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CUSTOMER EMPOWERMENT (DIGITAL ERA): DOUBLE EDGED SWORD FOR COMPANIES

Abstract

In today's technological era, organizations have to offer more control to the customers to gain a competitive advantage. This shift in control from marketers to customers has raised some important issues for organizations. It is the fact that satisfied customer is the source of business success and profit optimization but no marketing strategy is successful without employees' participation. Progression in the Service sector over the past few decades has shifted control in customer's hands. This has increased managers' desire to control their employees by using customers. However, this need to control employees by using customers has put managers in a dilemma. Managers want to control front line employees by using customers; yet, it may stifle employees' creativity and autonomy. This study is an attempt to understand customer control from the employee's perspective instead of the customer or organization. If customers are essential for business then committed and satisfied workforce is also the backbone. By building a bridge between organizational and individual perspective; this study is an attempt to make all parties unanimously understand customer control. 'Customer control' is a component of the management control system; it is designed and implemented by organizations to achieve specific goals. It is assumed that controls are implicitly designed and executed by managers but in reality, many other factors play important role in these controls' creation. Customer control is one of the controls originated by the external factors. This study is contributing to the literature of marketing, HR and management control by introducing customer control and studying its effects on the workforce.

Keywords: Customer control, employee behaviour, management control system.

Introduction

"To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace" by Doug Conant.
&

"If you take care of your employees they will take care of your customers and your business
will take care of itself" by J. W. Marriott.

"Customer is a king," "Customer is a boss," "Customer is always right," these phrases traced back to early 1900s. These are part of the business world for almost a century but recently adapted in its true spirit. This is all due to the rapid changes in artificial intelligence, advance technologies and computer devices in the last few decades (Nambisan, Wright, & Feldman, 2019). This digital change has most affected the business sector. The business has to adapt new ways to keep in the competition. Digitalization has changed how things were done in the past (Warner & Wäger, 2019). This change has not only replaced paper with digital data but it has also transformed traditional ways of doing business to digital ones (Rogers, 2016). These transformations not only affected the ways of doing business but changed the roles of business parties. Customer role from "passive" is changed to the "active" participant (Rogers, 2016; Chen, Chen, & Lin, 2015). This role change has put the foundation of "customer control". This new role has given a lot of power to the customer; Sperber (2019) suggested that customer is the manager in this internet era. The customer was always important for the business success especially through feedback (Erdogan & Uz Kurt, 2010) but now has control over all the variables which were previously in control of marketers (Wathieu et al., 2002). DELL is the best example to understand customer control; DELL suffered a lot because of its weak customer care and feedback collection service. It not only has to close its call centres in India but also has to launch a separate site "IdeaStorm" just for the customer's feedback and complaints. Importance of customer control can be examined through the priority given to customer's feedback and reviews by all these top brands such as Amazon, eBay, Uber, Netflix, Airbnb, Paytm, Hilton hotel, Slack and Twitter.

Every coin has two sides and such like that this customer empowerment has raised some tension among the marketers who think that it is a transfer of power from marketers to consumers (Pires, Stanton, & Rita, 2006). From a consumer's perspective, more knowledge about the product is always good and they always appreciate the encouragement given to their opinions and suggestions. Brands are turning towards their consumers for the creation of their brand image. The idea is to have access that is more diverse by empowering the customers. The more control customers perceive they have, the more loyal they will be to the brand and at the same time brands will have to reduce the cost of designing a new product (Morrissey, 2005). As Foucault (1972), suggested that more knowledge gives you more power and consumers consider themselves powerful being having so much knowledge. How do suppliers see this shift of power may be an interesting study? Customer empowerment/control is the topic of interest for marketers. Most of the past research is focused on the customer side, ignoring the effect of customer behaviour on the employee (Yi, Natarajan, & Gong, 2011). Yi, Natarajan & Gong (2011), discussed different perspectives of how customers are part of the organization's human resource and how they affect the employees of the organization. They believe that customers are not a passive but active part of this human resource chain and influences employee's behaviour.

Management control is always focused on the internal factors of the organization but the latest research in the area of control explored the potential influence of external factors on the organization. Recent studies in the control field highlighted the prospective influence of external factors such as market and customer on the organization. According to these researches, customers can influence the actions and behaviours of the organizational workforce (Malek, Sarin, & Jaworski, 2018). Customer control's significance in today's world cannot be

ignored and yet it is still an understudied concept especially from human resource and management control perspectives.

