

The role of organizational justice in the customer orientation–performance relationship

The role of
organizational
justice

El papel de la justicia organizacional en la relación entre orientación al cliente y desempeño

Received 30 April 2019
Revised 21 April 2020
Accepted 16 May 2020

Francisco Trincado-Munoz
Surrey Business School, University of Surrey, Guildford, UK
Leslier Valenzuela-Fernández
*Departamento de Administración,
Facultad de Economía y Negocios, Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile, and*
Melany Hebles
*Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas,
Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción, Concepción, Chile*

Abstract

Purpose – While companies have increasingly encouraged employees to adopt a customer orientation, less attention has been given to the impact that customer orientation has on employees' job outcomes and performance. Previous research has used job demands-resource theory (JD-R) and proposed several mechanisms through which customer orientation influences performance, yet the intervening variables in the process have shown inconsistent results. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the contextual role of organizational justice on the relationship between customer orientation and performance through work engagement. In this way, offering more understanding of the contingent effects that intervene in the customer orientation–performance relationship.

Design/methodology/approach – Using a structural equation model (SEM) in a sample of 249 marketing, sales and management managers in Chilean companies, this paper tested different hypotheses concerning the role of work engagement, organizational justice and customer orientation in relation to perceived performance.

Findings – This study informs that organizational justice (procedural and distributive justice) moderates the relationship between customer orientation and performance through work engagement. Precisely, the findings reveal that at lower values of organizational justice, changes in customer orientation negatively influence work engagement and in turn performance.

Originality/value – The results contribute to strengthening customer orientation theory by integrating a contextual variable often omitted: organizational justice. By exploring the moderation effect of organizational justice on customer orientation, this paper reveals contingent effects of employees' perceived fairness on the organization in the relationship between customer orientation and performance through work engagement. The findings encourage managers to look after employees' perceived organizational justice when they

JEL Classification — L80, M310, M59

We thank the financing obtained by the second author of this article Leslier Valenzuela-Fernández through her FONDECYT (CONICYT) project from Chile No 11100163, which partially financed this research. Furthermore, the authors thank the editors and reviewers for their comments and guidance throughout this publication.



implement customer-oriented approaches, in particular, of those employees who work in the frontline sales and service positions.

Keywords Organizational justice, Work engagement, Customer orientation, Service employees, Sales force, Performance

Paper type Research paper

Resumen

Propósito – Mientras las empresas han incentivado la adopción de una orientación al cliente por parte de los empleados, menos atención se ha dado al impacto que la orientación al cliente tiene en los resultados laborales y el desempeño. Investigación previa ha usado la teoría de Demandas y Recursos del Trabajo (Job Demands-Resource Theory en inglés) y propuesto varios mecanismos a través de los cuales la orientación al cliente tiene un efecto en el desempeño, no obstante las variables que intervienen en el proceso han mostrado resultados inconsistentes. Por tanto, este estudio tiene por objetivo investigar el rol contextual de justicia organizacional en la relación entre orientación al cliente y performance a través del compromiso organizacional. De esta manera, ofrecer mayor entendimiento de los efectos contingentes que intervienen la relación orientación al cliente-desempeño.

Diseño/metodología/enfoque – Usando un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales en una muestra de 249 ejecutivos de marketing, ventas y negocios en compañías chilenas, este estudio evalúa diferentes hipótesis respecto al rol del compromiso organizacional, justicia organizacional, y orientación al cliente en relación a la percepción del desempeño organizacional.

Hallazgos – Este estudio demuestra que la justicia organizacional (como justicia distributiva y procedural) modera la relación entre orientación al cliente y desempeño a través del compromiso organizacional. Precisamente, los resultados revelan que a menores valores de justicia organizacional, cambios en la orientación al cliente influyen negativamente el compromiso organizacional y a su vez el desempeño.

Originalidad/valor – Los resultados contribuyen a fortalecer la teoría de Orientación al Valor del Cliente integrando una variable contextual que a menudo ha sido omitida: Justicia organizacional. Explorando la moderación de la justicia organizacional en la orientación al cliente, esta investigación revela efectos contingentes de la percepción de justicia de los empleados en la organización en la relación entre orientación al cliente y el desempeño percibido a través del compromiso organizacional. Estos hallazgos invitan a los gerentes a preocuparse por la percepción de justicia de los empleados cuando deciden implementar la orientación al cliente en especial con quiénes trabajan en la provisión de servicios y atención a clientes.

Palabras clave Justicia organizacional, Compromiso organizacional, Orientación al cliente, Empleados en servicio, Fuerza de venta, Desempeño

Tipo de papel Trabajo de investigación

Introduction

Given the heightened customer expectations and demands, workers in the frontline sales and services positions have increased their focus toward customers (Harris *et al.*, 2005). Indeed, managers have promoted a customer-oriented management approach by establishing the customer as the first priority and taking care of all the factors involved in the interaction with them. Precisely, managers have created and promoted strategies for creating and delivering value for customers (such as identifying appropriate target markets/customers, understanding customers' needs and delivering promised value) with the aim to lead companies to a sustainable competitive advantage and ultimately to obtain superior performance (Huber *et al.*, 2001; Valenzuela-Fernández and Villegas, 2016). However, the processes that underlie the customer orientation–performance relationship have yet to be fully understood and tested (McNaughton *et al.*, 2002; Chu *et al.*, 2016).

Certainly, an essential step to implement customer-oriented strategies is to incorporate and motivate employees at frontline sales and service positions. Previous research has supported the idea that to achieve superior performance through a customer-oriented strategy, managers need to promote a customer value-based organizational culture and design activities that allow employees to satisfy customer needs (Slater, 1997). By means of these actions, employees are expected to acquire valuable resources that lead them to successful interactions and contacts with customers, as well as, to use all their skills and abilities to satisfy customers' needs. Moreover, just as employees feel more engaged with their job and organization, they are expected to put extra effort to satisfy customers beyond

selling a product or providing a service. As previous research argued, when employees satisfy customers' needs and make them happy, they will increase their satisfaction and commitment with their job and organizations, which in turn will increase their likelihood to perform better (Harris *et al.*, 2005; Rod and Ashill, 2010). Unfortunately, empirical evidence has been inconsistent regarding the effects of customer orientation in different job outcomes as well as regarding the role that they play towards job performance (Donavan *et al.*, 2004; Plouffe *et al.*, 2009; Zablah *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, models of customer orientation rarely consider the effects of moderators and/or intervening variables that can strengthen or weaken the effects on job outcomes.

Considering the customer in the first place requires that companies develop business strategies aimed to understand and satisfy customers' needs and/or prepare the conditions for their employees to do so (Luo *et al.*, 2008; Londono *et al.*, 2017). Companies' strategies should lead employees to go always one step further protecting their customers' interest, since they will compensate them by a positive reciprocity through word of mouth and loyalty or, in occasions, generating new customers or greater value for stakeholders (Kumar *et al.*, 2008; Macintosh, 2007; Valenzuela *et al.*, 2010). For instance, employees' perceptions of the companies' actions and efforts to support them become essential conditions to promote their extra efforts to serve customers. In particular, a climate of fairness, i.e. organizational justice, can become an important contextual condition which strengthens the employees' customer orientation, providing that being fairly treated will have positive effects on the employees' motivation to perform certain behaviors (Cojuharenco *et al.*, 2011).

Organizational justice is an important determinant of employees' attitudes and behaviors (Colquitt *et al.*, 2003; Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). Such that, how fair they perceive their organization can influence how much effort they put toward implementing the required company strategies or achieving the proposed aims and objectives. Fairness can become especially salient and important when employees face challenging changes, such as implementing a customer-oriented strategy (Colquitt and Chertkoff, 2002; Lind and Van Den Bos, 2002). At such times, employees scrutinize the fairness they receive in order to make sense of past experiences, to decide how to react in the present and to anticipate how they will be treated in the future. Because customer-oriented strategies require extra efforts from the employees, organizational justice can shape how employees implement such strategies or its effects on other psychological outcomes (Brown *et al.*, 2002).

