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Bridging Two Tales of Engagement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Employee Engagement and Customer Engagement in Service Contexts

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Bridging Two Tales of Engagement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Employee Engagement and Customer Engagement in Service Contexts

Structured Abstract

Article Classification: Research Paper

Keywords:

Employee engagement, customer engagement, meta-analysis, service-profit chain, service employee performance, service quality

Extended Abstract:

Purpose (mandatory): Employing a service-profit chain framework, this manuscript investigates the relationship between employee engagement (EE) and customer engagement (CE) within service contexts and explores how a mediating mechanism, service employee work performance (SEWP), links EE with CE.

Design/methodology/approach (mandatory): Meta-analytic procedures ascertain the magnitude of the relationship between EE and SEWP ($k = 102$, $\hat{\rho} = .45$) and between SEWP and three dimensions of CE: customer purchases ($k = 42$, $\hat{\rho} = .47$), customer knowledge ($k = 4$, $\hat{\rho} = .33$), and customer influence ($k = 7$, $\hat{\rho} = .42$). The current meta-analysis reports an effect size for the EE-overall SEWP relationship nearly 1.50 times greater than related extant meta-analyses.

Findings (mandatory): Results suggest SEWP, consisting of service employee task performance and contextual performance, serves as an important intervening mechanism between EE and CE, by considering nine dimensions of SEWP. Such findings suggest that to maximize SEWP, service employees must go beyond simply being satisfied in their work roles; instead, service employees must feel energized, find fulfillment and meaning, and be engrossed in their work to maximize the service they provide to customers.

Originality/value (mandatory) and practical implications: This research extends previous meta-analytic efforts, bridges the multi-disciplinary gap between EE and CE research, provides an empirical link allowing for informed decision making for managers and stakeholders, underscores the importance of service employees surpassing required job responsibilities to meet and exceed customer needs, and suggests an agenda for future service research integrating EE and CE.

Bridging Two Tales of Engagement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Employee Engagement and Customer Engagement in Service Contexts

For over twenty years, the notion of “engagement” has captivated both scholarly and practitioner audiences within the broader service literature. Employee engagement (EE) occurs when service employees possess high energy levels; are willing to invest in their work tasks; and experience a sense of enthusiasm, dedication, and pleasure while executing their work roles (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002). Customer engagement (CE) occurs when customers actively interact in a service relationship with a brand or organization and add value to the firm (Kumar and Pansari, 2016). Taken together, these two types of engagement link service employees with customers. Within both the practitioner (e.g., Kiron, 2014) and academic (e.g., Mittal *et al.*, 2018; Verleye *et al.*, 2016) literature, EE and CE have been shown to be strong predictors of firm performance by helping firms develop a competitive advantage, given service employees are essential for designing and engineering customer experiences (Rubin, 2016) and for influencing customers’ perceptions of service quality (Subramony *et al.*, 2021). However, despite the potentially intuitive and symbiotic relationship between employees and customers, to date there has been limited academic research focusing on the interrelationship between EE and CE (Salanova *et al.*, 2005; Kumar and Pansari, 2016).

The extant academic research within the broader service literature is emblematic of the “silo problem” (Madhavaram and Hunt, 2008) with academic research that has consequently led to multiple “tales” of engagement within the service context. For example, Bowden’s (2009) framework for the process of service engagement omits the role of employees as a critical antecedent of important customer-related outcomes. Similarly, van Doorn and colleagues’ (2010) framework of firm-level drivers of CE behavior overlooks the importance of individual

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3 employee attitudes as an antecedent to CE (e.g., Liao and Chuang, 2004). Within the
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5 management literature, a disproportionate amount of attention has been placed on clarifying the
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7 theoretical antecedents of EE (e.g., Kahn, 1990) at the expense of uniquely linking EE with
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9 customer-related outcomes, such as CE. When scholars consider EE and CE concurrently, they
10
11 tend to focus their investigations at the group- or organizational-level of analysis (e.g., Harter *et*
12
13 *al.*, 2002; Salanova *et al.*, 2005). Thus, an opportunity exists to clarify the relationship of
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15 individual-level EE on CE.
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20 According to the service-profit chain (S-PC) framework (Heskett *et al.*, 1994; Heskett *et*
21
22 *al.*, 1997), service employee attitudes directly influence service employee productivity. Given
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24 that research from organizational behavior considers employee performance to be
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26 multidimensional (e.g., Borman and Motowidlo, 1993; Williams and Anderson, 1991), the
27
28 present study employs an interdisciplinary approach bridging marketing, service management or
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30 marketing, and organizational behavior to understand how *service employee work performance*
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32 (*SEWP*) is a salient mediating mechanism between EE and CE. Therefore, the overall objective
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34 of this manuscript is to investigate the relationship between EE and CE across a variety of
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36 service contexts and to identify distinctions in SEWP that link the two constructs.
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41 To better understand the relationship between EE and CE, we employ a systematic
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43 review and meta-analysis. Meta-analytic methods allow researchers to synthesize results across
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45 studies to understand “the simpler patterns of relationships that underlie research literatures”
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47 (Hunter and Schmidt, 2004, p.17). Meta-analysis can help determine the magnitude and direction
48
49 of the relationship between EE and CE. Meta-analysis is appropriate to synthesize two related
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51 but often separated disciplines – management studies of EE and marketing studies of CE – that
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53 are connected by the focus on service employees. Given that the service domain is mature
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3 enough for meta-analytic investigations (e.g., Orsingher *et al.*, 2016), meta-analyses serve as a
4
5 first step toward identifying trends across the broader service literature and point to directions for
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7 theory building and empirical investigations.
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10 This manuscript makes several theoretically and managerially relevant contributions.
11
12 First, we provide an overview of the EE and CE constructs, identifying their unique roles in the
13
14 service literature streams. Second, employing a S-PC framework, we conduct meta-analytic
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16 analyses to ascertain the magnitude of the relationship between EE and CE, recognizing SEWP
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18 as a critical intervening mechanism linking these two constructs. Third, we consider SEWP to be
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20 multidimensional (e.g., Borman and Motowidlo, 1993; Williams and Anderson, 1991) and
21
22 investigate the unique relationships among EE and aspects of (1) service employee task
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24 performance, (2) service employee contextual performance, and (3) service employee
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26 counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Fourth, we consider three moderators consistent with
27
28 previous research on employee work performance, including (1) work performance as a
29
30 multidimensional construct (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993), (2) the extent to which service
31
32 employees engage in target-specific work behaviors exhibited toward internal organizational
33
34 actors and the technical core of the organization or external customers (e.g., Grandey *et al.*,
35
36 2010; Schneider *et al.*, 2005), and (3) the magnitude of the effect size when considering the
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38 rating source of SEWP (e.g., Ilies *et al.*, 2007). Figure 1 depicts the hypothesized relationships
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40 among the constructs in this study.
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Systematic Review of Engagement in a Service Context

Employee Engagement and Service Employees

Over the past two decades, EE has received significant attention predominantly in the organizational behavior, industrial-organizational psychology, and human resource management literature. EE has been defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002, p.74). Vigor describes how energized one feels about one’s work, while dedication and absorption describe finding fulfillment and meaning in and being engrossed in one’s work, respectively (Bakker *et al.*, 2008). While the three components of EE aggregate to form a second-order construct, researchers have investigated engagement at the dimension level (e.g., Kirves *et al.*, 2014). Overall, EE has been linked to increased job performance (Harter *et al.*, 2002), customer relationship management (Yuan *et al.*, 2012), customer orientation (Anaza and Rutherford, 2012), job satisfaction (Warr, 2012), organizational commitment (Llorens *et al.*, 2006), decreased turnover intentions (Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008) and actual employee turnover (Harter *et al.*, 2002).

While different authors have employed varying nomenclature to refer to engagement displayed by organizational employees, including *work engagement* (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002), *job engagement* (Rich *et al.*, 2010), and *employee engagement* (Harter *et al.*, 2002), in this manuscript the phrase *employee engagement (EE)* is used to refer to a psychological construct distinct from other job attitudes like job satisfaction or organizational commitment (Rich *et al.*, 2010), is motivational in nature (Kahn, 1990; Salanova *et al.*, 2005), and has been shown to positively influence task and contextual performance (Christian *et al.*, 2011). In this paper, we utilize Schaufeli *et al.*’s (2002) conceptualization of work engagement given the preeminent positioning it occupies within the extant literature.