The situation discussed in the above paragraphs has put the organization in an ambivalent state. At one hand the organization wants to satisfy its customer but on the other hand, it does not want to affect its employees well being. Over and above, there is also no clear indication in the literature about how this 'customer control' is exercised on employees. There is a plethora of research that suggests that customer control is a cause of negative behaviour in employees (Yang, Yu, & Huang, 2018) but that research was only focused on from the marketing side and mostly concerned with customer satisfaction. There is a dearth of research on the role of customer control and its effect on employee behaviour. Prior to 2007, customer control is not focused on by many scholars (Harmeling, Moffett, Arnold, & Carlson, 2017).

Therefore, this research will contribute to the literature by trying to answer the following issues raised from the above dilemma; what is customer control and how this new control is affecting the employees? This research will not only contribute to management control literature but also to HRM and marketing as well.

Research Questions

This research will contribute to the literature by answering the following questions.

- **Main question**

Is the customer the new manager and is customer control essential for today's organizational success?

- **Sub questions**

1. What are the key factors that are central to customer control?
2. What strategies and plans an organization has to adopt and what are the processes and activities required for the successful implementation of customer control?
3. Does customer control influence employee behaviour?

Literature review

Control

Over the years, to study the desire to have control over the events of one's life has appealed to many scholars. The word "control" has many meanings in English but mostly it is used in "dominance" and "inspection" sense. Dominance is having power on other person or group; whereas, "inspection" is more related to the monitoring and correction activities. Therefore, both words are accurate choice to explain control in an organization (Otley & Berry, 1980). White (1959) defined control as a desire for power over the surroundings.

Modes of control

Hopwood (1974) explained the Modes of control (Chiapellso, 1996).

1. Source of influence (Who or what).
2. The object of control (On what or whom).
3. Reaction and attitude in response to control.
4. The moment when control was exercised.
5. The process by which the influence is exercised.
6. Finally, the means and the medium used to exercise this control.

By focusing on Hopwood's (1974) modes of control, we are trying to design 'customer control' tool and study how management is using customers to direct employees' behaviour.

Control and management

It is not easy to define the organizational control system but Abernethy & Chua (1996) has categorized it as "a combination of control mechanisms designed and implemented by management to increase the probability that organizational actors will behave in ways consistent with the objectives of the dominant organizational coalition" (p. 573). Organizational control is "attempts by the organization to increase the probability that individuals and groups will behave in ways that lead to the attainment of organizational goals"

(Flamholtz, Das, & Tsui, 1985). Organizational control is exercised through management control. According to (Malmi & Brown, 2008), "systems, rules, practices, and other activities management put in place to direct employee behaviour should be called management control" (p. 290).

MCS from traditional quantifiable practices has been moved towards a much broader concept. Today's MCS include all internal and external environmental factors and information related to markets, customers, competitors, informal procedures which can guide managers (Malek et al., 2018; Chenhall, 2003). Management controls can be classified in a variety, based on their nature and focus such as output, technical, bureaucratic, normative, behavioural (Rennstam, 2017).

According to William G. Ouchi (1979), there are two types of control strategies. One is to use performance evaluation for control. In this strategy, the manager monitors and then rewards the performance. It is known as the cybernetic process. Output and behavioural controls are examples of this kind of control. While, in behavioural control, actions and behaviours of members are monitored and any deviation from organizational policies and procedures are correct. Along with all these management controls; customer control is also used in organizations but without proper understanding and is still an understudied area and profound research is required.

Customer control

By keeping in view Hopwood (1974) modes of control and the service model of Raaij & Pruyn (1998), we can define customer control as "A process through which one party (customer) has the power (which has given by management to gain a competitive advantage) to influence the other party (employee/management) by using different mediums." Another way of defining customer control is "Customer control is the set of processes that empower the customer to have a certain degree of control over the management/employee of a certain organization. These processes in turn also increase the efficiency and output of an organization; thus, benefiting all the parties and their relationships."