In line with the former arguments and customer orientation theory, in this study we seek to gain a better understanding of the extent to which customer orientation relates to organizational performance through work engagement, as well as, how such relationship can be shaped by the employees' perceptions of organizational justice. This paper adopts a psychological perspective of customer orientation (see Zablah *et al.*, 2012), that is, we consider that employees' perceptions of customer orientation, as a psychological resource, help to explain its effects on job outcomes and not inversely. Thus, this paper expands the literature on customer orientation theory by: (1) investigating the link between customer orientation and different job intervening variables such as work engagement and organizational justice, that is, adding more understanding respect to the processes through which such relationship flourishes; (2) enhancing our knowledge of job-related factors that managers can employ to encourage a customer orientation among salespeople; (3) exploring the potential moderating effects of organizational justice on customer orientation, and its relationship to work engagement. Ultimately, the results provide guidance for managers who want to promote a customer-oriented strategy among the frontline sales and service employees through the use of internal resources such as organizational justice and work engagement.

This paper begins by explaining the theoretical background for the proposed hypotheses depicted in Figure 1. This is followed by a discussion of the research methods and results. Hypotheses were tested using a structural equation modeling (SEM) based on covariances of

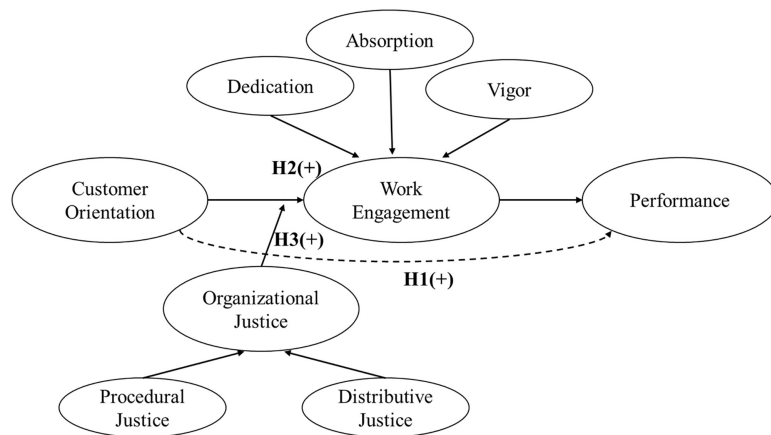


Figure 1.
Conceptual model

latent factors in a sample of 249 sales, marketing and service executives positioned at the medium and upper level of Chilean companies. Finally, this paper concludes by discussing managerial and theoretical implications prior to disclosing study limitations and directions for future research.

Theory

The employees' customer orientation has been considered an important driver of companies' economic success (Bove and Johnson, 2000; Henning-Thurau, 2004; Sergeant and Frenkel, 2000). Customer orientation encompasses the employees' task-oriented behaviors (e.g. describing products accurately or identifying customer needs) performed to meet customers' needs and requirements when they interact with them (Brown *et al.*, 2002; Homburg *et al.*, 2011). According to the literature, the primary goal of a customer orientation is the creation of long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with customers (e.g. Keillor *et al.*, 2000; Swanson *et al.*, 1998). Such that, customer orientation becomes a clear guideline to employees in the frontline sales and service positions to reconcile potential conflicts between goals and their roles (Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010), thereby promoting a deep-rooted belief that customers' interest and needs are placed first (Valenzuela *et al.*, 2010). Once employees adopt a customer-orientated approach, they will be more likely to increase customers' loyalty, that is, the express preference for a company and intention to continue to purchase from it in the future (Homburg *et al.*, 2011). Hence, more positive interactions with customers and increasing customers' loyalty are expected to lead to the companies' economic success (Henning-Thurau, 2004).

As companies adopt a customer-orientated approach, they need to perform actions that encourage employees to satisfy the customers' needs (Slater, 1997). This aspect is critical, as frontline and service employees' behaviors are central to influence the customers' perception of the service or the products (Bitner, 1990). Hence, from an employee's perspective, it is possible that other inherent variables associated with the job can interact with the companies' intentions to implement a customer-oriented approach, thereby affecting the employees' motivation toward adopting a customer orientation. It becomes essential to understand the role that customer orientation plays respect to key job variables, as for example, the case of work engagement.

In the sales and marketing literature, the role of customer orientation respect to job variables (as the case of work engagement) has been seen from divergent perspectives with often inconsistent empirical evidence (see Zablah *et al.*, 2012). While some studies have established that customer orientation is an antecedent of job variables, such stress or engagement (e.g. Harris *et al.*, 2005; Rod and Ashill, 2010), other studies have identified customer orientation as an outcome of

these job variables (e.g. [Bettencourt and Brown, 2003](#); [Kelley, 1992](#)). In an attempt to reconcile these divergent perspectives, [Zablah et al. \(2012\)](#) performed a meta-analysis which showed that customer orientation can be better understood as a “work value” (p. 22). That is, customer orientation constitutes a psychological resource that affects different job outcomes, such as the case of work engagement and performance, and it can be better understood by considering the job demands-resources theory ([Bakker and Demerouti, 2007](#); [Demerouti et al., 2001](#)).

JD-R theory ([Bakker and Demerouti, 2007](#); [Demerouti et al., 2001](#)) stretches the effects of resources that interact with job demands through two possible ways: stress and engagement. Whereas job resources consist in aspects that enable employees to achieve their work goals, fulfill their roles and perform according to the demands of their position (e.g. supervisor support, autonomy), job demands are physical or psychological efforts that the employees need to perform to fulfill their role (e.g. physically and emotionally demanding interactions with customers or high-pressure work). According to JD-R theory, both job demands and resources interact to influence job outcomes through their effects on the mediating processes stress and engagement. That is, JD-R theory helps to explain the effect that job variables, classify as demands or resources, have in outcomes such as stress and engagement, which then can affect other job outcomes such as performance. On the one hand, experiencing situations of conflict or unbalance between demands and resources can lead to stress and negative attitudes or behaviors. While, a more positive balance of resources and demands can lead to engagement which generates a more positive attitude toward the job or the organization. The balance of resources and demands that an employee faces will affect his or her level of stress and engagement, thereby influencing certain job outcomes, such as performance, proactivity or turnover intentions.

Following JD-R theory, [Zablah et al. \(2012\)](#)'s conclusion, and considering customer orientation as a resource that affects both stress and engagement, and which ultimately impacts job outcomes, it is essential to understand how customer orientation relates to organizational performance. Customer orientation provides a guideline for the employees on how to conduct and operate themselves in their job. That is, the strategies in which the company defines the way that employees on the frontline sales and service positions can act, by having the customers' best interest in mind while delivering the best service and satisfying the customers' needs, which in due course can lead to better organizational performance. Precisely, customer orientation can lead to more customer satisfaction, loyalty and intentions to return ([Kumar et al., 2008](#); [Macintosh, 2007](#)), thereby fostering organizational performance. Previous research has supported this idea, by demonstrating that customer orientation is directly related to the success of a business, by managing employees to meet customer desires and needs via the use of appropriate marketing strategies ([Brown et al., 2002](#)). Therefore, the evidence suggests that customer orientation will increase the employees' abilities to satisfy customer desires and needs, i.e. their resources to fulfill the demands of their job, which then will generate more positive answers from customers and in turn better performance. Thus

H1. Employees' customer orientation is positively related to perceived organizational performance.

