e-businesses, customers who do not perform adequately often make use of online or telephone help lines, therefore increasing the costs to service organizations.

The importance of citizenship behavior in service deliveries is also highlighted by the heterogeneity of services, a characteristic of services discussed earlier. It is often difficult for service organizations to prescribe and standardize the delivery of services. Unlike products, no two service deliveries are identical due to the human element involved in the delivery process. Therefore, extra-role behavior of employees may play a critical role in the service delivery. Bitner et al.'s studies (1990, 1994) concluded that unexpected, unsolicited employee behavior towards customers was a key determinant of exceptional customer service. This evidence further emphasizes the importance of studying citizenship behavior in service deliveries.

Researchers have identified some ways to effectively manage customers as partial employees. Past research has mostly focused on the process of socialization as one possible way to manage customers' involvement (Goodwin, 1988; Kelley, 1992; Kelley et al., 1992; Rodie, and Kleine, 2000). Customer socialization can take place by means of organizational literature, environmental cues, reinforcement, realistic service previews, observation of other customers, and setting expectations for service delivery (Kelley, 1992; Rodie and Kleine, 2000). These strategies can be used to manage customers' involvement by providing them with necessary behavioral tools as well as realistic expectations. On the other hand, customers' motivation to participate in the service delivery process can be managed by creating incentives, making procedures more efficient, and providing customers with more perceived control (Rodie and Kleine, 2000). For example, the introduction of teller fees in most banks can be seen as a disincentive for using tellers and, consequently, as an incentive for using automated teller machines.

Several other theoretical approaches to managing customer behavior have been proposed, even though no empirical data is available yet to support their claims. For example, Bowen and Jones (1986) used transaction cost analysis to create guidelines for how firms should manage exchanges with customers. According to their model, the level of customer involvement should depend on performance ambiguity and goal congruency. Performance ambiguity refers to the difficulty of one party in evaluating the performance of the other (e.g., lawyers, auto mechanics). Goal congruency refers to the difficulty of establishing equitable agreements between customers and service providers due to different and incompatible goals. According to Bowen and Jones' (1986) framework, service organizations should seek the highest customer participation when performance ambiguity is high and goals are congruent, whereas customer involvement should be minimized when performance ambiguity is low.

Goodwin (1988), on the other hand, provides a conceptual framework that classifies services by the number of customers in the service setting and the level of commitment of the provider and customer. According to her framework, customers' motivation to learn new behavior is highest when multiple customers are present in the service setting (because other customers can serve as role models) and when commitment is high. On the other hand, customer socialization is most difficult when commitment is low and the service is delivered on a one-to-one basis.

### **DISTINGUISHING CUSTOMER IN-ROLE AND EXTRA-ROLE BEHAVIORS**

The various approaches to managing customer behavior discussed above support the usefulness of the conceptualization of customers as partial employees and co-producers of service organizations. However, the construct of customer behavior remains unclear, as no attempt has been made to identify different facets of customer behavior and their influence on service organizations. Most importantly, current conceptualizations of customer participation and co-production usually include behaviors that are expected and necessary for the successful completion of the service delivery (e.g., filling out a deposit slip for a bank transaction) and, at the same time, behaviors that are neither required nor expected (e.g., helping other employees or customers, recommending a business to a friend). In the employee domain, over 20 years of OCB research has shown that a distinction between required in-role behavior (i.e., task performance) and voluntary extra-role behavior of employees (i.e., organizational citizenship behavior) has been fruitful for both academics as well as practicing managers. However, such framework has yet to be applied to the domain of customer behavior in the service management literature. Therefore, we propose a typology of customer behavior that distinguishes between in-role and extra-role behaviors. The typology parallels the current management literature on the distinctions between employee in-role and extra-role behavior.