Based on Raaij & Pruyn (1998) service model, "customer control" is composed of two parts. (I) Behavioural/ process control (three stages of service model (input, process, output)) (II) Output/ decisional control (evaluation stage (customer feedback after delivery)). Therefore, we can say that 'customer control' not only includes 'customer participation' in creation but also involves the 'evaluation' and post-purchase satisfaction of the customer.

Customer control (Behavioural/ process control - phase I)

This study is focused on the influence of customer control on the bank employees. Therefore, we have adapted previous definitions of behavioural control to our research context (i.e., in financial services). By conceptualizing behavioural control as a construct that measures the degree to which customer involves in information sharing, recommendations, and becoming a part of service delivery and value creation process (Auh, Menguc, Katsikeas, & Jung, 2019); we presume that customer participation in service process is a control over the whole service process and may be referred as 'behavioural/ process control.'

Customer contributions in a service process, along with the new approach, belief and conduct, has been referred to as customer participation (Chen, Raab, & Tanford, 2015). Customer participation is referred to the customer behaviours which occurs after mental and physical contribution, helping in creating and delivering the services and products (Chen et al., 2015). These behaviours can be noticed through their mental and physical contribution to the service process (Li & Hsu, 2018). Firms promote customer participation in the service process to gain a competitive advantage through customer's advice. Customer's proactive involvement in the process helps to have value creation for the firms (Ranjan & Read, 2016). Today's customer participation is not just an ordinary information sharing but it has more control due to the virtual community (online customer networks) (Pires et al., 2006). Therefore, the level of approval for

an individual consumer has increased. Customer by becoming part of the service creation process has now become more in control (Shaw, Bailey, & Williams, 2011).

Customer control (output/ decisional control - phase II)

The customer experience of the service model and its whole stages is a difficult concept to understand. Every customer has unique characteristics, which makes it complex to comprehend things from the customer's point of view. Customer's feedback, reviews and suggestions facilitate to understand customer's perception about whole service experience (Raaij & Pruyn, 1998). Customer feedback is one of the basic elements of the evaluation stage.

“Information coming directly from customers about the satisfaction or dissatisfaction they feel with a product or a service. Customer comments and complaints given to a company are an important resource for improving and addressing the needs and wants of the customer. The information is procured through written or oral surveys, online forms, emails, letters, or phone calls from the customer to the company.” (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/customer-feedback.html>(customer feedback)). Customer feedback helps companies to understand what is the perception of the customer about the company (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). It also helps companies to improve their products and services and fix the problems (Wirtz, Tambyah, & Mattila, 2010).

This is the era of the digitalization and no one can deny the power of social media. Novelist and playwright Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1839, in his historical play Cardinal Richelieu wrote: "The pen is mightier than the sword". Impact of the customer whether it's an oral or written has a strong impact on other customers and is known as "customer-driven influence" (CDI) (Blazevic et al., 2013). There are two types of customer feedback; solicited and unsolicited. When a company is asking for feedback it is solicited but when the customer itself wants to talk about his experience about product and service it is called unsolicited feedback (Sampson, 1996).

According to McAfee & Brynjolfsson (2012), companies which frequently use customer feedback are more productive and profitable than their opponents. The technological development is affecting the relationship between customers and companies more as today's customer has more access to the market and with his single click; he can either build or destroy the image of a company (Libai et al., 2010). Great value has given to the customer feedback in research (Ordenes, Theodoulidis, Burton, Gruber, & Zaki, 2014).

Customer's desire to have control over all the service stages includes both phases. The customer wants to be a part of the whole service process starting from the input stage and have a final say after it finishes. Customers when perceiving that they have a final say in a complaint resolution recovers their sense of control and negative feelings convert to the positive and their opinion about firm improves (Guo, Lotz, Tang, & Gruen, 2015).