Further, according to JD-R theory, work engagement is an important mechanism to explain the effects of customer orientation on organizational performance. Work engagement refers to the relationship of the employee with his or her work, representing the positive, fulfilling work-related state that entails physical-energetic (vigor), emotional (dedication) and cognitive (absorption) components ([Schaufeli et al., 2002](#); [Schaufeli, 2013](#)). More precisely, an employee high in vigor feels high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, which are expressed through higher willingness to invest efforts in his/her work, and a stronger perseverance even in the face of difficulties. An employee high on dedication finds a high sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge at work. While, finally, an employee high on absorption enjoys to be fully concentrated, happy and deeply engrossed in

his or her work, even losing sense of time or having difficulties to detach from work. Employees with high work engagement tend to feel more positive emotions while performing work-related tasks as well as being less likely to feel stress.

[Schaufeli and Bakker \(2010\)](#) proposed that work engagement is an experienced psychological state which mediates the impact of job resources on organizational outcomes. Work engagement can be a source of intrinsic motivation, personal development or extrinsic motivation for employees (when they can achieve their work goals) ([Bakker and Demerouti, 2007](#)). That is, increasing customer orientation – understood as a psychological resource for satisfying customer needs – can lead to higher work engagement in several ways. First, by impacting on employees' satisfaction of personal needs such as autonomy and competence when, for example, they need to answer customers' needs. Second, by fostering employees' growth and learning, through the development of more cognitive resources useful to perform their task. Finally, by facilitating the successful completion of the work task/goals, in addition to the positive feedback that they can receive from satisfied customers.

Employees with higher customer orientation will exhibit greater willingness and effort on the customer behalf ([Anaza and Rutherford, 2012](#)), therefore they will be more likely to display skills and abilities equivalent to an engaged employee ([Babakus et al., 2009](#)). For instance, employees with higher customer orientation will be more willing to put in the extra effort required to not only get the job done but also excel at doing a good job because they have the resources to fulfill the demands of their jobs. More precisely, it will be through the states of vigor, dedication and absorption that customer-oriented employees will express their positive feelings and motivation toward their job. This, in turn, will increase the satisfaction of customer, fulfilling the customers' expectations, as well as, receiving more positive emotional answers or increase loyalty ([Stock and Hoyer, 2005](#); [Anaza and Rutherford, 2012](#); [Jimenez et al. 2016](#)). The expressions of work engagement by customer-oriented employees will increase the likelihood of a successful performance and customer's reciprocity to their effort for satisfying them. Provided the positive interaction of resources and demands, and the motivational process in which job resources stimulate employees' motivation and foster engagement, in turn leading to positive organizational outcomes, we suggest that:

H2. Work engagement mediates the relationship between employees' customer orientation and perceived organizational performance.

Although work engagement becomes the mechanism through which customer orientation affects organizational performance, the relationship between customer orientation and work engagement can be influenced by the conditions that frontline sales and service employees experience in their organization. A key objective of this study is to investigate the effect of organizational justice on customer orientation adoption. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed below focuses on the moderator effects of organizational justice. Such that, in this section, we propose a reasoning regarding the positive contingent effects of distributive and procedural justice on the customer orientation-work engagement-performance link.

The interaction of job demands and resources can vary according to the context or other situational factors of the organization ([Bakker et al., 2010](#); [Nahrgang et al., 2011](#)). Indeed, the implementation of customer orientation depends on the organization and its managers' efforts to encourage and lead employees to do their best when they interact with customers. Previous research on the link between customer orientation and work engagement/stress has identified mainly individual level factors, such as sales skills ([Wachner et al., 2009](#)), personality traits ([Stock and Hoyer, 2005](#)), ability to help ([Saxe and Weitz, 1982](#)), customers and product characteristics ([Homburg et al., 2011](#)), as moderators of such relationship. However, beyond the individual characteristics, the organizational climate can also influence the effectiveness of customer orientation on employees at the frontline sales and service positions. In particular, we refer to organizational justice, i.e. the perceptions of fairness that employees experience at work.

Organizational justice entails the concern with employees and how fair they perceive that are treated by their organization (Colquitt *et al.*, 2005; Proost *et al.*, 2015). Precisely, employees often judge whether the rewards they receive correspond to their contributions to the organization or the rewards received by their colleagues (Adams, 1965; Leventhal, 1976), along with judging the fairness of the decision-making procedures used by managers, and how consistent, unbiased and accurate are those (Greenberg, 1986; Leventhal, 1980). Research on organizational justice has demonstrated that concerns about fairness can affect the attitudes and behaviors of employees (for reviews, see Colquitt *et al.*, 2003, 2001). Such that, the fairer employees perceive that their organizations treat them, the more likely will be that they feel good about their organization and perform the behaviors to successfully complete their job.

In particular, distributive justice, how fair employees perceive that they have been treated in the allocation of rewards, and procedural justice, how fair employees perceive the decision-making processes, have been widely linked to outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction and citizenship behaviors (Colquitt *et al.*, 2003, 2001). A fair treatment is likely to enhance employees' sense of status and legitimacy in front of superiors, as well as, to create a sense of trust that impacts their proclivity to cooperate on challenging situations (Lind and Van Den Bos, 2002; Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). On the contrary, a lack of fairness can cast doubt on employees regarding their ability to cope with work demands (Judge and Colquitt, 2004). Therefore, while organizational justice's positive effects can increase the employees' ability to accomplish their job and make extra efforts on this, the unfair treatment can disrupt their attitude and cause lack of motivation toward their job.

Organizational justice will be more likely to create a sense of obligation to repay the organization through more positive job attitudes (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). We therefore particularly argue that positive perceptions of organizational justice will lead to a climate of fairness among employees, which will encourage employees with higher customer orientation to feel more engaged with their job. That is, when employees feel fairness on rewards or incentives (distributive justice), or they feel that decision-making procedures are consistent, unbiased and accurate (procedural justice), they will experience stronger commitment to apply the resources that they have to perform their job (Wang *et al.*, 2015). As employees' justice perceptions increase, they will happily repay the organization by working hard and complying with high job demands (Proost *et al.*, 2015). This higher reciprocity with the organization accompanied with the necessary resources to serve customers will shape the employees willingness to satisfy the customers, and perform extra efforts to satisfy them, ultimately impacting the organizational performance. In other words, the interaction of organizational justice and customer orientation will have an effect on organizational performance through the positive feelings of work engagement that the employees have. Thus, we propose that,

- H3.* Organizational justice will moderate the effects of employees' customer orientation on perceived organizational performance through work engagement, such that higher perception of organizational justice will strengthen the relationship between employees' customer orientation and work engagement.

Figure 1 summarized the proposed hypotheses.

Method

Data and sample

To collect the data for the study, a total of 352 questionnaires were personally distributed by the research team to a purposive sample of graduate students that participate in marketing and management modules within their academic program at a Chilean university. The method used for data collection was nonprobabilistic by judgment because the questionnaires were answered by salespeople, sales supervisors, marketing executives and business executives and who were also graduate students at this Chilean university.

Before applying the instrument, survey items were translated from English to Spanish and back translated from Spanish to English, to assure that the meaning of the scale items remained unaltered (Brislin, 1986). Later, a pretest of the questionnaire was conducted in order to establish the appropriateness of the wording, form and layout, sequence, question difficulty, instructions, length of the questionnaire and completion time. Three research assistants not related to this project and two marketing professors were requested to fill the questionnaire and indicate any concern.

To obtain the data, the questionnaire was self-administered on a simple transverse design, using a face to face strategy. Before starting the survey, part of the research team explained aspects related to confidentiality of the answers and their academic use to the participants, and then they requested the participants to sign an informed consent. There were no incentives for participants to join this study, and six individuals declined their participation when this was requested. Therefore, the overall response rate was 98%.