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3 In the service context, EE provides a critical link between service employees and
4 customer service outcomes. Employees in customer-facing (i.e., frontline) service-providing jobs
5 directly influence customers in ways unlike many others (Subramony *et al.*, 2021). The work
6 attitudes of service employees toward their work or their organizations can affect how customers
7 perceive their relationships with the firm (Brown and Lam, 2008; Subramony and Pugh, 2015).
8 Consequently, it is believed that service employee attitudes, like EE, impact customers by
9 influencing service employees' work behaviors (Heskett *et al.*, 1994).

19 ***Customer Engagement and Service Employees***

21 While engagement has been explored from various perspectives within the marketing
22 literature, it has most often been considered from a customer perspective, as it relates to how
23 customers connect with organizations or brands – i.e., *customer engagement* (CE; Bowden,
24 2009; Verhoef *et al.*, 2010; Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Vivek *et al.*, 2014; Pansari and Kumar, 2017).
25 Notably, the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) has consistently listed CE as one of their
26 biannual key research priorities over the last decade (MSI, 2020).

35 Research strongly suggests CE is primarily positively-valenced (Hollebeek, 2011), and
36 the majority of investigations have conceptualized (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek, 2011) and
37 measured (Vivek *et al.*, 2014; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014; Verleye *et al.*, 2014) CE using a multi-
38 dimensional approach. CE can occur toward a firm as with codeveloping behaviors (Jaakkola
39 and Alexander, 2014) and toward employees via cooperation and compliance (Verleye *et al.*,
40 2014) as well as toward other customers through recommendations, knowledge sharing (Kumar
41 and Pansari, 2016), and word-of-mouth (organic, inter-customer communications regarding
42 characteristics of a product, service, or brand; De Matos and Rossi, 2008). Such influencing
43 behaviors and interactions may ultimately affect customers' expectations about, attitudes toward,
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3 and evaluations of the service encounters they experience (Azer and Alexander, 2018). Thus, CE
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5 is believed to assist in building an understanding of the overall customer experience (Hollebeek,
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7 2011; Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).
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10 Kumar and colleagues (2010) propose and empirically test (Kumar and Pansari, 2016) a
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12 behavioral measure of CE that includes both direct (e.g., transactional patronage) and indirect
13
14 (e.g., referral) components. The present study focuses on the behavioral manifestation of CE and
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16 considers the breadth of interactions introduced by Kumar *et al.* (2010) and expanded by Verleye
17
18 *et al.* (2016) and Kumar *et al.* (2019). Consistent with Kumar and Pansari's (2016) seminal
19
20 work, we conceptualize CE as a multidimensional construct consisting of *customer purchases*
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22 (financial contributions by customers to firm value as well as elements of customer satisfaction
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24 and loyalty), *customer knowledge* (active involvement by customers through providing feedback
25
26 or suggestions), *customer influence* (the digital and social impact of customers on others through
27
28 word-of-mouth), and *customer referrals* (brand promotions by customers for benefits or
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30 monetary incentives).
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36 **Service Employee Work Performance: A Key Link in The Service-Profit Chain**

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38 In this manuscript, we draw on the Service-Profit Chain (S-PC; Heskett *et al.*, 1994;
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40 Heskett *et al.*, 1997) as an overarching framework. This model links employee attitudes with
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42 customer attitudes and behaviors via employee work behaviors. In Heskett and colleagues'
43
44 (1994; 1997) seminal works, employee satisfaction and loyalty were identified as two employee
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46 attitudes that predicted employee productivity or "the quality as well as the quantity of service
47
48 produced" (Heskett *et al.*, 1994, p.10). In the S-PC, employee productivity predicted customer
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50 outcomes such as customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Consistent with previous meta-
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52 analyses of the S-PC (e.g., Hogreve *et al.*, 2017; Hong *et al.*, 2013), in this study we consider EE
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3 as an employee attitude that has been shown to influence employee work behaviors, broadly
4 characterized as employee productivity, and examine distinctions of SEWP identified across the
5 management literature.
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10 Prior research has highlighted the critical importance and influence of service employees
11 on several stakeholders (Subramony *et al.*, 2021) and on customers' evaluations of performance
12 (Zablah *et al.*, 2012) and service-oriented outcomes (Salanova *et al.*, 2005; Menguc *et al.*, 2016),
13 especially as they relate to perceptions of service quality (Bitner *et al.*, 1990). Furthermore, as
14 customers interact with firms over time, service employees become "a part of the overall
15 customer experience and... constitute specific touch points along the customer journey" (Lemon
16 and Verhoef, 2016, p.74). Consistent with the S-PC, service employees, as liaisons of the firm,
17 are expected to deliver on the firm's promises and act as organizational ambassadors responsible
18 for leaving lasting impressions (Auh *et al.*, 2016) for important indirect (e.g., financial
19 performance via CE; Mittal *et al.*, 2018) and customer-related outcomes such as loyalty
20 (Salanova *et al.*, 2005).
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35 CE does not only occur dyadically (between the firm and customers) but it also has an
36 interactive and co-creative network effect such that interactions with and ties to other network
37 actors (e.g., employees) are critical (Fehrer *et al.*, 2018). Research suggests higher CE levels are
38 likely in interactions with more direct employee-customer contact (i.e., frontline services)
39 (Wangenheim *et al.*, 2007). These positive interactions can motivate customers to engage in
40 additional value-creating behaviors for the firm via increased positive word-of-mouth (Kumar
41 and Pansari, 2016) and customer loyalty (Salanova *et al.*, 2005). Consistent with recent research
42 (Palmatier *et al.*, 2017), we posit that exploring CE related to employee performance in a service
43 context is of strategic importance to service management and marketing.
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3 Given that customers and employees are important value-creating stakeholders that
4 enable firms to create sustainable strategic advantages (Mittal *et al.*, 2018), understanding the
5 theoretical premise underlying employee-customer interactions is warranted. However, the
6 majority of existing studies focusing on CE have failed to address its theoretical foundation
7 (Bowden, 2009). Consequently, in explicating the nature of CE, marketing researchers primarily
8 frame CE from the perspective of co-creative value exchanges between various actors
9 (Alexander *et al.*, 2018; Li *et al.*, 2018; Kumar *et al.*, 2019). However, no fewer than six
10 theoretical frameworks have been explored in elucidating the concept of CE in marketing
11 (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Brodie and Hollebeek, 2011; Vivek *et al.*, 2014; Verleye *et al.*, 2014;
12 Harmeling *et al.*, 2017; Kumar *et al.*, 2019). Broadly, these frameworks focus on relationship-
13 building efforts among firms, service employees, and customers and how these service
14 interactions ultimately affect actors' attitudes and behaviors as well as important performance
15 outcomes. The present research aims to unify and address these inconsistencies by applying the
16 S-PC as an overarching explanatory framework for the proposed relationships.

17 ***Employee Engagement and Service Employee Work Performance***

18 Consistent with previous meta-analytic conceptualizations of the service-profit chain
19 (e.g., Hong *et al.*, 2013; Hogreve *et al.*, 2017), we adopt a broad categorization of SEWP. Within
20 the extant management literature, SEWP can be distinguished in three ways. *Task performance*
21 refers to service employee behaviors directed toward completing tasks and functions that are
22 core to one's job or core to the functioning of one's organization (Williams and Anderson,
23 1991). *Contextual performance* refers to voluntary service employee behaviors that go beyond
24 the scope of one's job but are crucial to the overall functioning of one's organization (Borman
25 and Motowidlo, 1993). Finally, service employees may engage in *counterproductive work*
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3 behaviors (CWB): that is, those behaviors that may cause harm to the organization, including
4 “aggression, interpersonal conflict, sabotage, and theft” (Fox *et al.*, 2001, p.291). It should be
5
6 noted that while the forms of SEWP may be related, they are not necessarily dependent on each
7
8 other (Williams and Anderson, 1991).
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12 Previous meta-analytic findings suggest EE relates to both task and contextual
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14 performance (Christian *et al.*, 2011). Theoretically, these relationships occur due to engaged
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16 employees’ ability to pour themselves – their physical, cognitive, affective, and social resources
17
18 – completely into their work role and the organization that employs them (Kahn, 1990). So not
19
20 only do engaged employees invest resources into their jobs to gain further resources (i.e., higher
21
22 performance ratings, promotions, raises, etc.), but also to support the organization. This occurs
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24 because engaged employees’ task performance supports the values and goals of the organization,
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26 makes employees more vigilant about not just their individual jobs but also the organization as a
27
28 whole, and strengthens the social connections between employees that create positive work
29
30 environments (Kahn, 1990; Rich *et al.*, 2010). Thus, contextual performance provides engaged
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32 employees more opportunities to invest their energy into behaviors that will lead to additional
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34 opportunities to gain more resources. Finally, given research suggests individuals with high
35
36 levels of EE are less likely to engage in CWB (Sulea *et al.*, 2012), we predict a negative
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38 association between EE and CWB.
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45 *Hypothesis 1. A positive relationship exists between EE and SEWP.*