Whereas customer coproduction has received some empirical attention in the research literature, there is virtually no research on customer citizenship behavior. Vaughan and Renn (1999) offer the most comprehensive attempt to date to conceptualize citizenship behaviors in service organizations. However, consistent with the current OCB literature, these authors only focus on employee behavior and not on customer behavior. Nevertheless, some preliminary empirical evidence for their model is provided by two studies by Ford (1995) and Bettencourt (1997). Ford (1995) observed and surveyed customers of grocery stores in order to assess customer discretionary behavior, a construct that he defines as behavior a customer voluntarily performs, beyond purchasing products or services, which may be helpful or harmful to an organization. Results show that employees' courteous behavior, which was assessed with three items of commitment and three items of helpfulness, is related to customer commitment and that customer mood partially predicts helping behavior.

Bettencourt (1997) also surveyed grocery store customers to examine helpful, discretionary behaviors of customers, a construct she labeled customer voluntary performance. However, no clear distinction between in-role and extra-role behavior is made, as customer loyalty, customer participation; and cooperation were all considered voluntary

performance in her study. Results show partial support for relationships between customer satisfaction, commitment, and perceived support for customers and the various types of customer voluntary performance.

In the few empirical studies available, there is conceptual overlap as to how to define and measure customer behaviors. To achieve conceptual clarity, we base our definition and conceptualization of customer citizenship behavior (hereafter, referred to as CCB) on the OCB literature, therefore drawing important theoretical connections to an existing body of literature. Thus, we define CCB as voluntary and discretionary behavior of individual customers that is not directly or explicitly expected or rewarded but that, in the aggregate, leads to higher service quality and promotes the effective functioning of service organizations. Customer citizenship behavior only encompasses behavior of customers and is conceptually distinct from customer co-production although we would expect these constructs to be statistically correlated. Whereas customer co-production refers to behaviors necessary and expected for a successful service completion, CCB is not required for successful service deliveries and is performed at the sole discretion of the customer.

Although the proposed construct of CCB is a relatively new construct, some preliminary empirical evidence for the usefulness of this construct is provided by Groth (2003). In his study, a scale of CCB is developed and results demonstrate CCB and customer coproduction to have differential sets of predictors. Using the Q-Sort technique (Stephenson, 1953) as a multistage process of scale development, Groth (2003) identifies three dimensions of CCB: (1) providing feedback to the organization, (2) helping other customers, and (3) recommendations. Although these dimensions were derived empirically, they parallel and are theoretically based on existing OCB dimensions.

The first dimension of CCB, *providing feedback* to the service business, can be defined as providing solicited or unsolicited information to a service organization, either negative or positive in nature, which helps the organization to improve their service delivery process in the long run. This construct broadly parallels the civic virtue dimension of OCB, which refers to one's responsibility to participate and be involved in the life of an organization (Graham, 1991). Evidence for the existence of such a construct in CCB is found in Bettencourt (1997) who suggests that active and responsible customer behavior in the governance and development of the organization is a major form of customer voluntary performance. Furthermore, Wolstenholme (1998) suggests that customers can greatly benefit an organization by playing the role of an organizational consultant. That means, because customers usually see normal and unaltered behavior of employees, their suggestions, feedback, and critique helps organizations to better their service. Providing feedback is clearly a voluntary behavior and not part of the regular service delivery. However, because most customers have generally a direct interest in better delivery, their willingness to engage in such behavior becomes an important component in understanding customer citizenship behavior.

The second dimension of CCB, *helping other customers*, closely parallels the altruism dimension found in OCB. Altruism refers to behavior directed and intentionally aimed at helping a specific person, usually another employee (Smith, Organ, and Near, 1983). In a service environment, customers' helping behavior is most likely to be directed at other customers, as opposed to service employees, for several reasons. First of all, other customers are usually in most need of help as they are often confused about certain aspects of their service experience (e.g., where and how to pay, whom to ask for help, etc.). This is especially

true about Internet service deliveries where roles are less defined and many customers lack experience of the service delivery process. Secondly, employees are less likely to be in a position in which they appear to need the help of customers and are therefore less likely to be the target of customers' helping behavior. This prediction is consistent with role theory in service settings (Solomon et al., 1985) which suggests that each participant in a service interaction (the customer and the employee) play a closely scripted role in which each knows what is expected of each other. These ritualized behaviors are usually learned by customers and employees, making it less likely that a customer will deviate from his or her role in helping an employee. However, according to Bitner et al. (1994), the roles of other customers in the service environment are less defined, making spontaneous helping behavior more likely.