Because the purpose of this study includes to test hypotheses related to sales, services and marketing strategies, respondents were asked to indicate their area of work in their organizations. This question allows us to filter the final sample, selecting only respondents who strongly know about commercial and human resources managerial practices at their companies, as well as service and sales policies and procedures. In total, 249 responses were included in the final sample of this study. The remaining 97 answers were separated and later used to validate one of the scales used in this study. Results of *t*-test suggest no significant differences between both samples.

In summary, the final sample only included participants that belong to sales, service and marketing positions consisting of 249 individuals. From whom, 73.1% were male. The average age was 33 years (s.d. 5.86) and the average tenure was 3.66 years (s.d. 0.54).

Variables

Most of the items were asked to the managers with the label of “*Thinking in the majority of people that work in your organization, please indicate the degree that you agree or disagree with the following statements*”. Although otherwise indicated, the items were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “*strongly disagree*”, 5 = “*strongly agree*”), owing to ease of response and because interval scales are suitable to measure attitude and perceptions of individuals (Mathieson and Doane, 2005).

Work engagement. A three-dimension scale was built from a 17-item work engagement measure found in Schaufeli *et al.* (2006). The dimensions dedication (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.849), absorption (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.780) and vigor (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.807) were used to build the latent variable work engagement. Example items include the following: “on their work they feel full of energy” and “time flies when they are working”.

Organizational justice. A two-dimension scale was built from two sources: 5-item distributive justice – Mansour-Cole and Scott (1998) (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.819) and 4-item procedural justice – Sweeney and McFarlin (1993) (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.878). Some examples of the items that participants answered were “I feel that my actual job responsibilities are fair” and “How fair are the procedures utilized to give feedback on performance?”.

Customer orientation. A 5-item scale was adapted from Kohli and Jaworski (1990) and Valenzuela-Fernández and Villegas (2016) (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.909). Example items include the following: “[the company] offers after-sales service to meet their customers”; “[the company] frequently communicates with their customers”.

Perceived performance. A 10-item measure of performance was designed to collect participants’ perceptions of their companies’ performance. Participants were asked to evaluate how well their companies did in the last three years in different indicators compared to competitors in the market (items in the original language can be seen in Table A1).

As the perceived performance scale was designed for us, we subjected the 10-item measure, using the 97 participant sample, to an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). We used FACTOR 10.0 (Ferrando and Lorenzo-Seva, 2017) software to analyze EFA. Consistent with *a priori* predictions, an initial principal components analysis identified only one component with eigenvalue greater than 1 (value of 6.08), explaining 64.41% of the total variance. The suitability of a one-factor solution was also supported through inspection of the scree plot (Cattell, 1966). Inspection of the pattern coefficients for the rotated structure (using a Promax method) indicated that all the items loaded to only one factor.

To test the structure highlighted with the EFA, we tested the proposed perceived performance measure with an already validated 3-item scale of job satisfaction, adapted from Cammann *et al.* (1983), using a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) approach. CFA provided very good results. The items loaded on a two-factor solution with corresponding items loading to the expected factors, performance and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the chi-square was nonsignificant ($X^2 = 20.39$, $df = 53$) and the fit indices were also in the corresponding range (goodness-of-fit index (GFI) 0.99, comparative fit index (CFI) 1.0, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) 0.0). Factor loadings were high, ranging from 0.68 to 0.87 (performance: 0.68–0.83; job satisfaction: 0.70–0.87). Latent factor correlation was 0.297, revealing a moderated correlation between both variables. Therefore, the previous results confirm that the perceived performance measure can be discriminated from other measures, as the case of job satisfaction.

Final reliability analysis of the perceived performance scale using Cronbach's alpha also indicated high levels of reliability. The Cronbach's alpha value was 0.93 for the 97-participants sample (while, for the final sample of 247 participants Cronbach's alpha value was 0.908). In summary, the performance measure appears to have reasonable psychometric properties in terms of factor structure and reliability. We therefore proceeded to use it (see Table1).

Control variables

In addition to the mentioned variables, we controlled the hypothesized relationships by role conflict. As JD-R theory sets two alternative mechanisms are related to job resources and demands: work engagement and stress. Therefore, we decided to control the effects of the proposed moderator and mediator by role conflict, a proxy for stress. Role conflict represents the degree of inconsistency between the behaviors expected of an individual and his or her actual behaviors (Rizzo *et al.*, 1970). Higher inconsistency will result in stress and dissatisfaction. We measured role conflict with an 8-item scale adapted from Rizzo *et al.* (1970) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.848). Example items include the following: "They have to do things that should be done differently". Finally, we controlled for age, gender and tenure of the participants.

Results

Construct validity and reliability

The analysis for this study was conducted in Mplus software version 7.4 (Muthén and Muthén, 2015) using maximum likelihood estimation. First, we analyzed our measurement model using CFA. The 8-factor measurement model demonstrated adequate fit. The chi-square is 654.86 ($df = 361$) with Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.9, CFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.058 and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) 0.057 are within all the accepted cut-point values (Hu and Bentler, 1999). In addition, the 8-factor model was compared to alternative factor models. Table 2 displays the results for the CFA and the model comparison. The 8-factor measurement model showed better fit compared to the 7-factor and 6-factor models.

ARLA

	EFA		CFA	
Scales	PP		PP	JS
Items	Factor loadings		Factor loadings	
PP1	0.797			0.678
PP2	0.787			0.799
PP3	0.832			0.825
PP4	0.769			0.749
PP5	0.791			0.734
PP6	0.827			0.805
PP7	0.729			0.69
PP8	0.783			0.739
PP9	0.818			0.775
PP10	0.73			0.704
JS1			0.873	
JS2			0.698	
JS3			0.722	
Goodness-of-fit indices	Results (cutoff ¹)		Factor correlations (Cronbach's alpha)	
χ^2	$p = 0.99 (>0.05)$		PP	(0.93)
CFI	1.00 (>0.90)		JS	0.297 (0.803)
NNFI	1.00 (>0.90)			
GFI	0.987 (>0.90)			
RMSEA	0.00 (<0.06)			

Table 1. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses of responses to the perceived performance scale

Note(s): PP = perceived performance, JS = job satisfaction
¹Cutoff values were extracted from Frías-Navarro and Soler (2013) and Ferrando and Anguiano-Carrasco (2010)
Source(s): Own Elaboration

Model	Chi-sq, df	Chi-sq change, df change, significance	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
8-factors/final model	654.861,361		0.91	0.9	0.058	0.057
7-factors	792.348,366	$p < 0.001$	0.87	0.86	0.069	0.066
6-factors	798.796,367	$p < 0.001$	0.87	0.85	0.069	0.066

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis on final and competing models

Note(s): 8-factors comprises all the variables included; 7-factors comprises a model where both distributive and procedural justice are modeled under the same latent factor at the first order; 6-factors comprises a model where work engagement dedication, absorption and vigor are modeled under the same latent factor. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual

Following adequate overall fit, the individual items were analyzed to assess convergent validity of the measurement model. Each item loaded on their respective construct (at the first order level) at greater than 0.60. Finally, all the scales showed adequate reliability with each Cronbach's alpha. Table 3 displays Cronbach's alpha and descriptive statistics of the variables (see Table 3).