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47 *Hypothesis 2. A negative relationship exists between EE and CWB.*

48 49 **Service Employee Work Performance and Customer Engagement**

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51 As service employees engage in work behaviors that yield productivity and quality,
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53 customers will value a firm’s service offerings and respond with positive attitudes, namely
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3 customer satisfaction and loyalty (Heskett *et al.*, 1997). Accordingly, customers' interactions
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5 with the firm can go beyond a transactional perspective with the ultimate goal of establishing
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7 long-term relationships with companies and their representatives (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Van Doorn
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9
10 *et al.*, 2010).

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12 As noted by Heskett *et al.* (1997), "the quality of the processes for delivering results,
13
14 including the attitude of those in direct contact with customers, is important" (p.17). Put
15
16 differently, engaged employees make greater resource investments, allowing them to provide
17
18 better SEWP. Consequently, customers perceive this superior performance, which has the
19
20 potential to increase their own resource contributions (e.g., time, effort, knowledge, attention,
21
22 etc.). Accordingly, co-created and mutually beneficial experiences in which value occurs and
23
24 strategic benefits are derived for all parties are necessary for CE to occur (Vargo and Lusch,
25
26 2016). This aligns with the idea of SEWP acting as a catalyst for CE. When engaged service
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28 employees demonstrate dedication to their work, are absorbed in the moment, and can harness
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30 personal energy, they are likely to engage in behaviors valued by their organization, including
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32 task and contextual performance. Consistent with the S-PC, customers are more likely to
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34 experience superior service and positively reciprocate toward the organization through increased
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36 purchases, referrals, influence, or knowledge.
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42 *Hypothesis 3. A positive relationship exists between SEWP and overall CE (3a) and,*
43
44 *specifically, between SEWP and the four dimensions of CE: (3b) customer purchases,*
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46 *(3c) customer knowledge, (3d) customer influence, and (3e) customer referrals.*

49 ***Moderating Influences of the EE-SEWP-CE Relationship***

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51 *Target Foci of SEWP.* Task performance and contextual performance have been
52
53 distinguished further within the broader service literature, as service employee work behaviors
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3 may be directed toward different foci (Schneider *et al.*, 2005). For example, task performance
4 and contextual performance may be directed internally toward work colleagues and the
5 organization as a whole or externally toward customers. In the service context, EE has been
6 found to positively relate to both organization- and customer-targeted SEWP. Regarding task
7 performance, employees in the retail-banking sector who reported higher engagement resulting
8 from higher perceptions of organizational resources also exhibited increased productivity, which
9 led to greater customer satisfaction (Lee *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, supervisor support of customer
10 service representatives in the apparel sector led to higher levels of EE and customers reported
11 that these engaged frontline employees performed their jobs more effectively (Menguc *et al.*,
12 2013). EE has also been found to positively relate to contextual performance. Hotel employees in
13 Spain reported higher organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) as their engagement increased
14 and their engagement predicted OCB more than identification with their employer (Buil *et al.*,
15 2016). Similarly, employees in a hotel chain in China reported that supervisor behaviors not only
16 affected their engagement but that their subsequent engagement also directly related to whether
17 employees would exhibit extra-role behaviors to hotel customers (Lyu *et al.*, 2016). In the
18 service context, engagement levels of frontline employees matter because of the aforementioned
19 spillover effects between the employee and customers, and it is these relationships that are tested
20 in the present meta-analysis.
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44 *Hypothesis 4. The target of SEWP moderates the positive relationship between EE and*
45 *SEWP such that in service contexts, the relationship is strongest for customer-targeted*
46 *SEWP.*
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51 *Hypothesis 5. The target of SEWP moderates the positive relationship between SEWP*
52 *and CE such that in service contexts, the relationship is strongest for customer-targeted*
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3 *SEWP.*

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5 *Multidimensional Nature of SEWP.* Given the emphasis the S-PC places on
6
7 understanding how employee attitudes and behaviors impact customer attitudes and behaviors
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9 (Heskett *et al.*, 1994; Heskett *et al.*, 1997), the multidimensional nature of SEWP is a particularly
10
11 meaningful distinction within service literature. Because previous meta-analyses have
12
13 investigated the link between EE and employee performance (e.g., Christian *et al.*, 2011) and
14
15 employee job satisfaction and service quality (Brown and Lam, 2008), the present meta-analysis
16
17 seeks to expand beyond the traditional task performance vs. contextual performance dichotomy
18
19 and considers unique dimensions of employee work behavior. With regard to task performance,
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21 in this study we consider the moderating influences of four types of task performance that
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23 represent required service employee work behaviors: in-role behavior directed toward the
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25 organization (i.e., IRB, Williams and Anderson, 1991), service performance directed toward
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27 customers (e.g., Babin and Boles, 1998; Liao and Chuang, 2004), service recovery performance
28
29 (e.g., Boshoff and Allen, 2000), and sales performance (e.g., Behrman and Perreault, 1982).
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35 These four types of task performance are consistent with Borman and Motowidlo's
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37 (1993) conceptualization of required employee behaviors. They contend that task performance
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39 may either "contribute to the organization's technical core directly by implementing a part of its
40
41 technological process" (p.99) or "indirectly by providing needed materials or services" (p.99).
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43 Therefore, in this study, we characterize *task performance* as required employee behaviors
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45 directed toward the organization and not explicitly directed toward customers (e.g., Williams and
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47 Anderson, 1991). Conversely, *service performance*, *service recovery performance*, and *sales*
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49 *performance* are characterized as required employee behaviors explicitly directed toward
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51 customers (e.g., Babin and Boles, 1998).
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3 While management scholars have employed various conceptualizations to characterize
4 contextual performance, in this study, we distinguish among four types of contextual
5 performance: *organizational citizenship*, or *OCBs* directed toward one's colleagues or the
6 organization as a whole (Williams and Anderson, 1991); service employee *innovative work*
7 *behavior* (Janssen, 2000); service employee *proactivity* (Griffin *et al.*, 2007); and *customer*
8 *citizenship*, OCBs directed toward customers (e.g., prosocial customer service behaviors,
9 Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; customer-focused extra-role performance, Netemeyer and
10 Maxham, 2007). An important feature of contextual performance is that it is voluntary and
11 represents service employees going "above and beyond" required job duties. For example, when
12 service employees assist coworkers who return to work after being absent or who provide
13 advanced notice when they intend to be absent, they engage in organizational citizenship
14 (Williams and Anderson, 1991). Conversely, when service employees go "beyond the call of
15 duty" to assist customers or help satisfy a customer (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997, p.48), they
16 engage in customer citizenship. Service employees engage in contextual performance when they
17 complete extra-role and voluntary behavior that may be risky. Beyond citizenship behavior, we
18 consider service employee innovative work behavior and service employee proactivity as other
19 distinctions of contextual performance. *Innovative work behavior* is defined as the "intentional
20 creation, introduction and application of new ideas within a work role" (Janssen, 2000, p.288).
21 *Service employee proactivity* is defined as work behavior that "initiates change, is self-starting,
22 and future directed" (Griffin *et al.*, 2007, p.330). When service employees engage in innovative
23 or proactive behaviors, they go beyond what is expected work behavior. Accordingly, we
24 hypothesize the following:

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54 *Hypotheses 6. Positive relationships exist among EE and (6a) IRB, (6b) service*
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3 *performance, (6c) service recovery performance, (6d) sales performance, (6e) OCB, (6f)*
4 *innovative work behavior, (6g) proactivity, and (6h) customer citizenship.*

7
8 *Rating Source of SEWP.* Research suggests that due to common method variance, the
9
10 meta-analytic correlation between two constructs will be influenced when both constructs are
11
12 rated by the same source (Ilies *et al.*, 2007). In the present study, we predict that when EE and
13
14 SEWP are both rated by service employees, the effect size will be the greatest.