The third dimension of CCB, *recommendations*, refers to recommending the business to others, usually friends or family. This voluntary behavior indicates allegiance to and promotion of the organization's interests beyond individual interests (Bettencourt, 1997). Ample support for this construct can be found in the marketing literature, where the concepts of customer loyalty and customer word-of-mouth have been explored in depth (Swan and Oliver, 1989; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996). Recommendations and referrals are beneficial to service businesses because they develop a positive image, promote the products and services, and serve to increase the size of the customer base. Although there is no exact parallel of this construct in OCB, it is conceptually similar to civic virtue, which, as discussed above, generally refers to behavior that indicates one's responsibility to participate and being involved in the life of an organization (Graham, 1991). Everyday experience suggests that giving recommendations is behavior that many customers frequently engage in, even though it is completely voluntary and is not expected by the organization.

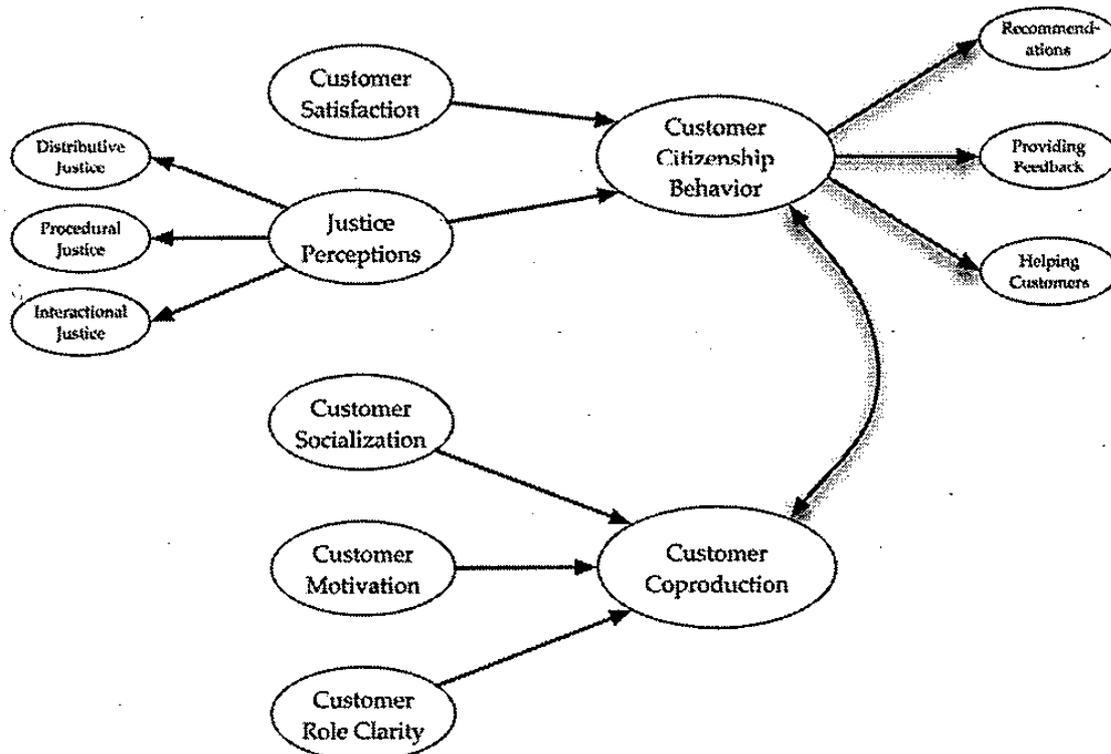


Figure 2. Proposed Theoretical Model of Antecedents of Customer Behaviors

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence discussed above, which suggests that customer behaviors in service deliveries can be conceptualized as consisting of separate in-role (i.e., coproduction) and extra-role (i.e., CCB) behaviors, we suggest the theoretical model illustrated in Figure 2. The components and relationships of the model and resulting propositions are discussed in detail below.