Structural models

After the assessment of the measurement properties of our model, to test the hypotheses proposed earlier we performed a SEM also in the Mplus software version 7.4 (Muthén and

Variable	Average	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Perceived performance	3.69	0.82	(0.908)										
2. Customer value orientation	3.46	0.99	0.409**	(0.909)									
3. Work engagement–vigor	3.45	0.68	0.127	0.351**	(0.807)								
4. Work engagement–dedication	3.32	0.80	0.245**	0.420**	0.617**	(0.849)							
5. Work engagement–absorption	3.42	0.65	0.219**	0.451**	0.715**	0.628**	(0.780)						
6. Distributive justice	3.11	0.90	0.218**	0.126	0.332**	0.352**	0.290**	(0.819)					
7. Procedural justice	3.13	0.89	0.147*	0.461**	0.309**	0.379**	0.344**	0.412**	(0.878)				
8. Role conflict	2.99	0.79	-0.139*	-0.278**	-0.246**	-0.365**	-0.196**	-0.450**	-0.446**	(0.848)			
9. Gender (female = 1)	0.25	-	-0.064	-0.032	-0.222**	-0.079	-0.217**	-0.245**	-0.088	0.133*	-		
10. Age	33.49	5.86	-0.093	-0.004	0.161*	0.155*	0.104	0.180**	-0.023	-0.067	-0.101	-	
11. Tenure (years)	3.66	0.54	0.153*	0.178**	0.109	0.105	0.088	0.076	0.078	-0.109	-0.093	0.355**	-

Note(s): $N = 236$, $*p < 0.05$ (2-tailed), $**p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). Cronbach's alpha are found in the diagonal

Table 3.
Descriptive statistics,
correlations and
Cronbach's alpha

Muthén, 2015). As we tested our hypotheses using latent variables at the first and second order, we assessed the fit of the model using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) criteria. Lower values of AIC and BIC indicate the best fitting model (Hayes, 2013). Results are shown in Table 4.

Hypothesis 1 stated that customer orientation is positively related to performance. As expected, the results showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between customer orientation and performance (Model 1: $\beta = 0.366, p < 0.01$). Hence, we found support for Hypothesis 1, showing that higher customer orientation has a positive relationship with perceived performance.

Hypothesis 2 states that work engagement mediates the relationship between customer orientation and performance. As seen in Model 1 in Table 4, we tested the indirect effect for the mediation of work engagement in the relationship between customer orientation and performance using 1,000 bootstrap estimations. The results show that there is a significant and positive mediation of work engagement in such relationship as the confidence interval does not include zero ($\beta = 0.056, 95\% \text{ CI} = [0.001, 0.144]$). In addition, also in Model 1, customer orientation is positive and significantly related to work engagement (Model 1: $\beta = 0.491, p < 0.05$) as well as work engagement is positive and significantly related to performance (Model 1: $\beta = 0.116, p < 0.05$).

Next, to test Hypothesis 3, we calculated the conditional indirect effects as shown in Model 2 in Table 4. Looking at Model 2, we found that work engagement has a marginally significant effect on performance ($\beta = 0.096, p < 0.10$). Therefore, more in detail, the conditional indirect effects (Hayes, 2013) show how changes in levels of organizational justice produce corresponding changes in the relationship between customer orientation, work engagement and performance at three levels (1 SD below the mean, mean and 1 SD above the

Effects	Model 1		Model 2	
	WE	Performance	WE	Performance
<i>Main effects</i>				
Customer orientation (CO)	0.491*	0.366**	0.475*	0.368**
Work engagement (WE)		0.116*		0.096 ⁺
Organizational justice (OJ)	0.565**		0.596**	
<i>Interaction effect</i>				
WE x OJ			-0.235 ⁺	
<i>Control covariates</i>				
Role conflict	0.229	0.121	0.219	0.122
Gender	-0.226	-0.044	-0.205	-0.041
Age	0.045 ⁺	-0.029*	0.048	-0.03*
Tenure	-0.022	0.033	-0.022	0.033
<i>Indirect effect¹</i>				
CO → WE → PERF		0.056[0.001,0.144]		
AIC	17032.468		16218.336	
BIC	17377.051		16589.178	
<i>(From model 2)</i>				
Conditional total effects ¹			Conditional indirect effects ¹	
-1 s.d. OJ	0.432[0.245,0.656]		-1 s.d. OJ	0.065[0.001,0.180]
0	0.413[0.218,0.638]		0	0.046[-0.003,0.135]
+1 s.d. OJ	0.394[0.187,0.636]		+1 s.d. OJ	0.027[-0.014,0.112]
Note(s): ⁺ t = 1.65, p < 0.10 (1-tailed); *t = 1.96, p < 0.05 level (2-tailed); **t = 2.57, p < 0.01 level (2-tailed). ¹ 95% CI values are based on a 1000 bootstrap samples and 236 cases. PERF = Performance				

Table 4. Hypotheses tests—structural equation model

mean). We found that for lower levels of organizational justice there is a positive indirect effect, while there is no effect for medium and high levels of organizational justice. The indirect path from customer orientation to performance varied significantly from 0 at the low values of organizational justice, as the bootstrapping confidence interval of the indirect effect at very low-level of organizational justice (conditional indirect effect = 0.065, 95% bias-corrected CI [0.001,0.180]) did not include zero. Hence, opposite to what we expected, among individuals with a very low perception of organizational justice, the indirect effect was positive, meaning that low customer orientation compared to high customer orientation individuals have less work engagement, which, in turn, is related to lower performance. On the other hand, when the organizational justice was medium (conditional indirect effect = 0.046, 95% bias-corrected CI = [-0.003, 0.135]) to high (conditional indirect effect = 0.027, 95% bias-corrected CI = [-0.014, 0.112]), customer orientation did not have an indirect effect on performance through work engagement.

Finally, the moderation of organizational justice on the relationship between customer orientation and work engagement has a marginally significant effect ($\beta = -0.235, p < 0.10$) as well as customer orientation and organizational justice have a positive effect and significant effect on work engagement ($\beta = -0.475, p < 0.05; \beta = -0.596, p < 0.01$, respectively). Figure 2 illustrates the moderation, revealing that individuals who perceive lower organizational justice have less work engagement especially for individuals with low customer orientation.

Among the control variables, role conflict did not show any significant relationship with the dependent variables. Similarly, gender and tenure were not significantly related to either work engagement or performance. Age, however, had a positive marginally significant effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.045, p < 0.10$), while a negative and significant effect on performance ($\beta = -0.029, p < 0.05$). Thus, higher age is related to a positive perception of work engagement and a more negative perception of performance.

Discussion

Creating and increasing customer value plays a significant role in building satisfied and loyal customers (Schwepker and Ingram, 2016), thereby stimulating companies' competitive advantages and performance. Customer orientation becomes a strategy through which companies can differentiate by offering additional value to customer relationships beyond the traditionally offered price/quality ratio. However, companies must commit to their frontline sales and services employees to adopt a customer orientation, by encouraging in them a strong belief into their work that customers come first and they have to make extra

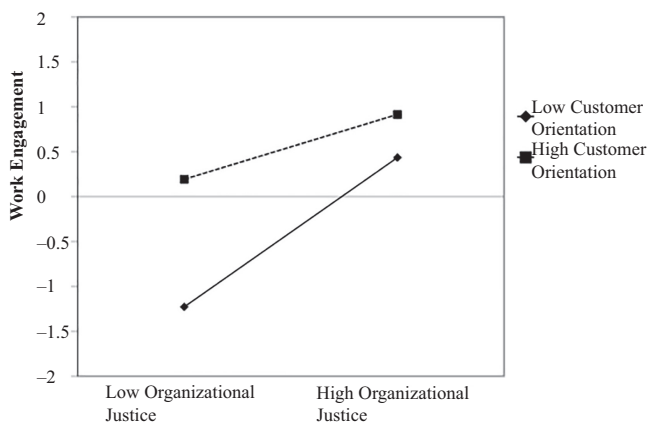


Figure 2. Moderation of organizational justice on customer orientation and work engagement

efforts to satisfy them. As the employees strive to adopt a customer orientation, the feelings about their job as well as the support that companies offer to them can influence how they turn such beliefs into better performance. In this study, we proposed that work engagement is the mechanism through which customer orientation affects performance. While, organizational justice can enhance the relationship between customer orientation and work engagement, fostering a stronger impact of customer orientation on performance through work engagement.