16
17 *Hypothesis 7. The positive relationship between EE and SEWP will be strongest when*
18
19 *both constructs are rated by service employees.*

22 **Meta-Analytic Investigation Linking Employee Engagement to Customer Engagement**

24
25 This meta-analysis builds on previous service research and bridges the multi-disciplinary
26
27 gap between management research on EE and marketing research on CE. Specifically, this meta-
28
29 analysis extends previous meta-analytic efforts by Christian *et al.* (2011) that sought to link EE
30
31 and work performance and by Brown and Lam (2008) that established a link between employee
32
33 job satisfaction and service quality. Similarly, this research links EE and CE through the bridging
34
35 influence of SEWP, serving to connect these disparate disciplines. Finally, by identifying the true
36
37 relationship first between EE and SEWP and second between SEWP and CE, this research
38
39 provides an empirical link between EE and CE, thus allowing for more informed decision-
40
41 making for managers and other organizational stakeholders.

45 ***Systematic Literature Search Overview***

47
48 Following Hunter and Schmidt (2004), we created a master file with all possible
49
50 combinations of search terms. These terms were related to employee engagement (e.g.,
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52 engagement, employee engagement, job engagement, work engagement, vigor, dedication,
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54 absorption), employee performance (e.g., performance, employee performance, job performance,
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3 work performance, in-role, extra-role, task performance, contextual performance, citizenship,
4 voice, creativity, employee innovation, counterproductive work behavior, devien*) and customer
5 engagement (e.g., customer engagement, customer engagement behaviors, customer service,
6 customer purchases, customer referrals, customer influence, customer knowledge, purchase
7 intentions, repatronage, satisfaction, loyalty, referrals, incentives, word-of-mouth, advocacy,
8 feedback) as well as to the research context (e.g., servic*, frontline, sales).
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17 To be included in the meta-analysis, a study (1) must be set in a service context, (2) must
18 be a peer-reviewed publication, completed dissertation, or refereed conference presentation, (3)
19 must be in the English language, 4) must include a measure of employee engagement and
20 employee performance or a measure of employee performance and customer engagement-related
21 outcomes, and (5) must be at the individual-level of analysis. More specifically, the following
22 qualifying criteria were used for studies measuring the EE to SEWP relationship when screening
23 articles. First, the study had to include a measure of psychological EE such as the Utrecht Work
24 Engagement Scale (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006) or 9-item short form (Schaufeli
25 *et al.*, 2006), among others. Additionally, eligible manuscripts were required to include at least
26 one behavioral measure of SEWP. This measure could be archival or come from a common
27 performance scale such as Williams and Anderson's (1991) in-role behavior scale, the
28 Organizational Citizenship Behavior scale (Smith *et al.*, 1983; Williams and Anderson, 1991;
29 Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000), or Babin and Boles' (1998) measure of service performance directed
30 toward customers. Moreover, the study must have been conducted in a service context (i.e.,
31 customer-facing service occupation) with examples including retail, call centers, hotels,
32 hospitals, or education, among others.
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54 Articles measuring the SEWP to CE relationship were screened using the following
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3 criteria. First, the article needed to include a behavioral measure of SEWP, similar to articles
4
5 measuring the EE to SEWP relationship. Second, the article needed to include a measure of CE
6
7 congruent with Kumar and Pansari's (2016) definition or with one of the representative
8
9 dimensions of CE. If the study included a different behavioral indicator of CE, it was saved and
10
11 reviewed to determine if it met the inclusion criteria. Finally, a service context was required for
12
13 inclusion. Any articles, refereed conference presentations, or dissertations published prior to
14
15 2021 were eligible for inclusion.
16
17

18
19 In addition to requiring that each article meet all the inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria
20
21 were defined. If any of the following exclusion criteria were met, the study was not included.
22
23 First, studies were required to be in a service context; that is, studies that measured employees
24
25 not working in a customer-facing job were excluded. Second, studies measuring EE or CE by
26
27 reverse coding burnout items were excluded. Studies were also excluded if the authors employed
28
29 a behavioral measure of EE, were qualitative, were published in a non-peer-reviewed journal, or
30
31 were duplicates (e.g., a conference proceeding that was later published as a journal publication).
32
33 In the case of duplicate articles, the journal publication was used in lieu of the conference
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35 proceeding. Overall, the majority of the excluded articles were omitted because they did not
36
37 study the variables of interest in a service context.
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41 42 ***Literature Search Process*** 43

44
45 All coauthors had prior experience with conducting meta-analyses or underwent formal
46
47 training regarding systematic review and meta-analytic data collection and coding processes.
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49 Two coauthors first performed 966 unique searches of abstracts, titles, and keywords in several
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51 databases (ABI-INFORM, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, PsycINFO, PsycArticles) limiting
52
53 manuscripts to full-text and peer-reviewed articles. The search process returned 4,662 results
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3 across numerous disciplines, including marketing, management, hospitality, healthcare, sports
4 science, tourism, education, and psychology. These were then filtered for duplicates as well as
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6 for non-English language manuscripts using first automation and then manual replication
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8 resulting in the elimination of 3,570 articles.
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12 Additionally, we conducted supplemental searches, including multi-disciplinary listserv
13 manuscript requests, a review of conference proceedings, and targeted Google Scholar searches,
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15 resulting in 853 articles for consideration. Unpublished works were identified through multi-
16
17 disciplinary listserv requests (e.g., Organizational Behavior OB Digest and AMA-affiliated
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19 ELMAR) and a review of conference proceedings from the past three years (e.g., AOM
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21 Proceedings and AMA Proceedings). Targeted Google Scholar searches were conducted utilizing
22
23 combinations of the original keywords with the first five pages (i.e., 50 articles) of titles and
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25 abstracts considered for possible inclusion. Filtering for duplicates resulted in 410 articles for
26
27 review.
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33 Three authors reviewed the combined 1,502 abstracts and titles according to the primary
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35 inclusion criteria identified previously resulting in the elimination of 893 articles. The remaining
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37 609 full-text articles were reviewed by two authors based on the aforementioned inclusion and
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39 exclusion criteria with the added inclusion requirement of a correlation matrix, resulting in the
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41 exclusion of 464 articles. The remaining 145 articles were verified by a third author and
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43 identified as eligible for coding. Figure 2 provides a flowchart of the meta-analysis search
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45 process.
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Literature Search Results

Initial inclusion results yielded 145 total studies for the EE-SEWP and the SEWP-CE relationship. The final database included 102 independent samples measuring EE to SEWP and 43 measuring SEWP to CE. Given that Hunter and Schmidt (2004) recommend a minimum of three samples to calculate meta-analytic results, we were unable to assess a direct relationship between EE and CE or a mediated relationship between EE and CE through SEWP.

Coding Procedures

All coders had previous experience conducting meta-analytic reviews or were trained for this project. Two authors coded all data, which was then confirmed by a third author well-versed in coding procedures. Inter-rater reliability was calculated by having all coders review and code a series of articles spanning both relationships and different research designs. The few disagreements were resolved via discussion. For all articles, coded data included the country in which data were collected, if the data came from customers or employees, the industry in which data were collected, average sample age, percent of sample that was male, whether the design was cross-sectional or longitudinal, time between data collections (if applicable), the name, the data collection source, and the measure used for all independent and dependent variables as well as the sample size, correlation coefficient, reliability, and reliability measure (e.g., alpha) of all variables.