### ANTECEDENTS OF CUSTOMER COPRODUCTION

#### Customer Socialization

When employees enter a new organization, organizational socialization, the process of 'learning the ropes' and becoming acquainted with organizational processes and values, plays an important part in the process (Bauer, Morrison, and Callister, 1998; Saks and Ashforth, 1997; Van Maanen and Schein, 1979). Organizational socialization describes the "process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role" (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979, p. 211). Employees learn about simple everyday procedures not specifically addressed in formal training sessions as well as complex and tacit processes of relationships and power structures. Not surprisingly, the process of organizational socialization has been linked to job performance in that employees who are more effectively socialized by the organization are more effective on their jobs (Adkins, 1995; Ashforth and Saks, 1996; Bauer and Green, 1998; Morrison, 1993; Saks, 1995).

Similar to employees, customers who actively participate in service delivery and act as partial employees need to be properly socialized. In order to become effective coproducers, customers need to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to adequately perform the tasks required during coproduction. For example, an airline passenger needs to understand proper check-in procedures, by retaining and producing proper documentation, such as boarding passes, throughout the process. This behavior is required in order to effectively coproduce the service. At the same time, properly 'trained' customers will know that meals may not be served on short flights and will come prepared with reading materials and travel accessories for longer flights. By doing so, they are essentially more effective coproducers than less prepared travelers who need to frequently interrupt flight attendants or other passengers.

As pointed out by Bowen (1986) and Goodwin (1988), the similarities between employee and customer socialization are apparent. For example, Lengnick-Hall (1996) and Kelley (1992) suggest a number of different socialization techniques for customers. Specifically, she suggests training and incentives to effectively communicate to customers the nature of their role as coproducers. Rodie and Kleine (2000) demonstrate the effectiveness of using 'realistic service previews' as a socialization technique for customers. By giving customers realistic expectations as to what to expect and not to expect, they invariably gain knowledge about their role as coproducers of the service. For example, a realistic service preview may be useful for first-time customers of no-frills airlines who, through their past experiences, may have come to expect seat assignments and meals and drinks even on short flights. Customer socialization certainly does not need to be an elaborate and extensive process. In fairly simple and straightforward service situations, signs and environmental cues are often sufficient. For

example, a 'Please wait to be seated' sign may be all that is needed in order to properly socialize customers in a restaurant as to how to behave upon arrival.

Despite the apparent similarities between employee socialization and customer socialization, empirical evidence of the socialization process in the customer domain is rare (c.f. Kelley, 1992; Kelley et al., 1992). Kelley et al. (1992) show that customers who have been socialized more effectively are more efficient coproducers and hold more favorable perceptions of the organization and the service delivery process. That is, those customers who are clear about the behaviors expected of them and who have been trained to perform them effectively are more successful coproducers.

The theories reviewed here suggest that customer socialization should be a strong predictor of customer coproduction behaviors. Therefore, we propose:

**Proposition 1:** Customers' level of socialization will predict the frequency of their coproduction behaviors during service delivery.

### *Customer Motivation*

Besides customers' ability to coproduce a service, their motivation to do so is expected to be an equally important predictor of coproduction behaviors. Although empirical evidence is limited, a conceptual link between customers' motivation to be engaged in the delivery process and its outcomes has been proposed previously (e.g., Bowen and Waldman, 1999; Rodie and Kleine, 2000). Bowen (1986) has identified rewards and incentives as a critical component of effective coproduction behaviors. That is, unless customers see a personal benefit in engaging in the service process (e.g., lower prices, reduced wait time, increased efficiency of service delivery), they will be less willing to invest effort and resources in doing so. As an example, many customers have become accustomed to using ATMs because of their after-hours availability, the reduction of waiting lines, and in some cases, fees for using personal tellers for routine transactions. These characteristics serve as incentives to use ATMs, despite the fact that they require more coproduction behaviors than a face-to-face transaction with a bank employee. Rodie and Kleine (2000) demonstrate that rewards can often come in form of psychological benefits to customers in that perceptions of increased control over the service outcome are sufficient to motivate customers to be coproducers.