Employee reactions to the control:

The past research on customer control has shown mixed finding on the effect of customer participation on employee behaviours and attitudes (Chan et al., 2010). In customer control, the employee-customer relationship is dominated by customer. Customer's aspiration to be a part of the service process is driven by an intrinsic appeal towards the desire for high-quality service (Larsson & Bowen, 1989). "Customer control in sales relationship reveals customer's yearning to exhibit capability, authority, and mastery" (Mullins, Bachrach, Rapp, Grewal, & Beitelspacher, 2015). To use the customer as a co-producer and co-creator of service and product is to enhance customer satisfaction and thus such control is given to the customer (Roggeveen, Tsiros, & Grewal, 2012). The scholars in support of customer control and participation suggest that it helps to build strong connection and understanding between customer and employee (Claycomb, Lengnick-Hall, & Inks, 2001) and help employees to fulfil their social needs (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). The scholars against customer control argue that Customer participation could create employee job stress in three

ways: (1) loss of power and control (2) increased input uncertainty, and (3) incompatible role expectations and demands. Increase in customer control is the suppression of employee control and power and with a feeling of loss of power may create job stress. Loss of power will confuse the new roles for both customers and employees and may create more hurdles than convenience (Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 1985). The employee will also show resistance for the control. Losing control causes an uneven delivery of service for employees (Chase, 1978). Employees feel more stressed when a customer tries to challenge their knowledge by asking non-regular or tricky questions (Chan et al., 2010). This customer behaviour leads to role uncertainty and task complexity for employees and leads to job dissatisfaction (Larsson & Bowen, 1989). To meet the expectations of both customers and supervisors, employees have to spend more time on learning and acquiring new skills (Hsieh, Yen, & Chin, 2004). In addition to that, customer demands are not always reasonable and to handle such demands that require a lot of effort at employee sides and they have to keep in check their emotions and be polite at the same time and it will eventually lead to the emotional burnout and low performance (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). It is not necessary that customers may understand their roles and this role confusion may create more problems for service providing employee who will take more time to make customers understand it and will create work overload and job stress for employees (Hsieh & Yen, 2005). Front line employees may react to high customer control in several ways. They may ignore customers or try to distract them (Rafaeli, 1989). High customer control may also promote the deviant and unwilling behaviour among employees as employees try to find other avenues to get their frustration out (Chan et al., 2010).

Moreover, high customer control effects employee adaptive selling behaviour and encourages them to involve in unethical selling practices (Yang et al., 2018). The high customer control during service encounters may also cause a sense of uncertainty for the employees. High customer demands and unpredictable behaviour may hurt service employees (Lengnick-hall, 1996). Customers demands for active participation in the business process, though it helps in providing performance feedback and helping employees to improve and solving problems but as discussed above it has more negative effects. Therefore, it can be assumed that customer control has a double-edged sword effect on employees (Chan et al., 2010). As employee feels under constant pressure, feel strained, and stressed all the time.

Hence, based on the discussion in the above paragraphs, we can presume that customer control has more negative than positive effect on employee work behaviour. Customer control may be beneficial for the organization's financial growth but from the employee's perspective, it has more issues and problems. So, it can be concluded that customer control is a double-edged sword for organizations.

Employee attitudes

In past, a paramount amount of research is done on the "bright side" effect of the customer on employee behaviour and "dark side" influence has been ignored mostly (Johnsen & Lacoste, 2016). This research includes both positive and negative employee's reactions to customer control. Organizational commitment and job involvement are considered as important aspects of organizational success (Abdallah, Obeidat, Aqqad, Janini, & Dahiyat, 2017). Etzioni's compliance theory (1961, 1970) focuses on how control makes people obey. Moreover, the reactions against power include moral, calculative and alienation involvements of employees. Therefore, it will be interesting to study the effects of control on employee behaviour by focusing on employee commitment, job involvement and alienation.

Employee commitment: The three-component model of commitment

Employee commitment is the attachment and bond of an individual with its organization on the base of experiences. High commitment is linked with satisfaction, low turnover and less absenteeism. An individual who feels more committed towards his job and organization will exhibit more positive behaviour. In today's competitive business environment, committed

workforce gives an edge to the management and becomes an asset in overall organizational performance. Therefore, making it important to study and focus on factors which can provide committed employees (Princy & Rebeka, 2019).