Meta-Analytic Method

We used psychometric meta-analytic methods to analyze the data and, therefore, corrected for measurement error (Hunter and Schmidt, 2004). If one study provided more than one relevant effect size for the same construct from the same sample, the effect sizes and corresponding reliability estimates were averaged. Although the vast majority of the included

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3 studies provided reliability estimates, not all did. If none was provided, we imputed the average
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5
6 relatability estimate. All analyses were at the individual level. The observed mean estimate (\bar{r}_o),
7
8 as well as the measurement error corrected one ($\hat{\rho}$), were calculated with their respective
9
10 standard deviations. For the corrected mean estimate, the 95% confidence interval (95% CI) to
11
12 determine whether the obtained mean is statistically different from zero is provided. When
13
14 analyzing the data, we accounted for known moderating influences. For instance, we accounted
15
16 for the type of SEWP separately. In addition, the 80% credibility interval (80% CR) around the
17
18 respective corrected mean estimates were estimated to determine whether additional moderators
19
20 are likely present (i.e., wide 80% CRs can be interpreted as evidence consistent with the presence
21
22 of moderating effects).
23
24
25

26 ***Meta-Analytic Results***

27
28 *EE to SEWP.* With regard to Hypothesis 1 suggesting a positive relationship between EE
29
30 and SEWP, Table I indicates that the psychometric meta-analytic mean for the relation between
31
32 EE and SEWP is .45, suggesting a moderate and significant relationship between the constructs
33
34 ($k = 102$, $\hat{\rho} = .45$, 95% CI = .42, .48, 80% CR = .25, .66). Hypothesis 2 suggests a negative
35
36 relationship between EE and CWB, and as indicated in Table I, the psychometric meta-analytic
37
38 mean for the relation between EE and CWB is .32 (reflecting the reverse-coding of CWB to
39
40 ensure consistency when being combined with other dimensions of performance), suggesting a
41
42 sizable and significant relationship between the constructs ($k = 4$, $\hat{\rho} = .32$, 95% CI = .21, .43,
43
44 80% CR = .20, .44). Consistent with our predictions, the meta-analytic results lend support for
45
46 Hypotheses 1 and 2.
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52 *SEWP to CE.* The results for the relation between SEWP and CE are shown in Table II.
53
54 The psychometric mean for all types of SEWP and overall CE is .43, indicating a moderate and
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3 significant positive relationship between both constructs ($k = 43$, $\hat{\rho} = .43$, 95% CI = .37, .49, 80%
4 CR = .18, .68), thus lending support for Hypothesis 3a. With regard to Hypotheses 3b-3e, we
5
6 CR = .18, .68), thus lending support for Hypothesis 3a. With regard to Hypotheses 3b-3e, we
7
8 predict positive relationships between SEWP and the four dimensions of CE as conceptualized
9
10 by Kumar and Pansari (2016). As such, SEWP is positively related to customer purchases (H3b,
11
12 $k = 42$, $\hat{\rho} = .47$, 95% CI = .41, .54, 80% CR = .19, .75), customer knowledge sharing (H3c, $k =$
13
14 4, $\hat{\rho} = .33$, 95% CI = .25, .41, 80% CR = .24, .42), and customer influence (H3d, $k = 7$, $\hat{\rho} = .42$,
15
16 95% CI = .32, .52, 80% CR = .26, .58), thus lending support for Hypotheses 3b-d. Due to an
17
18 insufficient number of primary studies measuring the relationship between SEWP and customer
19
20 referrals, we were unable to conduct meta-analytic analyses, thus Hypothesis 3e is not
21
22 supported.
23
24

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26 *Target of SEWP.* Given relatively large credibility intervals may indicate the presence of
27
28 moderators, we examined the extent to which the target of SEWP may moderate the EE-SEWP
29
30 and SEWP-CE relationships and these findings are displayed in Table III. With regard to
31
32 Hypothesis 4, which suggests the relationship between EE and SEWP is strongest for customer-
33
34 targeted SEWP, psychometric meta-analytic findings suggest no difference between
35
36 organizational-targeted SEWP ($k = 54$, $\hat{\rho} = .43$, 95% CI = .37, .49, 80% CR = .16, .70) and
37
38 customer-targeted SEWP ($k = 39$, $\hat{\rho} = .39$, 95% CI = .33, .45, 80% CR = .16, .63) given the 95%
39
40 confidence intervals overlap. While not hypothesized, meta-analytic findings for mixed or
41
42 indeterminate targeted SEWP suggest a positive relationship as well ($k = 22$, $\hat{\rho} = .50$, 95% CI =
43
44 .45, .55, 80% CR = .35, .64). All in all, Hypothesis 4 is not supported.
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50 With regard to Hypothesis 5a, which suggests a positive relationship between
51
52 organization-targeted SEWP and CE, and Hypothesis 5b, which suggests a positive relationship
53
54 between customer-targeted SEWP and CE, psychometric meta-analytic findings provide support
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3 for both H5a ($k = 14$, $\hat{\rho} = .44$, 95% CI = .35, .53, 80% CR = .23, .65) and H5b ($k = 36$, $\hat{\rho} = .43$,
4
5 95% CI = .36, .51, 80% CR = .15, .71). While not hypothesized, meta-analytic findings for
6
7 mixed or indeterminable targeted SEWP suggest a positive relationship as well ($k = 3$, $\hat{\rho} = .22$,
8
9 95% CI = .02, .43, 80% CR = .00, .45). With regard to Hypothesis 5c, which suggests the
10
11 relationship between SEWP and CE is strongest for customer-targeted SEWP, an examination of
12
13 the 95% confidence intervals indicates that both confidence intervals overlap, thus suggesting no
14
15 difference exists in the two effect sizes. Accordingly, Hypothesis 5c is not supported.
16
17

18
19 *Multidimensional Nature of SEWP*. Moving beyond Christian *et al.*'s (2011)
20
21 conceptualization of work performance being either task performance or contextual performance,
22
23 we consider eight distinctions of SEWP (beyond CWB) and ascertain the unique relationship
24
25 between EE and each aspect of service employee performance. As indicated in Table I, with
26
27 regard to Hypotheses 6a-6d, which predicted a positive relationship among EE and the four
28
29 distinctions of task performance, psychometric meta-analytic findings provided support for
30
31 positive relationships between EE and IRB (H6a, $k = 23$, $\hat{\rho} = .48$, 95% CI = .40, .57, 80% CR =
32
33 .23, .74), service performance (H6b, $k = 27$, $\hat{\rho} = .40$, 95% CI = .33, .47, 80% CR = .17, .63),
34
35 service recovery performance (H6c, $k = 3$, $\hat{\rho} = .35$, 95% CI = .32, .38, 80% CR = .35, .35), and
36
37 sales performance (H6d, $k = 4$, $\hat{\rho} = .30$, 95% CI = .16, .44, 80% CR = .14, .45). Accordingly,
38
39 Hypotheses 6a-6d were supported.
40
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45 With regard to Hypotheses 6e-6h, which predicted a positive relationship among EE and
46
47 the four distinctions of contextual performance, psychometric meta-analytic findings provided
48
49 support for positive relationships between EE and OCB (H6e, $k = 26$, $\hat{\rho} = .39$, 95% CI = .29, .49,
50
51 80% CR = .07, .71), innovative work behavior (H6f, $k = 14$, $\hat{\rho} = .41$, 95% CI = .34, .49, 80% CR
52
53 = .25, .58), proactivity (H6g, $k = 4$, $\hat{\rho} = .33$, 95% CI = .25, .42, 80% CR = .29, .38), and customer
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3 citizenship ($H6h$, $k = 17$, $\hat{\rho} = .43$, 95% CI = .33, .53, 80% CR = .18, .68). Accordingly,
4
5 Hypotheses 6e-6h were supported.

6
7 *Rating Source of SEWP.* As indicated in Table IV, with regard to Hypothesis 7, which
8
9 predicted that the relationship between EE and SEWP will be the strongest when both are rated
10
11 by the same source, psychometric meta-analytic findings provide support for this contention, as
12
13 the effect size for the EE-SEWP relationship when both constructs are measured by service
14
15 employees ($k = 61$, $\hat{\rho} = .50$, 95% CI = .47, .54, 80% CR = .34, .67) is greater than SEWP rated
16
17 by managers ($k = 38$, $\hat{\rho} = .38$, 95% CI = .30, .45, 80% CR = .08, .67), customers ($k = 3$, $\hat{\rho} = .32$,
18
19 95% CI = .26, .39, 80% CR = .32, .32), or company archival data ($k = 6$, $\hat{\rho} = .22$, 95% CI = .14,
20
21 .31, 80% CR = .12, .33). Most importantly, the 95% confidence interval for SEWP rated by
22
23 service employees does not overlap with SEWP rated by managers, customers, or company
24
25 archival data, thus fully supporting Hypothesis 7.