Goodwin (1988) provides further evidence of the link between customer motivation and customer coproduction by developing a framework to predict under what circumstances customers will be more motivated to learn new skills and procedures (e.g., frequency of use, level of commitment, presence of other customers during service delivery). Goodwin (1988) demonstrates that the level of customer motivation will have a direct impact on the productivity (i.e., effective coproduction behaviors) as well as overall service quality.

Based on this evidence, we propose the following:

**Proposition 2:** Customers' level of motivation will predict the frequency of their coproduction behaviors during service delivery.

### *Customer Role Clarity*

A final expected predictor of customer coproduction is customers' role clarity. According to Bowen and colleagues (Bowen, 1986; Bowen and Waldman, 1999), role clarity refers to a customer's understanding of how to perform a role. In other words, customers must

understand what they are expected to do. As discussed by Rodie and Kleine (2000), main sources of role clarity are a customer's own experiences with a particular provider, experiences in similar service settings or different settings in a similar context, as well as observations of other customers' behavior. Although the link between customer role clarity and customer coproduction has been repeatedly proposed on conceptual and theoretical grounds (e.g., Bowen, 1986; Bowen and Waldman, 1999; Goodwin, 1988; Lengnick-Hall, 1996; Rodie and Kleine, 2000), we were not able to locate an empirical test of this relationship.

Consequently, we propose:

**Proposition 3:** Customers' level of role clarity will predict the frequency of their coproduction behaviors during service delivery.

## Antecedents of Customer Citizenship Behaviors

### *Customer Satisfaction*

Ample of evidence in the OCB literature suggests a strong link between employee satisfaction and OCB (LePine, Erez, and Johnson, 2002; Organ and Ryan, 1995). As suggested by Organ (1977, 1988b), extra-role behaviors, such as OCB, can be dispensed at the free will of employees and are therefore more strongly related to job satisfaction than required in-role behaviors. The theoretical link between employee satisfaction and OCB is based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which suggests that employee behavior consists of both economic and social exchanges. Economic exchanges refer to formal, transactional exchanges in which the value of what is exchanged is based on a quid pro quo basis (Rousseau and Parks, 1993). Social exchanges, on the other hand, refer to relationships based on trust and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and entail benefits and future obligations that are rarely specified or explicitly negotiated. Thus, providing benefits is a voluntary action. As pointed out by Konovsky and Pugh (1994), parties in social exchanges allow for reciprocation through discretionary extra-role behaviors.

Social exchange theory has been used as a conceptual foundation for a large body of research on perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa (1986) suggest that high levels of perceived organizational support, that is, beliefs concerning the extent to which one's organizational values and cares for its employees, create feelings of future obligations. On a more dyadic level, leader-member exchange theory suggests that interpersonal relationships, based on norms of reciprocity, evolve between supervisors and subordinates where each party offers something the other party sees as valuable (Graen and Scandura, 1987). In addition, Organ (1988a, 1990) used social exchange theory to explain why individuals engage in behaviors that are neither formally rewarded nor contractually enforceable. Organ (1988a) suggests that employees define their relationship with organizations as social rather than economic exchanges, and that perceived obligations towards the organization manifest themselves in discretionary behaviors, such as OCB.

Some have argued that, similar to employees, customers view their relationship with an organization as a social exchange (e.g., Bowen, 1990; Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, and Gutman, 1985; Vaughan and Renn, 1999). This view is consistent with growing evidence that

customers can be conceptualized as organizational members (e.g., appraising performance of service employees, Bowen and Schneider, 1985, or as a source of new ideas for business strategies, Juttner and Wehrh, 1994). Applying social exchange theory to the domain of customers may help service organizations to identify antecedents of CCB that allow them to better understand how to manage their customers effectively.