This study findings reveal that customer orientation is positively and strongly related to performance ([Hypothesis 1](#)). While work engagement mediates the effects of customer orientation on performance ([Hypothesis 2](#)). Organizational justice fosters the relationship between customer orientation and work engagement. However, opposite to what we expected, it will be under low levels of organizational justice that customer orientation will have an impact on performance through work engagement ([Hypothesis 3](#)). That is, the lack of organizational justice will impact the level of engagement, and thus on performance, for employees at different levels of customer orientation.

Multiple theoretical contributions are reflected in our research results. First, our research extends the findings of previous research (see [Zablah et al., 2012](#)) regarding the mediating role of work engagement on the relationship between customer orientation and performance. Prior studies found that work engagement operationalized as either or both job satisfaction and commitment were mediators of customer orientation and performance (e.g. [Harris et al., 2005](#); [Rod and Ashill, 2010](#)). However, in this study, work engagement is not operationalized as job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment, but involves the combination of three dimensions (i.e. dedication, absorption and vigor) which represent three alternative work-related states of mind that characterize a person's engagement. This is significant in light of extensive research that has argued that the concept of work engagement is different from job satisfaction and organizational commitment for several reasons. More precisely, [Schaufeli \(2013\)](#) explains that engagement shows different patterns of correlations with other variables (e.g. in-role and extra-role performance), in comparison to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, work engagement has shown an effect in some variables independent of the contribution that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have (see [Rich et al., 2010](#); [Christian et al., 2011](#)). Numerous studies have documented as well that this multidimensional conceptualization of work engagement is a mediator of job resources with different outcomes, such as turnover intentions ([Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004](#)) and proactive behaviors ([Schaufeli and Salanova, 2008](#); [Hakanen et al., 2008](#)). Therefore, taken together, these arguments testify the importance of testing previous findings in the customer orientation literature, in line with JD-R theory, to strengthen the idea that work engagement is related, as a mediator, to customer orientation and performance.

Furthermore, considering dedication, absorption and vigor as drivers of the effects that customer orientation has on performance outlines the mechanism through which customer orientation, as a work value and resource, influences the behaviors of frontline sales and service employees. That is, employees' orientation to provide high level of customer value will be driven through their commitment to their job, in particular, by their energy and mental resilience toward their job, by their sense of significance and pride when they satisfy customers' needs, and by their efforts and enthusiasm to serve customers beyond the price/quality ratio. While reaching sales goals cannot be ignored, managers must encourage the right behaviors to satisfy customers and reach such goals. Thus, actions that encourage and reward customer satisfying behavior among employees must be done accompanied by measures that encourage the employees' engagement with their job. For instance, training can focus on knowledge and skills associated with customer orientation that lead to create or add greater value for customers, yet managers should also look at providing enough motivation that incentives employees' dedication, absorption and vigor with their job. These

feelings of commitment should encourage employees on frontline sales and service positions to take care of their customers in the best way possible and ensure a better performance for their organizations.

In addition, our findings also support the idea that sales managers can influence employees' customer orientation and work engagement by reinforcing the feelings of justice in the organization. Specifically, we showed that organizational justice, as procedural and distributive justice, strengthen the effects of customer orientation on work engagement. Due to its potentially positive effects on employees' motivation to work when they feel that they are fairly treated in their organization (Cojuharenco *et al.*, 2011), organizational justice can create more positive conditions for employees with high customer orientation to increase their work engagement. On the contrary, an unjust treatment reduces work engagement even more when employees have lower customer orientation. For instance, consider the situation of an employee that experiences unfair treatment when he or she serves customers (e.g. unpaid overtime hours or unreasonable shifts allocation) can affect his or her level of commitment with the job, despite having the resources to satisfy their needs. Contrary to our expectations for Hypothesis 3, we found that the mediation effect of work engagement on the relationship between customer orientation and performance is significant to lower levels of organizational justice. Meaning that an unfair treatment is more likely to shape the levels of engagement that employees experience related to their customer orientation, and in turn, affect the performance of the organization. As such, it is likely that a fair treatment does not have a more significant impact than an unjust treatment by the organizations. Hence employees at frontline sales and service positions will be more sensitive to being treated unfairly rather than fairly. A lack of fairness tends to circumvent customer orientation and work engagement, reducing successful performance.

Judge and Colquitt (2004) posit that organizational justice can be seen as a stressor that creates aversive or unpleasant emotional and physiological states to employees, particularly when they face situations that are outside the employee's control. Indeed, Lind and Van Den Boss (2002) explain that people use unfairness to manage their reactions to uncertainty, experiencing additional distress in unfair experiences. Because it is likely that serving customers and satisfying their needs involves uncertainty and lack of control by the employees, organizational justice can be an additional stressor for employees with high levels of customer orientation. Increasingly high workloads, resulting from salespeople's need to meet escalating customer demands (i.e. create value) and deliver more output, cause already some stress to salespeople (Jaramillo *et al.*, 2011). Hence, avoiding perceptions of unfairness can be essential to facilitate the job of employees at frontline and service positions. Looking after organizational justice can represent an opportunity for managers to encourage positive commitment of the sales and service employees. The organization must be careful to provide a clarity in the procedures and transparency in the decision-making to reduce perceptions of unfairness.

Finally, an additional methodological contribution of this study is the development of an alternative measure of performance. Although briefly described in the Method section, we validated a measure of performance that groups general perceptions of indicators that assess the performance of a company with respect to others in their industry. In this way, through an egocentric measure participants evaluated the performance of their companies, representing an adequate proxy to evaluate how well or bad their organizations are generally doing. Given the lack of opportunity and complexity to obtain more realistic measures of performance, our scale satisfied its purpose. However, we encourage future researchers to prefer alternative sources of performance measure if it is possible.

Limitations and future research

Despite some limitations, this study may serve to stimulate additional research in this area. First, the study's model is limited because it does not provide a complete picture of the

antecedents or consequences for any of its constructs. For instance, although we controlled by role conflict (a proxy for stress), we did not test any relationship concerning this variable with the constructs on the hypotheses. Second, an additional limitation resides in the use of self-report scales for all research variables. In this regard, it should be noted that while this study examined managers' perceptions of employees working at frontline sales and service positions' attitudes and behaviors, their perceptions are influenced by the state of the practices within the organization. We acknowledge that a longitudinal study including the constructs in this paper's model may shed additional insight. Additionally, the final sample was limited to executives working on areas related to salespeople, marketing and service provision. Nonetheless, responders from other areas could have also offered alternative insights, yet we assume that the chosen participants will have a more accurate perception of the reality that employees at frontline and service positions experience.

Fourth, when measuring organizational justice we only considered the structural measures of justice (distributive and procedural justice) because these tend to be more stable and less influenced by the interaction and context of individuals. Future research should consider interactional justice to reassess our findings. Finally, we did not consider multisource data regarding the interactions between employees and customers, employees and manager, to explore the constructs of interest. Future research on frontline and service employees in a multilevel framework could be particularly valuable in this regard by allowing other relevant constructs to be introduced as antecedents or moderators.

Furthermore, future research should also consider other control variables that may also influence customer orientation and performance relationship. There could also be value in exploring possible downsides of customer orientation on work engagement and performance as well as evaluating in more detail the influence of organizational justice from a stressor perspective on the customer orientation and work engagement relationship.