26
27 *Post-Hoc Results of SEWP-Customer Related Outcomes.* While not originally
28
29 hypothesized, we present in Table V the psychometric meta-analytic results for the individual
30
31 customer-related outcomes that underpin the dimensions of Kumar and Pansari's (2016) CE
32
33 measure. Accordingly, we calculated meta-analytic results for the SEWP-customer satisfaction
34
35 relationship ($k = 30$, $\hat{\rho} = .46$, 95% CI = .38, .55, 80% CR = .16, .76), SEWP-customer word-of-
36
37 mouth relationship ($k = 7$, $\hat{\rho} = .42$, 95% CI = .32, .52, 80% CR = .26, .58), SEWP-customer
38
39 recovery satisfaction relationship ($k = 5$, $\hat{\rho} = .49$, 95% CI = .36, .62, 80% CR = .31, .68), SEWP-
40
41 customer purchase intent relationship ($k = 8$, $\hat{\rho} = .45$, 95% CI = .34, .57, 80% CR = .25, .65),
42
43 SEWP-customer knowledge sharing relationship ($k = 4$, $\hat{\rho} = .33$, 95% CI = .26, .39, 80% CR =
44
45 .24, .41), and SEWP-customer loyalty relationship ($k = 13$, $\hat{\rho} = .52$, 95% CI = .43, .61, 80% CR =
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47 .31, .73).

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Insert Tables I, II, III, IV, and V about here
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Discussion

This meta-analysis revealed several notable findings. Despite a paucity of research directly linking EE to CE, these results suggest that SEWP may serve as an important bridging mechanism for this relationship. Consistent with the S-PC, these meta-analytic results support the contention that service employee attitudes (i.e., EE) and work behaviors (i.e., SEWP) serve as antecedents to a mutually beneficial service exchange with customers. Furthermore, based on the empirical evidence, the relations between EE and SEWP, as well as SEWP and CE, are of considerable magnitude and are scientifically and practically substantial. Bosco *et al.* (2015) empirically derived effect size benchmarks that suggest the average effect size between attitudes (e.g., EE) and behaviors (e.g., SEWP) is around .16. In fact, effect sizes of .33 are in the 80th percentile in the attitudes-behaviors effect size distribution.

When compared to previous meta-analytic findings, the mean effects from the present study tended to be similar or somewhat larger, thus underscoring the importance of engagement as a salient predictor (i.e., originating from service employees) and outcome (i.e., impacting customer experiences) of SEWP within service contexts. For instance, Christian *et al.*'s (2011) non-service-specific meta-analysis found an effect size of .43 between EE and task performance and .34 between EE and contextual performance. In the present study, the comparable effect sizes of .48 for the EE-IRB relationship and .39 for the EE-OCB relationship suggest a stronger relationship between these constructs within the service domain. Similarly, Brown and Lam (2008) reported an attenuation-corrected effect size of .29 for the employee satisfaction-service

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3 quality relationship, and Hong *et al.* (2013) reported a corrected effect size of .30 for the
4
5 employee attitudes-service performance relationship. In comparison, the current meta-analysis
6
7 reports an effect size of .45 for the EE-overall SEWP relationship, an effect nearly 1.50 times
8
9 greater than previously reported. Such findings suggest that to maximize SEWP, service
10
11 employees must go beyond simply being satisfied in their work roles; instead, service employees
12
13 must feel energized, find fulfillment and meaning, and be engrossed in their work to maximize
14
15 the service they provide to customers.
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Insert Table VI about here
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Turning attention to the relationship between SEWP and CE, our findings suggest significant differences in the effect sizes between the SEWP-customer loyalty relationship ($\hat{\rho} = .52$) and SEWP-customer knowledge relationship ($\hat{\rho} = .33$), as the 95% confidence interval did not overlap for these two effect sizes. In line with the S-PC, when service employees engage in behaviors that create value for customers, customers are more likely to maintain these relationships. The stronger effect size of the SEWP-customer loyalty relationship suggests customers value SEWP by engaging in repeat interactions with the firm, which directly impacts firm profitability rather than engaging in customer knowledge/feedback behaviors.

Finally, the analyses revealed only one substantial moderating effect – rating source. As previously noted, the mean estimates for employee-rated SEWP were not only larger ($\hat{\rho} = .50$) in magnitude than manager- ($\hat{\rho} = .38$), customer- ($\hat{\rho} = .32$), or company-rated ($\hat{\rho} = .22$) SEWP, but also the 95% confidence intervals did not overlap, indicating that the means are significantly different from each other. Perhaps surprisingly, the target of SEWP did not serve as a moderator,

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3 given that the psychometric means are quite similar for the relationship between EE and
4 organization-targeted SEWP and customer-targeted SEWP ($\hat{\rho} = .43$ vs. $.39$, respectively) and
5
6 nearly identical for the relationship between organization-targeted SEWP and customer-targeted
7
8 SEWP and CE ($\hat{\rho} = .44$ vs. $.43$, respectively). Furthermore, while the dimensionality of SEWP
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10 largely did not serve as a moderator, the magnitude of the means varied substantially between in-
11
12 role behavior and service recovery performance ($\hat{\rho} = .48$ vs. $.35$) as the 95% confidence intervals
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14 did not overlap. In sum, the respective mean estimates across many relationships tended to be
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16 quite similar and the respective 80% CRs were relatively wide, indicating the likely presence of
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18 additional moderating influences.
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24 When considering the results of the systematic review and meta-analysis in tandem, we
25
26 identify several noteworthy findings that may advance the study of EE, CE, and SEWP in the
27
28 service context. While notions of engagement have been considered as either antecedents or
29
30 outcomes in numerous academic disciplines, including psychology, sociology, organizational
31
32 behavior, and marketing (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek, 2011), our systematic review suggests
33
34 that surprisingly few studies have simultaneously investigated both EE and CE. Given that each
35
36 discipline examines the salient properties of engagement according to a unique set of stakeholder
37
38 requisites, the majority of the studies reviewed in this manuscript have developed their own
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40 versions of engagement in discipline-specific isolation. Rather than attempting to synthesize
41
42 types of engagement across disciplines, researchers devote considerable effort to illustrating the
43
44 distinctiveness of engagement in their respective discipline relative to other disciplines (c.f.,
45
46 Bowden, 2009; Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Sashi, 2012; van Doorn *et al.*, 2010; Vivek *et al.*, 2014).
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48 Accordingly, this impacted the current meta-analysis, as we were unable to test a fully mediated
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50 model linking EE to CE through SEWP.
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3 In a related vein, our systematic review revealed a proliferation of theoretical frames
4 across both marketing and management that scholars have employed to investigate the
5 nomological networks of EE and CE. Accordingly, this has resulted in disjointed research
6 streams that have made it difficult to ascertain how the attitudes and behaviors of service
7 employees (i.e., EE and SEWP) impact CE. In light of this finding, we reinforce the value of the
8 S-PC to explain how EE influences CE as a unifying framework that links service employee
9 attitudes with customer-related outcomes through SEWP.
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19 **Agenda for Future Service Research Integrating Employee Engagement** 20 **and Customer Engagement** 21 22

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25 This study proposes future investigations should simultaneously investigate EE and CE,
26 explore the reciprocal loop between EE and CE, examine engagement from a multi-level
27 perspective, and broaden the conceptualization of “customers.”
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32 ***Opportunity 1: Primary studies which simultaneously investigate both EE and CE*** 33

34 Absent from the extant literature are studies that have attempted to empirically
35 investigate potential relationships between discipline-specific types of engagement (i.e., EE from
36 management and CE from marketing). Using the Gallup database, a meta-analytic study
37 completed by Harter *et al.* (2002) provided an initial attempt to empirically demonstrate
38 interactive relationships between EE and customer satisfaction. Similarly, Salanova *et al.* (2005)
39 used service climate as a mediator to empirically demonstrate the relationship between EE and
40 customer loyalty. These studies show that service-based organizations provide a unique
41 opportunity to transcend boundaries across the organizational behavior and marketing literatures,
42 as service employees frequently interact with and impact customers.
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55 ***Opportunity 2: Primary studies which consider a reciprocal loop between EE and CE*** 56 57

Beyond the S-PC, other theoretical frameworks may allow for future studies to consider the reciprocal nature between EE and CE. Some studies within the broader marketing literature have relied on Service-Dominant logic (S-D logic) and the larger service science body of work that asserts all actors are resource integrators who co-create value within larger service ecosystems (Vargo and Lusch, 2016). According to S-D logic, CE reflects the dynamics of networked agents, including employees, through which value is co-created in interactions through service-for-service exchange (Hollebeek, 2011; Vargo *et al.*, 2008). Consequently, the formal roles of employees and customers converge, resulting in collaboration between sellers and buyers in co-creating value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Yet, the majority of CE research only considers customer interactions with other customers or the firm overall, resulting in limited discussions of customer interactions with service employees. Thus, future research should consider the reciprocal impact of a customer-to-employee feedback loop.