Commitment literature is incomplete without mentioning of Allen & Meyer (1990) three-component model of commitment. The number of scholars has conceptualized commitment over the years and there are various conceptualizations of commitment (Meyer & Maltin, 2010) but we are using TCM by Allen and Meyer (1990) as this is the most widely accepted model. According to (Allen & Meyer, 1990) there are three types of organizational commitments. An employee is emotionally attached to his organization and feels part of it, is an **affective commitment (AC)** when an employee assesses the opportunity cost of leaving current job/organization, it is known as **continuous commitment (CC)**. He feels committed to the organization because he fears that if he leaves this job he may suffer monetary, professional or social loss. **Normative commitment (NC)** an individual feels committed to the organization due to a sense of loyalty or obligation. He does not want to leave the organization even if he is not happy with his job/organization because he feels the organization has spent money and time on him (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

Job involvement

Organizational growth depends on the involvement of its employees, it should not be incorrect to say that employee's behaviour and satisfaction plays an important role in the organization's overall success. Management must focus on the strategies that can make members of the organization more involved in their jobs, follow rules and policies, shows dedication to their work and participates actively in decision-making process etc. (Allam & Habtemariam, 2009). Employees who are willing to do their work without any supervision and think themselves as part of the organization are the need of every organization (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013).

According to Lodahl & Kejner (1965) job involvement is "the degree to which a person identified psychologically with his/her work or the importance of work in his/ her total self-image." A person who is fully involved with his work, the company, co-workers all are an important part of his life then the person is said to be involved in his job (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965). Later on, their work was further elaborated by Kanungo (1982). He differentiated between Job and work involvement. According to Kanungo (1982), Job involvement means that an employee is actively participating in his present job, whereas work involvement is a general work environment not related with the current working position of the person (Sethi & Mittal, 2016). "Job involvement (JI) concerns the degree to which employees identify with their job. It may be influenced by the level of satisfaction of one's needs, be they intrinsic or extrinsic" (Pathak, 1983, p.297). Job involvement is considered as one of the core components of organizational success and has grabbed the attention of many researchers (Abdallah et al., 2017). Job involvement is a means to success and growth. It increases the organizational productivity and increases motivation and satisfaction of employees by integrating the goals of organization and employees (Mgedezi, Toga, & Mjoli, 2014).

Alienation

The pressure for improved productivity and overall organizational performance has changed the past business practices and caused some adverse effects on the well-being of the employees. The huge impact on the social and economic factors has forced many academic scholars from different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, management and medicine to take a keen interest in the causes and effects of workplace negativity. This is an alarming situation for organizations and it is asking them to identify the factors causing unrest among workers and take preventive and proactive measures to align the goals of workers and organization (O'Donohue & Nelson, 2014).

Karl Marx first gave the concept of alienation. He discussed the labour issues in capitalistic societies. Alienation is not a new concept but management scholars often ignore it when they

study the employee behaviours. Mostly, management academics study the behaviours such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, motivation, stress, engagement, participation etc. (Shantz, Alfes, Bailey, & Soane, 2015). Alienation is studied in academic literature for a long time. In beginning, there were two schools of thought about alienation. One linked it with religious beliefs and the other with the health. However, later on, Marx rejected it by introducing a concept of alienation with social and workplace reference (Chiaburu, Thundiyil, & Wang, 2014). According to Marx "alienation" is a concept in which a worker detaches himself from the product, process, co-workers and the end consumers of the product (Shantz, Alfes, & Truss, 2014).

Customer control and self-determination theory

Self-determination theory helps to understand what motivates an individual to display a specific behaviour. Humans seek certain psychological needs (autonomy, relatedness, competence) and satisfaction of these needs promotes positive behaviour (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017).

First, employee autonomy – Interaction of employees with customers is not always pleasurable and may cause job stress. The employee feels less motivated if his external evaluations (supervisor, colleagues, customers) are more negative than positive (Dormann & Zapf, 2004). Employee empowerment leads to better performance and employee empowerment is directly related to autonomy and power. More control to employees bring optimistic qualities and helps in finding solutions for improvement opportunities (Bhatnagar, 2012). Whereas, high customer control reduces the intrinsic motivation among employees and their interest in going beyond the formal procedures in helping out customers will be diminished (Yang et al., 2018). When autonomy of front line employees is controlled they feel less motivated to perform tasks (Miao & Evans, 2007). Mills et al. (1983), when customers are more involved in business processes they affect the authority of employees and create conflicts (Hsieh & Yen, 2005). From the above literature, we can assume that customer participation suppresses employee control and affects his need for autonomy.