Conclusion

As companies continue to move toward an emphasis on the development of long-term customer relationships, managers must understand the psychological influencers of customer-oriented approaches as a way to obtain competitive advantages and foster organizational performance (Terho *et al.*, 2015). The current study confirms that customer orientation has a positive and significant impact on companies' performance. In addition, it also reveals that work engagement mediates the relationship of customer orientation and performance when companies have lower levels of organizational justice. Several issues from our work have relevance for marketing practice and research. In particular, the negative role that low organizational justice can play in the relationship between customer orientation and work engagement. Unjust perceptions can threaten customer-oriented approaches, hence undermine the efforts to satisfy customers and ultimately increase performance.

References

- Adams, J.S. (1965), "Inequity in social exchange", *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Academic Press, New York, Vol. 2, pp. 267-299.
- Anaza, N.A. and Rutherford, B. (2012), "How organizational and employee customer identification, and customer orientation affect job engagement", *Journal of Service Management*, Vol. 23 No. 5, pp. 616-639.
- Babakus, E., Yavas, U. and Ashill, N.J. (2009), "The role of customer orientation as a moderator of the job demand–burnout–performance relationship: a surface-level trait perspective", *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 85 No. 4, pp. 480-492.
- Bakker, A.B. and Demerouti, E. (2007), "The job demands-resources model: state of the art", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 309-328.

-
- Bakker, A.B., Van Veldhoven, M. and Xanthopoulou, D. (2010), "Beyond the demand-control model", *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 309-328.
- Bettencourt, L.A. and Brown, S.W. (2003), "Role stressors and customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors in service organizations", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 394-408.
- Bitner, M.J. (1990), "Evaluating service encounters: the effects of physical surroundings and employee responses", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54 No. 2, pp. 69-82.
- Bove, L.L. and Johnson, L.W. (2000), "A customer-service worker relationship model", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, Vol. 11 No. 5, pp. 491-511.
- Brislin, R.W. (1986), "The wording and translation of research instruments" in Lonner, W.J. and Berry, J.W. (Eds.), *Cross-cultural research and methodology series, Field methods in cross-cultural research*, Sage Publications, Beverley Hills, CA, Vol. 8, pp. 137-164.
- Brown, T.J., Mowen, J.C., Donovan, D.T. and Licata, J.W. (2002), "The customer orientation of service workers: personality trait effects on self-and supervisor performance ratings", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 110-119.
- Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, D. and Klesh, J. (1983), "Assessing the attitudes and perceptions of organizational members", in Seashore, S., Lawler, E., Mirvis, P. and Cammann, C. (Eds), *Assessing Organizational Change*, John Wiley, New York, NY.
- Cattell, R.B. (1966), "The scree test for the number of factors", *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 245-276.
- Christian, M.S., Garza, A.S. and Slaughter, J.E. (2011), "Work engagement: a quantitative review and test of its relations with task and contextual performance", *Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 64 No. 1, pp. 89-136.
- Chu, Z., Wang, Q. and Lado, A.A. (2016), "Customer orientation, relationship quality, and performance", *The International Journal of Logistics Management*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 738-754.
- Cojuharenco, I., Patient, D. and Bashshur, M.R. (2011), "Seeing the 'forest' or the 'trees' of organizational justice: effects of temporal perspective on employee concerns about unfair treatment at work", *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Vol. 116 No. 1, pp. 17-31.
- Colquitt, J.A. and Chertkoff, J.M. (2002), "Explaining injustice: the interactive effect of explanation and outcome on fairness perceptions and task motivation", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 591-610.
- Colquitt, J.A., Conlon, D.E., Wesson, M.J., Porter, C.O. and Ng, K.Y. (2001), "Justice at the millennium: a meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86 No. 3, p. 425.
- Colquitt 2003, Colquitt, J.A. and Greenberg, J. (2003), "Organizational Justice: A Fair Assessment of the State of the Literature", in: Greenberg, J. (ed.), *Organizational Behavior: The State of the Science (2nd ed)*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, pp. 165-210.
- Colquitt, J.A., Zapata-Phelan, C.P. and Roberson, Q.M. (2005), "Justice in teams: a review of fairness effects in collective contexts", *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, Vol. 24, pp. 53-94.
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A.B., Nachreiner, F. and Schaufeli, W.B. (2001), "The job demands-resources model of burnout", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86 No. 3, p. 499.
- Donavan, D.T., Brown, T.J. and Mowen, J.C. (2004), "Internal benefits of service-worker customer orientation: job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 68 No. 1, pp. 128-146.
- Ferrando, P.J. and Anguiano-Carrasco, C. (2010), "El análisis factorial como técnica de investigación en psicología", *Papeles Del Psicólogo*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 18-33.
- Ferrando, P.J. and Lorenzo-Seva, U. (2017), "Program factor at 10: origins, development and future directions", *Psicothema*, Vol. 29 No. 2, pp. 236-240.

-
- Frías-Navarro, D. and Soler, M.P. (2013), "Prácticas del análisis factorial exploratorio (AFE) en la investigación sobre conducta del consumidor y marketing", *Artículos en PDF disponibles desde 1994 hasta 2013*, A partir de 2014 visítenos en www.elsevier.es/sumapsicol, Vol. 19 No. 1.
- Greenberg, J. (1986), "Determinants of perceived fairness of performance evaluations", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 71 No. 2, p. 340.
- Hakanen, J.J., Perhoniemi, R. and Toppinen-Tanner, S. (2008), "Positive gain spirals at work: from job resources to work engagement, personal initiative and work-unit innovativeness", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol. 73 No. 1, pp. 78-91.
- Harris, E.G., Mowen, J.C. and Brown, T.J. (2005), "Re-examining salesperson goal orientations: personality influencers, customer orientation, and work satisfaction", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 19-35.
- Hayes, A.F. (2013), *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach*, Guilford publications, New York.
- Hennig Thurau, T. (2004), "Customer orientation of service employees", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*.
- Homburg, C., Müller, M. and Klarmann, M. (2011), "When does salespeople's customer orientation lead to customer loyalty? The differential effects of relational and functional customer orientation", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 39 No. 6, pp. 795-812.
- Hu, L.T. and Bentler, P.M. (1999), "Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: conventional criteria vs new alternatives", *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 1-55.
- Huber, F., Hermann, A. and Morgan, R.E. (2001), "Gaining competitive advantage through customer value-oriented management", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 41-53.
- Jaramillo, F., Mulki, J.P. and Boles, J.S. (2011), "Workplace stressors, job attitude, and job behaviors: is interpersonal conflict the missing link?", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 339-356.
- Jimenez, N., San-Martin, S. and Azuela, J.I. (2016), "Trust and satisfaction: the keys to client loyalty in mobile commerce", *Academia Revista Latinoamericana de Administración*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 486-510.
- Judge, T.A. and Colquitt, J.A. (2004), "Organizational justice and stress: the mediating role of work-family conflict", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 89 No. 3, p. 395.
- Keillor, B.D., Parker, R.S. and Pettijohn, C.E. (2000), "Relationship oriented characteristics and individual salesperson performance", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 7-22.
- Kelley, S.W. (1992), "Developing customer orientation among service employees", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 27-36.
- Kohli, A.K. and Jaworski, B.J. (1990), "Market orientation: the construct, research propositions, and managerial implications", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54 No. 2, pp. 1-18.
- Kumar, V., Venkatesan, R. and Reinartz, W. (2008), "Performance implications of adopting a customer-focused sales campaign", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 72 No. 5, pp. 50-68.
- Leventhal, G.S. (1976), "The distribution of rewards and resources in groups and organizations", in Berkowitz, L. and Walster, E. (Eds), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Equity theory, Toward a general theory of social interaction, Academic Press, New York, Vol. 9, pp. 91-131.
- Leventhal, G.S. (1980), "What should be done with equity theory?", *Social Exchange*, Springer, Boston, Massachusetts, MA, pp. 27-55.
- Lind, E.A. and Van Den Bos, K. (2002), "When fairness works: toward a general theory of uncertainty management", *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 24, pp. 181-224.