The co-creative foundation of the S-D logic framework may indeed provide a mechanism to allow for the concurrent examination of EE and CE. Stated differently, rather than consider one type of engagement as either an antecedent or outcome (i.e., micro-level aggregation), the axioms of S-D logic allow researchers to examine various types of engagement simultaneously as interrelated antecedents and outcomes because they exist within larger service ecosystems (i.e., expanding midrange theoretical abstraction to consider meso- or macro-level effects). Therefore, this study calls for future researchers to consider leveraging a service-based context to empirically examine EE-CE relationships. However, given that the vast majority of studies included in this meta-analysis were cross-sectional, future research needs to address temporal considerations both theoretically and methodologically to capture the reciprocal and oscillating nature of exchange relationships between various service actors (e.g., in the role of service

1
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3 employee, customer, firm, etc.) underpinning S-D logic.
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6 ***Opportunity 3: Primary studies which are multilevel in nature***
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8 Service organizations realize that engagement may be considered a strategic-level
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10 phenomenon that will increase understanding of benefits associated with interactions between
11
12 customers and organizational stakeholders (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Subramony and Pugh, 2015).
13
14 Marketing scholars have empirically demonstrated that market-orientation strategies, defined as
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16 the belief in and ability to coordinate resources to understand and meet customer needs (Day,
17
18 1994), create competitive advantages (e.g., Gruca and Rego, 2005). However, Sashi (2012)
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20 contends that “CE goes beyond market orientation by actively involving customers in generating
21
22 intelligence on their changing needs and in helping the organization respond to those needs”
23
24 (p.259). Similarly, strategic-management scholars link employee-customer interactions to firm
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26 performance through a resource-based lens (Hult *et al.*, 2005), arguing that these
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28 interrelationships can create market-based assets resulting in competitive advantages. Research
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30 focusing on multi-level customer-employee interactions stands to advance cross-disciplinary
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32 research and to identify meaningful opportunities for service firms to improve engagement and
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34 mutually-beneficial strategic advantages that can translate into sustainable resources and
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36 improved organizational performance (Kumar *et al.*, 2010).
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42 ***Opportunity 4: Broaden the conceptualization of “customer”***
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44 While the present study focuses on actors in the role of external “customers” of the firm,
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46 service employees can also be considered internal customers within the organization. Research
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48 on internal marketing is “concerned with making available internal products (jobs) that satisfy
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50 the needs of a vital internal market (employees) while satisfying the objectives of the
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52 organization” (Berry *et al.*, 1976, p.11). Berry and Parasuraman (2004) indicate that “to practice
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3 services marketing successfully, firms must practice internal marketing successfully” (p.25)
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5 because how employees are treated within the firm directly influences how they will treat
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7 external customers (Lings and Greenley, 2010). Thus, within the organization, service employees
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9 need to understand the ongoing requirements of other departments and constantly seek to
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11 increase the value they can provide to or co-create with each other. For example, when an
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13 operations department receives orders from a sales department, the operations department needs
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15 to understand the order requirements. In such cases, the sales department functions as an internal
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17 customer of the operations department. Firms that focus on internal marketing demonstrate
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19 management’s commitment to both understanding and responding to employees’ needs as part of
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21 the organizational service and marketing strategy (Gounaris, 2006). This includes ensuring
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23 service employees have the means necessary to provide superior service to both their internal and
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25 external customers (Gounaris 2008). Thus, future research can broaden the definition of
26
27 customer to include all network actors, both internally and externally, and examine how EE
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29 impacts all aspects of CE.
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36 **Conclusion**

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38 In this manuscript, our overall objective was to investigate the relationship between EE
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40 and CE as well as the potential bridging mechanism SEWP. This research offers five primary
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42 contributions, including (1) an overview of the EE and CE constructs and their role within the
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44 broader service literature; (2) identifying an intervening mechanism, SEWP, linking EE and CE;
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46 (3) consideration of the differential effects and multidimensional nature of SEWP and
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48 theoretically relevant moderators; (4) the application of the S-PC framework to explain the EE-
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50 SEWP-CE relationship; and (5) a substantive future research agenda to advance our
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52 understanding of EE and CE within service contexts.
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3 As only a limited number of studies directly address the relationship between EE and CE
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5 (e.g., Kumar and Pansari, 2016), this study repeats calls for research that bridge the various
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7 engagement streams and look at the overall impact for the firm. Specifically, this manuscript and
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9 meta-analysis underscore the need for additional primary studies across service contexts that
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11 include both the EE and CE constructs and further demonstrate that a great deal of conceptual
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13 and empirical developments are needed to have a more complete understanding regarding the
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15 nature of EE and CE and their unique impacts within the service domain.
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Table I. Employee engagement and service employee work performance: Psychometric meta-analytic results

Distribution	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{r}_o	$SD_{\bar{r}_o}$	$\hat{\rho}$	$SD_{\hat{\rho}}$	95% CI	80% CR
Predicting Overall Service Employee Work Performance (SEWP)								
-Employee Engagement (EE)	102	55 638	.37	.13	.45	.17	.42, .48	.25, .66
EE – In-role behavior (IRB)	23	8 427	.40	.17	.48	.21	.40, .57	.23, .74
EE – Organizational citizenship (OCBs)	26	7 642	.32	.21	.39	.26	.29, .49	.07, .71
EE – Innovative work behavior	14	6 040	.36	.13	.41	.14	.34, .49	.25, .58
EE – Proactivity	4	677	.30	.07	.33	.09	.25, .42	.29, .38
EE – Service performance	27	9 212	.35	.15	.40	.19	.33, .47	.17, .63
EE – Customer citizenship	17	4 484	.37	.18	.43	.21	.33, .53	.18, .68
EE – Service recovery performance	3	518	.32	.02	.35	.02	.32, .38	.35, .35
EE – Sales performance	4	772	.26	.11	.30	.14	.16, .44	.14, .45
EE – Counterproductive work behavior	4	975	.26	.12	.32	.12	.21, .43	.20, .44

Note. *k* = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; *N* = meta-analytic sample size; \bar{r}_o = weighted mean observed correlation; $SD_{\bar{r}_o}$ = standard deviation of \bar{r}_o ; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; $SD_{\hat{\rho}}$ = standard deviation of $\hat{\rho}$; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval; 80% CR = 80% credibility interval.

Table II. Service employee work performance (SEWP) and Kumar and Pansari's (2016) dimensions of customer engagement: Psychometric meta-analytic results

Distribution	k	N	\bar{r}_o	$SD_{\bar{r}_o}$	$\hat{\rho}$	$SD_{\hat{\rho}}$	95% CI	80% CR
Predicting Customer Engagement (CE)								
- Overall Service Employee Work Performance (SEWP)	43	17 965	.38	.19	.43	.20	.37, .49	.18, .68
Predicting Customer Purchases								
- Overall SEWP	42	17 748	.42	.21	.47	.22	.41, .54	.19, .75
Predicting Customer Influence								
- Overall SEWP	7	1 897	.36	.14	.42	.14	.32, .52	.26, .58
Predicting Customer Knowledge								
- Overall SEWP	4	4 406	.30	.07	.33	.08	.25, .41	.24, .42

Note. k = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; N = meta-analytic sample size; \bar{r}_o = weighted mean observed correlation; $SD_{\bar{r}_o}$ = standard deviation of \bar{r}_o ; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; $SD_{\hat{\rho}}$ = standard deviation of $\hat{\rho}$; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval; 80% CR = 80% credibility interval.