As noted earlier, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) suggest that parties in social exchanges form relationships based on mutual trust and the fulfillment of perceived obligations. If individuals are satisfied with the degree to which the other party is "living up to its promises," they are themselves more likely to respond with reciprocal behavior. As noted by Konovsky and Pugh (1994), one common way for employees to reciprocate in an organizational setting is to engage in extra-role behavior. Evidence for this link is provided in the OCB literature, where a relationship between job satisfaction and OCB has been demonstrated (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff and Williams, 1986). Those employees satisfied with their job are more likely to engage in discretionary behaviors that benefit their organization as a whole. As discussed earlier, Organ (1977, 1988b) suggests that employees use OCB behaviors to reciprocate because they are free to vary those behaviors, but are more constrained in varying other work-related behaviors (e.g., task performance) because deviating from such behaviors may lead to negative consequences (e.g., low performance reviews, termination).

Similar to employees, customers develop parallel social exchange relationships with organizations. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) have shown that customers have clear expectations prior to engaging in service deliveries and that their satisfaction will be a function of whether or not those expectations were met. Satisfied customers are then more likely to return to the business and develop long-lasting relationships with the organization or with individual employees (Berry, 1995; Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger, 1997). And, similar to employees, customers are also constrained in that many behaviors could negatively impact the service outcome (e.g., providing one's payment information during Internet transactions). On the other hand, they can freely vary discretionary behaviors, such as CCBs, because doing so does not negatively affect the service outcome (e.g., helping other customers).

Consequently, findings from the OCB literature can be applied to customers in that a relationship between satisfaction and citizenship behaviors can be expected during service deliveries. In other words, satisfied customers will be more likely to reciprocate behavior by engaging in extra-role behavior.

Hence, we propose:

**Proposition 4:** Customers' levels of satisfaction will predict the frequency of their customer citizenship behaviors (CCB) during service delivery.

### *Customer Perceptions of Justice*

Organizational justice research has identified several dimensions of justice: Distributive justice, people's perceptions of the fairness of outcomes they receive; procedural justice, the perceived fairness of the procedures used to make decisions; and interactional justice, the perceived fairness of the decision makers' behavior as experienced. While early research on organizational justice focused mainly on distributive justice (Greenberg, 1982), subsequent

research has demonstrated the independence and importance of procedural (Folger and Greenberg, 1985; Greenberg, 1986) as well as interactional (Bies and Moag, 1986) justice.

The importance of justice in service organizations has only recently received attention in the management literature. Clemmer (1993) developed a conceptual framework that identified the influence of service delivery components on organizational justice dimensions. In her study, customers described fair or unfair service experiences across a variety of different service settings. Although not explicitly tested, her results suggest that customers' perceptions of all three dimensions of justice will directly impact their subsequent behaviors towards the service organization. Similarly, Vaughan and Renn (1999) developed a theoretical model in which employee perceptions of justice are a direct antecedent of their customer-service-oriented citizenship behaviors. The authors partly base their model on the OCB literature, which provides further support for the suggested relationship between justice perceptions and citizenship behaviors. A number of studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between organizational justice and OCB (e.g., Moorman, 1991; Farh, Podsakoff, and Organ, 1990). That is, those employees who perceive higher levels of justice are more likely to engage in *voluntary behaviors towards their coworkers or the organization*. Given the increasing engagement of customers in the service process and given the conceptualization by many service organizations of customers as human resources of organizations, we expect a similar relationship in the customer domain.

Therefore, we propose the following:

**Proposition 5:** Customers' perceptions of justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) will predict the frequency of their customer citizenship behaviors (CCB) during service delivery.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to broaden the OCB literature to the customer domain by developing a theoretical framework that distinguishes between customer in-role behaviors (customer coproduction) and extra-role behaviors (customer citizenship behaviors). We base this theoretical distinction on the OCB literature (Organ, 1988a) which similarly distinguishes employee extra-role behaviors from in-role behaviors. However, whereas recent OCB research has focused on customers only as potential recipients of OCB, our model conceptualizes customers not just as recipients but also as senders of citizenship behaviors. Based on research by Groth (2003) which has identified three dimensions of CCB, recommendations, providing feedback to the organization, and helping other customers, we expand and clarify a nomological network and posit specific research propositions of customer behaviors and their antecedents. Specifically, customer socialization, customer motivation, and customer role clarity are proposed as antecedents of customer coproduction, and customer satisfaction and perceptions of justice are proposed as antecedents of CCB in our model.