-
- Londono, B., Prado, Y. and Salazar, V. (2017), "Service quality, perceived value, satisfaction and intention to pay", *Academia Revista Latinoamericana de Administración*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 269-286.
- Luo, X., Hsu, M.K. and Liu, S.S. (2008), "The moderating role of institutional networking in the customer orientation-trust/commitment-performance causal chain in China", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 36 No. 2, pp. 202-214.
- Macintosh, G. (2007), "Customer orientation, relationship quality, and relational benefits to the firm", *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 150-159.
- Mansour Cole, D.M. and Scott, S.G. (1998), "Hearing it through the grapevine: the influence of source, leader relations, and legitimacy on survivors' fairness perceptions", *Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 51 No. 1, pp. 25-54.
- Mathieson, K. and Doane, D. (2005), "Using fine-grained likert scales in web surveys", *Alliance Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 27-34.
- McNaughton, R.B., Osborne, P. and Imrie, B.C. (2002), "Market-oriented value creation in service firms", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36 Nos 9-10, pp. 990-1002.
- Muthén, L.K. and Muthén, B.O. (2015), *MPlus for Windows 7.41*, Muthén and Muthén, Los Angeles.
- Nahrgang, J.D., Morgeson, F.P. and Hofmann, D.A. (2011), "Safety at work: a meta-analytic investigation of the link between job demands, job resources, burnout, engagement, and safety outcomes", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 96 No. 1, p. 71.
- Plouffe, C.R., Hulland, J. and Wachner, T. (2009), "Customer-directed selling behaviors and performance: a comparison of existing perspectives", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 37 No. 4, p. 422.
- Proost, K., Verboon, P. and Van Ruysseveldt, J. (2015), "Organizational justice as buffer against stressful job demands", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 30 No. 4, pp. 487-499.
- Rich, B.L., Lepine, J.A. and Crawford, E.R. (2010), "Job engagement: antecedents and effects on job performance", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 53 No. 3, pp. 617-635.
- Rizzo, J.R., House, R.J. and Lirtzman, S.I. (1970), "Role conflict and ambiguity in complex organizations", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 150-163.
- Rod, M. and Ashill, N.J. (2010), "Management commitment to service quality and service recovery performance: a study of frontline employees in public and private hospitals", *International Journal of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 84-103.
- Saxe, R. and Weitz, B.A. (1982), "The SOCO scale: a measure of the customer orientation of salespeople", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 343-351.
- Schaufeli, W.B. (2013), "What is engagement?", in Truss, C., Alfes, K., Delbridge, R., Shantz, A. and Soane, E. (Eds), *Employee Engagement in Theory and Practice*, Routledge, London.
- Schaufeli, W.B. and Bakker, A.B. (2004), "Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: a multi sample study", *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 293-315.
- Schaufeli, W.B. and Bakker, A.B. (2010), Defining and measuring work engagement: Bringing clarity to the concept, in Bakker, A.B. and Leiter, M.P. (Eds), *Work engagement: A Handbook of Essential Theory and Research*, Psychology Press, London, pp. 10-24.
- Schaufeli, W.B. and Salanova, M. (2008), "Enhancing work engagement through the management of human resources", in Naswall, K., Hellgren, J. and Sverke, M. (Eds), *The Individual in the Changing Working Life*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 380-402.
- Schaufeli, W.B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V. and Bakker, A.B. (2002), "The measurement of engagement and burnout: a two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach", *Journal of Happiness Studies*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 71-92.

-
- Schaufeli, W.B., Bakker, A.B. and Salanova, M. (2006), "The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: a cross-national study", *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, Vol. 66 No. 4, pp. 701-716.
- Schwepker, C.H. and Ingram, T.N. (2016), "Ethical leadership in the salesforce: effects on salesperson customer orientation, commitment to customer value and job stress", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 31 No. 7, pp. 914-927.
- Sergeant, A. and Frenkel, S. (2000), "When do customer contact employees satisfy customers?", *Journal of Service Research*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 18-34.
- Slater, S.F. (1997), "Developing a customer value-based theory of the firm", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 25 No. 2, p. 162.
- Steenkamp, J.B.E. and De Jong, M.G. (2010), "A global investigation into the constellation of consumer attitudes toward global and local products", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 74 No. 6, pp. 18-40.
- Stock, R.M. and Hoyer, W.D. (2005), "An attitude-behavior model of salespeople's customer orientation", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 536-552.
- Swanson, S.R., Kelley, S.W. and DorschM, M.J. (1998), "Inter-organizational ethical perceptions and buyer-seller relationships", *Journal of Business-To-Business Marketing*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 3-31.
- Sweeney, P.D. and McFarlin, D.B. (1993), "Workers' evaluations of the 'ends' and the 'means': an examination of four models of distributive and procedural justice", *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Vol. 55 No. 1, pp. 23-40.
- Terho, H., Eggert, A., Haas, A. and Ulaga, W. (2015), "How sales strategy translates into performance: the role of salesperson customer orientation and value-based selling", *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 45, pp. 12-21.
- Valenzuela, L.M., Mulki, J.P. and Jaramillo, J.F. (2010), "Impact of customer orientation, inducements and ethics on loyalty to the firm: customers' perspective", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 93 No. 2, pp. 277-291.
- Valenzuela-Fernández, L.M. and Villegas, F.J. (2016), "Influence of customer value orientation, brand value, and business ethics level on organizational performance", *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios-RBGN*, Vol. 18 No. 59, pp. 5-23.
- Wachner, T., Plouffe, C.R. and Grégoire, Y. (2009), "SOCO's impact on individual sales performance: the integration of selling skills as a missing link", *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 38 No. 1, pp. 32-44.
- Wang, H.J., Lu, C.Q. and Siu, O.L. (2015), "Job insecurity and job performance: the moderating role of organizational justice and the mediating role of work engagement", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 100 No. 4, p. 1249.
- Zablah, A.R., Franke, G.R., Brown, T.J. and Bartholomew, D.E. (2012), "How and when does customer orientation influence frontline employee job outcomes? A meta-analytic evaluation", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 76 No. 3, pp. 21-40.

Appendix

The role of organizational justice

Item	Sobre los últimos tres años Y con respecto a su principales competidores como percibe a su EMPRESA RESPECTO A								
1.	Su desempeño con respecto al aumento de clientes	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	
2.	Su desempeño respecto a la rentabilidad (utilidad) del negocio	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	
3.	Cambios en el valor de mercado	Claramente ha disminuido	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente ha aumentado	
4.	Cambios en el número de clientes de la empresa	Claramente ha disminuido	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente ha aumentado	
5.	El desempeño de los productos/ servicios de su empresa en el mercado	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	
6.	Mayores niveles de ingresos por ventas	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	
7.	Cambios en el grado de satisfacción de sus clientes	Claramente ha disminuido	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente ha aumentado	
8.	Cambios en la preferencia que tienen sus clientes por la marca	Claramente ha disminuido	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente ha aumentado	
9.	Tasa de retención de clientes (0 menor fuga de clientes)	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	
10.	Participación de cuota de mercado	Claramente peor	1	2	3	4	5	Claramente mejor	

Table A1.
Performance scale
items in the original
language

Corresponding author

Francisco Trincado-Munoz can be contacted at: F.trincadomunoz@surrey.ac.uk

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com