Table III. Target of service employee work performance (SEWP) as a moderator of employee engagement-service employee work performance and service employee work performance-customer engagement relationships

Distribution	k	N	\bar{r}_o	$SD_{\bar{r}_o}$	$\hat{\rho}$	$SD_{\hat{\rho}}$	95% CI	80% CR
Employee Engagement (EE) predicting:								
- Organization-targeted SEWP	54	17 726	.37	.18	.43	.22	.37, .49	.16, .70
- Customer-targeted SEWP	39	12 427	.34	.16	.39	.19	.33, .45	.16, .63
- Mixed/indeterminable SEWP	22	28 628	.39	.08	.50	.12	.45, .55	.35, .64
Predicting Customer Engagement (CE):								
- Organization-targeted SEWP	14	7 250	.39	.16	.44	.17	.35, .53	.23, .65
- Customer-targeted SEWP	36	12 607	.38	.20	.43	.23	.36, .51	.15, .71
- Mixed/indeterminable SEWP	3	1 336	.21	.17	.22	.18	.02, .43	.00, .45

Note. k = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; N = meta-analytic sample size; \bar{r}_o = weighted mean observed correlation; $SD_{\bar{r}_o}$ = standard deviation of \bar{r}_o ; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; $SD_{\hat{\rho}}$ = standard deviation of $\hat{\rho}$; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval; 80% CR = 80% credibility interval.

Table IV. Rating source as a moderator of the employee engagement and service employee work performance relationship

Distribution	k	N	\bar{r}_o	$SD_{\bar{r}_o}$	$\hat{\rho}$	$SD_{\hat{\rho}}$	95% CI	80% CR
Predicting Service Employee Work Performance (SEWP) as rated by:								
- Employee (self-report)	61	43 891	.41	.10	.50	.13	.47, .54	.34, .67
- Manager	38	10 303	.32	.20	.38	.24	.30, .45	.08, .67
- Customer	3	762	.28	.04	.32	.06	.26, .39	.32, .32
- Company archival data	6	2 076	.19	.09	.22	.10	.14, .31	.12, .33

Note. k = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; N = meta-analytic sample size; \bar{r}_o = weighted mean observed correlation; $SD_{\bar{r}_o}$ = standard deviation of \bar{r}_o ; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; $SD_{\hat{\rho}}$ = standard deviation of $\hat{\rho}$; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval; 80% CR = 80% credibility interval.

**Table V. Service employee work performance and customer-related outcomes:
Psychometric meta-analytic results**

Distribution	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{r}_o	$SD_{\bar{r}_o}$	$\hat{\rho}$	$SD_{\hat{\rho}}$	95% CI	80% CR
Predicting Customer Engagement (CE)								
-SEWP – Customer Satisfaction	30	13 166	.40	.22	.46	.24	.38, .55	.16, .76
-SEWP – Customer Word-of-Mouth	7	1 897	.36	.14	.42	.14	.32, .52	.26, .58
-SEWP – Customer Recovery Satisfaction	5	2 151	.45	.14	.49	.15	.36, .62	.31, .68
-SEWP – Customer Purchase Intent	8	2 783	.41	.14	.45	.17	.34, .57	.25, .65
-SEWP – Customer Knowledge Sharing	4	4 415	.30	.07	.33	.07	.26, .39	.24, .41
-SEWP – Customer Loyalty	13	4 736	.45	.16	.52	.17	.43, .61	.31, .73

Note. *k* = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; *N* = meta-analytic sample size; \bar{r}_o = weighted mean observed correlation; $SD_{\bar{r}_o}$ = standard deviation of \bar{r}_o ; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; $SD_{\hat{\rho}}$ = standard deviation of $\hat{\rho}$; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval; 80% CR = 80% credibility interval.

Table VI. Comparison of effect sizes reported in related meta-analyses

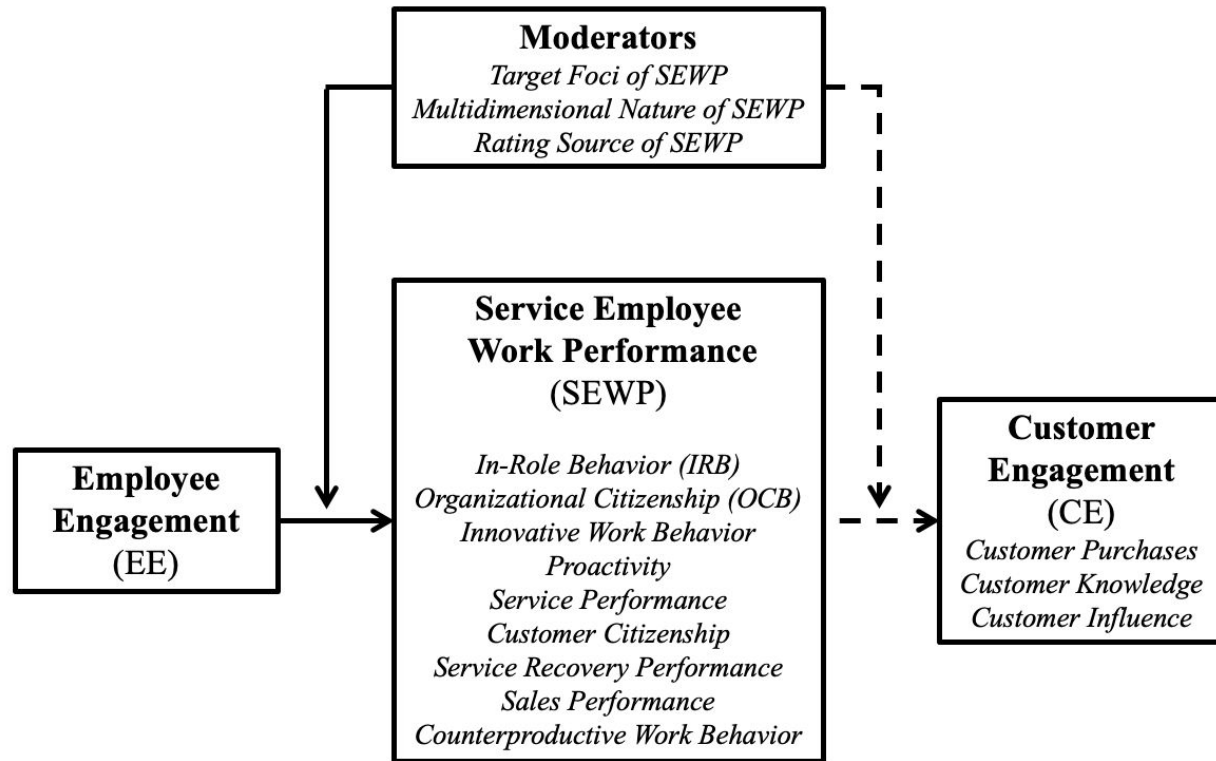
Authors	Study description	Level of analysis	Similar relationship examined	Sample size and mean sample-size-weighted corrected correlation
Hong <i>et al.</i> (2013)	S-PC examination of the nomological network of service climate construct	Unit-level studies	Employee attitudes - Service performance	k=7, $\hat{\rho}=.30$
			Service performance-Customer satisfaction	k=15, $\hat{\rho}=.53$
Hogreve <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Comprehensive examination of the S-PC	Individual- and unit-level studies	Employee satisfaction-Employee productivity	k=76, $\hat{\rho}=.258$
			Employee productivity-External service quality	k=16, $\hat{\rho}=.243$
			External service quality-Customer satisfaction	k=126, $\hat{\rho}=.712$
Christian <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Investigation of the nomological network of work engagement based on Macey and Schneider's (2008) framework	Individual-level studies	Work engagement-Task performance	k=14, $\hat{\rho}=.43$
			Work engagement-Contextual performance	k=10, $\hat{\rho}=.34$

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Brown and Lam (2008)	Investigation of the relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction	Individual- and unit-level studies	Employee satisfaction-Customer satisfaction	k=22, $\hat{\rho} = .23$
			Employee satisfaction-Service quality	k=9, $\hat{\rho} = .29$
Halbesleben (2008)	Examination of nomological network of work engagement employing a COR framework	Individual-level studies	Work engagement-Overall performance	k=7, $\hat{\rho} = .36$

Note. *k* = number of correlation coefficients in the analyzed distribution; $\hat{\rho}$ = weighted mean correlation corrected for predictor and criterion unreliability; *COR* = Conservation of Resources; *S-PC* = Service-Profit Chain

Figure 1. Overarching research model investigating Employee Engagement (EE), Service Employee Work Performance (SEWP), and Customer Engagement (CE)



Note: Solid line indicates relationships tested in EE to SEWP meta-analysis (k=102). Dashed line indicates relationships tested in SEWP to CE meta-analysis (k=43).

Figure 2. EE-SEWP-CE meta-analysis search process flowchart