Second, employee competence is affected by customer involvement in the service process. Excessive customer participation in service process ceases employee competence (Li & Hsu, 2016). The employee feels more uncertain in performing tasks when customer's participation is high in a service relationship. Best service to customers can be ensured when employee feel more competent and have fewer interruptions from customers (Chan et al., 2010). It is difficult to understand the customer behaviour so when the customer provides input in production and service process it creates difficulty for employees to coordinate well because they have incomplete information and it increases hurdles for employees during performing duties (Larsson & Bowen, 1989). Customers diversity in demands affect the employee competence as they feel it challenging to match the different demands of customers and it will create task uncertainty and will affect the job performance and employee behaviour (Hsieh & Yen, 2005). Third, employee relatedness is negatively affected by high customer control. As past empirical research suggests that organization and customers have role conflicts and they always confuse about their true nature of roles. High customer control in service relationship leads to boundary spanning process, which as a result increases high role conflicts between employees and customers. Employees who have to fulfil the demands of both customer and management mostly found themselves affected by role conflict and are unable to connect with both customers and management (Yang, 2010; Chung & Schneider, 2002). Role conflict is an outcome of difference in perception between what employee believes customer expected from him and what management rewards him for (Chung & Schneider, 2002). Much past research on customer participation have shown negative effects, on the service processes and is the cause of role conflict and ambiguity in employees (Li & Hsu, 2018; Chan et al., 2010; Hsieh, Yen, & Chin, 2004). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H1: Customer control is negatively associated with Basic psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness).

Self-determination theory and employee commitment

A large number of scholars support committed workforce benefits. A meta-analysis study of this topic has shown that committed employees are more regular (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002) have fewer turnover intentions (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) show effective performance (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Riketta, 2002). Commitment has a part of literature since long and has been studied in various ways. Commitment to occupations, supervisors, work teams and customers these all have direct links with retention and performance (Becker, Kernan, Clark, & Klein, 2015; Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

In this research, we have adapted the Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) TCM model. Meyer and Allen, TCM model has three types of commitments, according to (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Meyer et al., 2002) affective commitment has greater benefit for the organization than continuance and normative commitments as later two are more focused on the social and economic factors. Commitment is defined as "a force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and a course of action of relevance to that target" (Meyer, Becker, & Dick, 2006, p. 666). The link between an individual and target can be viewed in several ways: a feeling of an attachment and connection with the target, a sense of obligation towards the target, and an understanding of the costs of leaving the target. These are referred to as affective (AC), normative (NC), and continuance (CC) commitment, respectively (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

According to (Meyer & Maltin, 2010), types of commitment mentioned in TCM and Self-determination theory's motivational process are strongly comparable. They also argued that autonomous form of psychological needs of SDT theory covers affective commitment whereas; continuance commitment is more towards controlled form of self-determination (SDT) theory. Normative commitment is associated strongly with an introjected form of SDT. It also has a relation with autonomous regulation but does not correlate with controlled regulation. Gagné, Chemolli, Forest, & Koestner (2008) in their study partially supported these hypotheses.

The linked between commitment and SDT autonomous regulations is based on the presumption that individuals with affective and normative commitments need to fulfil all three psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) of SDT. Even though there is less research available but still the few research provides the proof of these relations (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

The findings on NC are based on two facts: one NC is based on moral obligation and other on indebted (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010; Gellatly, Meyer, & Luchak, 2006). Moral obligation is the combination of NC with strong AC (such as I have to do because it is the right thing to do) whereas indebted obligation is a combination of NC with CC (I am obliged to do because I am expected by others to do it).

The findings from above few studies show the links between TCM and SDT psychological needs. These studies suggest that fulfilment of specific psychological needs leads to particular TCM type of commitment. Hence, based on the initial finding we can propose that need satisfaction is closely associated with employee commitment. AC is connected with working conditions which promotes the intrinsic employee motivation by satisfying all three needs of SDT (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

The psychological needs of SDT have a negative or no relation with CC (Meyer et al., 2002). In support of negative relation, it is assumed that as CC is based on control regulation instead of autonomous regulation, therefore the relation between CC and psychological needs of SDT should be negative. Because employees with CC are attached to the organization due to social factors and not are intrinsically motivated (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

The findings that connect AC to SDT are similar in the case of NC as well. As we discussed above that NC has two types of obligation: Moral and indebted. The moral is associated with satisfaction of all three needs of SDT whereas, when autonomous is low than indebted NC is high and behave more like a CC and less than an AC. According to Meyer & Maltin (2010), moral NC is associated with the autonomous regulation of SDT whereas; indebted NC is associated with the control regulation of SDT. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H₂: Basic psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are positively related to affective commitment, "Moral" NC and job involvement.