Our theoretical model is based on the central premise that customers who actively participate in service delivery can be conceptualized by organizations as partial employees and co-producers in service organizations. We reviewed evidence from the management and marketing literatures that supports this claim and discussed the unique features of services

that highlight the importance of examining extra-role behaviors within the context of customer-employee interactions.

The study of CCB and coproduction behaviors has a variety of practical implications for managers. Most importantly, organizations may benefit from actively managing customers' perceptions of which behaviors are required and which are voluntary. Managers should not necessarily assume that behaviors they consider as required coproduction behaviors are also viewed as such by customers. In other words, customers may perform certain behaviors during their service experience because they want to be 'good soldiers' whereas managers may expect those same behaviors as part of the service delivery. Anecdotal evidence suggest that expectations of customers and management are often incongruent, therefore managers may be well advised to assess customer perceptions regarding the various customer behaviors that are part of service delivery. Similarly, managers may be well advised to actively manage customer expectations as to which behaviors their customers need to perform during service delivery. For example, we know of one well-known fast food restaurant which has hired 'customers' to dine at their facilities and then demonstratively perform various tasks in front of other customers (e.g., cleaning their tables, using the various trash bins). In other words, whereas customers may have considered these behaviors as CCB, the organization attempted to create an expectation that these behaviors should indeed be viewed as required coproduction behaviors.

In short, customers are increasingly coproducing services, and therefore the boundaries between employees and customers are blurring. As this occurs, it becomes increasingly important to view customers as resources and assets to organizations, as opposed to passive consumers who simply want to exchange money for services. Our theoretical model demonstrates that existing theories and frameworks from the organizational literature, most of which have been developed for employee behavior in traditional employment settings, can be meaningfully applied to customers.

Our framework can be strengthened by future research in a variety of areas. One such area is the examination of additional antecedents of CCB and coproduction behaviors. Although we attempted to identify to most crucial antecedents based on existing management and marketing research, there are undoubtedly other antecedents that need to be identified in future research. For example, it is likely that individual characteristics of customers, such as specific personality traits or a general propensity to help others, will likely be predictors of citizenship behaviors. Through the identification of other antecedents, our theoretical model can be further developed and increase in its descriptive power.

Another area in need of future research includes outcomes of customer behaviors. Whereas our current model is limited to the identification of antecedents of CCBs and coproduction, these behaviors likely have effects on various customer-related and employee-related outcomes not captured in our model. What specific effects does the performance of extra-role behaviors of customers have on organizational processes and on customers' perceptions of the service experience? How do CCB and coproduction behaviors influence the relationship between customers and organizations? Can helping other customers or providing feedback to the organization produce desirable as well as undesirable outcomes for an organization? These and other questions can be addressed by focusing future research on likely consequences of customer behaviors. Unfortunately, doing so was beyond the scope of this chapter.

A final area for future research we would like to draw attention to is antisocial customer behavior. Whereas CCB and coproduction behaviors focus exclusively on well-meaning customer behaviors aimed at positive outcomes, disgruntled, difficult, or abusive customer behaviors could be viewed as a counterforce to CCB. Whereas the great majority of customers are well-meaning, honest individuals, sometimes customers with unrealistic expectations or ill will go out of their way to harm a service employee or an organization. Thus, the flipside of CCB are antisocial behaviors that can cause great expense and damage to organizations. These behaviors parallel those in the management literature that focus on negative employee behaviors. For example, recent research by Lau, Au, and Ho (2003) has examined counterproductive behaviors such as personal, organizational, work, and contextual factors. Future research should identify antisocial customer behaviors as well as potential antecedents and outcomes of such behaviors so that managers have the necessary tools to protect their organization, employees, and customers from malicious customer behavior.

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