H₃: Basic psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are negatively or not related to continuance commitment.

H₄: Basic Psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are negatively associated with "indebted" NC and alienation.

Self-determination theory and job involvement

According to (Kanungo, 1982a) Job involvement has been defined as "the degree to which a person psychologically identifies or committed to his/her job" (Singh & Gupta, 2015). Another explanation according to Dubin (1956) "job involvement as the degree to which the total job situation is a "central life interest", that is, the degree to which it is perceived to be a major source for the satisfaction of important needs" and Pathak (1983) definition "It is the degree to which an employee identifies with his job, actively participates in it, and considers his job performance important to his self-worth. It may be influenced by the level of satisfaction of one's need be that intrinsic or extrinsic" (Sethi & Mittal, 2016). It is also the level of involvement in one's job (Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). Individuals who are more involved in their jobs shows better work performance as it gives them internal satisfaction (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965). Individuals who show more interest in their jobs have a high job involvement (Kanungo, 1982b). Job involvement is associated with one's immediate connectivity and engagement with work activities (Brown & Leigh, 1996). Management which supports job involvement must support SDT (Buckley, Halbesleben, & Wheeler, 2016). SDT is based on the concept that individuals strive for personal growth and it is related with the satisfaction of intrinsic motivation which is supported by the satisfaction of the psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In support of SDT, it is proposed that individual who are more empowered shows better performance at work and which leads to the satisfaction of intrinsic motivation (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). According to Kanungo (1982), job involvement is based on the satisfaction of some salient needs. Employees with high freedom of choice and intrinsic motivation during work activities display more job involvement and interest (Wallace, Butts, Johnson, Stevens, & Smith, 2013; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004). Employees who experience a high level of autonomy at work display more involvement in their jobs and perform better (Brown, 1996). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H₅: Psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are positively associated with job involvement.

Self-determination theory and Alienation

Alienation is a concept first discussed by Marx (1844/1932), in alienation mode, an individual loses interest in his work, surroundings, life (Fromm, 1955). According to Horowitz (1966) an individual doesn't feel like he belongs to anywhere or anyone. He experiences himself as an alien and not part of the world and separates himself from everything (Nair & Vohra, 2012). Mostly, alienation was studied by sociologists and few psychologists otherwise it is ignored concept (Nair & Vohra, 2010). The reason it was ignored may be due to its negative orientation (Swales, 2002). Most of the work on alienation was done during the 1970s and 1980s and that is on the blue-collar or factory workers. After the introduction of advanced technology, there is a need to study the effects of alienation on the service sector employees (Nair & Vohra,

2010). Self-determination is rarely tested with the negative outcomes of the work but the few empirical studies on such area have suggested that dissatisfaction of psychological needs leads to stress and other negative workplace behaviours (Olafsen, Niemiec, Halvari, Deci, & Williams, 2016).

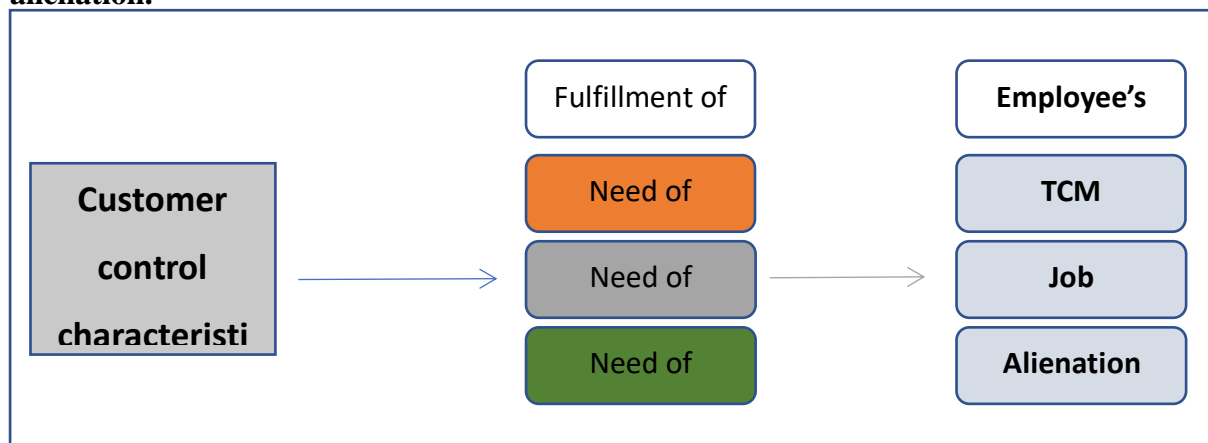
Autonomy is the experience of choice of decision and willingness. When this need is satisfied, one feels self-content and self-motivated. If the need is not satisfied the person will feel frustrated, pressured, conflicted. Relatedness is the basic need of feeling connected to others. Feeling a relationship and thinking you are important for others. If it is not fulfilled then it leads to social distancing, isolation and alienation from others. Competence gives one the self-confidence of performing work activities. One becomes self-sufficient in performing tasks and expert and uses this opportunity to excel his skills and expertise. If not met with desired competence then one feels powerless, useless and unaccomplished (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

From the above discussion we hypothesise that:

H₆: Psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are negatively associated with alienation.

From above-mentioned discussion on Psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), customer control and employee attitudes relations. We can hypothesise that:

H₇: Psychological needs of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) mediate the relationship between customer control and employee commitment, job involvement and alienation.



Theoretical framework

Methodology

Banking sector plays an important role in overall economic growth and in minimizing unemployment. Banks as a part of service industry always try to meet up with customer expectations but technological change has made things more challenging. Today's customer is more informative and demanding and has more access to social media and governing bodies. The direct interaction between the bank's customer and employee is higher than in other sectors. Since customers are becoming more powerful, the employees as the representatives of their organizations have to bear more pressure. Banks are a vital part of the service sector; which emphasizes the need to study customer control's effect on bank employee's behaviour.

Research setting and sample

To test the hypotheses, we will collect data from employees working in different banks. The data will be collected using Likert-type questionnaires. We will collect data through questionnaires from employees who are working in bank branches and are in direct contact with customers.

Measurement Development

We have adapted already developed scales and modified them according to our study and workplace requirements. To avoid confusion for readers, we kept all constructs used 5-point

Likert scales, all scales response options were between strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Conclusion and discussion

The research discusses the effect of customer empowerment on the employees' behaviour. It signifies how customer control may be used to elicit a particular behaviour by taking into consideration the customer-employee interaction and the context in which this interaction takes place. Today, the business world is facing challenges and to meet these challenges companies are investing in their employees and infrastructure. Companies are spending millions on employee's training and purchasing costly infrastructure. However, these companies overlooked that sometimes these are not the only requirements for success. They need to pay attention to employee's needs and the root cause of unrest among these employees. Findings from this study will help to solve many organizational issues.

The research also explains the process (self-determination theory) through which the customer control may affect a particular behaviour or attitude. Self-determination theory throws the light on this mechanism and proposes the importance of the satisfaction of three innate psychological needs (i.e. autonomy, competence and relatedness) for the internalization of organizational values.

Managerial implications

The proposed framework has several implications. It signifies the importance of employee's satisfaction of basic needs and management role in making things easier when it comes to the effects of customer control. The satisfaction of these needs may provide the opportunity to get a positive job-related attitude from the employees.

The results of this study will have important implications for both practising managers and researchers. Although managers may decide to avoid or engage in socially responsible activities based on their values and beliefs alone, the literature suggests that such activities can also have a strong effect on their subordinates. The study concluded that to have a better working environment both management and supervisors have to play their role. If they will try to avoid their responsibilities it will affect the profitability of an organization. In the service industry, profitability depends on how well you deal with your internal and external customers. If your internal customers are happy then your external customers will be satisfied as well. A mentally relaxed person can put all efforts in his work and can deliver double times. It is already proved that managers can influence subordinates and in some cases, they trigger the negative behaviour in them as well. So, the responsibility of top management is to select honest and realistic individuals as managers and promote employee well-being culture in the organization, which as a result will affect the employees positively and will help in promoting customer welfare culture.

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