

If Employees “Go the Extra Mile,” Do Customers Reciprocate with Similar Behavior?

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ABSTRACT

This study proposes an integrated framework depicting the effects of two types of *employee* behavior (employee citizenship behavior and employee dysfunctional behavior) on customer satisfaction, which in turn, influences customer commitment. Customer satisfaction and commitment are then expected to affect two types of *customer* behavior (customer citizenship behavior and customer dysfunctional behavior). A survey of matched responses from 123 employees and 590 customers reveals that employee citizenship behavior, employee dysfunctional behavior, customer satisfaction, and customer commitment are important predictors of customer citizenship behavior and customer dysfunctional behavior. Furthermore, this study identifies variables (relationship age, group size, and communication frequency) that moderate the relationships being considered. The results show that the effects of two types of employee behavior on customer satisfaction are stronger when relationship age and communication frequency are higher. © 2008 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

The service–profit chain has received considerable attention from academics and practitioners over the past few decades and continues to be a popular topic in marketing. The service–profit chain demonstrates the linkage among employee perceptions and performance, customer perceptions and behavior, and financial

performance (Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997). Likewise, prior research has established the positive effect of employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction (e.g., Homburg & Stock, 2004, 2005; Payne & Webber, 2006; Pritchard & Silvestro, 2005) as well as on customer perceptions of service quality (e.g., Snipes et al., 2005).

Although research supports the existence of relationships between employee behavior and customer perceptions, relatively few studies have empirically examined the relationships between two types of employee behavior (employee citizenship behavior [ECB] and employee dysfunctional behavior [EDB]) and two types of customer behavior (customer citizenship behavior [CCB] and customer dysfunctional behavior [CDB]). An investigation of these behaviors is important because of their likely influence on customer perceptions and behavior. For example, previous research has established that ECB increases the efficiency of an organization by enhancing coworker or managerial productivity (Podsakoff et al., 1990), while prior work on EDB has suggested that it has a tremendous negative impact on organizations in terms of lost productivity, as well as on people in terms of increased dissatisfaction (Spector et al., 2006). These employee behaviors might also influence customer behavior, because customers are under the direct influence of employees (Bowers, Martin, & Luker, 1990). Such an investigation could answer the calls for an effective management of customer citizenship behavior and customer dysfunctional behavior (Bettencourt, 1997; Fullerton & Punj, 2004; Groth, 2005; Yi & Gong, 2006). Therefore, it is important to explore how ECB and EDB affect customer behavior.

A recent line of research has found that customers might exhibit citizenship behavior and dysfunctional behavior. Customers often share their positive experience with other customers, assist other customers, treat service employees in a pleasant manner, or make suggestions for the improvement of service (Bettencourt, 1997; Gruen, Summers, & Acito, 2000). Although these behaviors “cannot be easily translated into dollars earned or saved, the behaviors, like OCB, may, in the aggregate, promote the effective functioning of the organization” (Ford, 1995, p. 68). Customer behavior can also take a negative form, such as critical word of mouth, fraud, disruption, or uncooperative behavior (Bettencourt, 1997). Sometimes, customers may go out of their way to harm a service employee or an organization, and thus can cause great expense and damage (Groth, Mertens, & Murphy, 2004). Therefore, managers should understand what factors make customers willing to “go the extra mile.”

In order to account for this interplay, the present study adopts social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) as a theoretical basis. The underlying premise of the theory is that behavior results from the interaction of people and situations. According to social learning theory, learning can take place vicariously through observing the effects of other people (e.g., employees) on the social environment (e.g., service encounter) (Davis & Luthans, 1980). Specific to the service environment, customers can look to their employees as models of behavior and learn what behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate.

The objective of this paper is to develop and test a comprehensive framework depicting the interplay of voluntary behaviors by employees and customers. Specifically, this research focuses on citizenship and dysfunctional behavior by employees and customers. This study proposes that ECB and EDB affect CCB and CDB. This is in line with the claim in social learning theory that new

behaviors can be acquired through observation of others in the system (Barclay, 1982). This study also examines the role of customer satisfaction (CS) and customer commitment (CC) in the relationship between employee behavior and customer behavior. People quickly reproduce actions, attitudes, and emotional responses (e.g., CS and CC) exhibited by models (e.g., employees) (Davis & Luthans, 1980). The present study focuses on CS and CC because of their implications for customer behavior (Bettencourt, 1997; Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Many studies in marketing and management hold that employee behavior has an impact on customer behavior through its effects on CS and CC (Castro, Armario, & Ruiz, 2004; Rapp et al., 2006; Schneider et al., 2005). Therefore, the service–profit chain is proposed as a process in which employee behavior leads to customer perceptions such as CS and CC, which in turn lead to customer behavior. Customers perceiving a social exchange relationship through high (or low) levels of satisfaction and commitment may exhibit citizenship (or dysfunctional) behavior (Bettencourt, 1997; Rose & Neidermeyer, 1999). As such, this research tests a model in which employee behaviors (ECB and EDB) are hypothesized to have indirect effects on customer behaviors (CCB and CDB) via CS and CC. Furthermore, the present study investigates how these relationships are affected by certain moderators.

The present study employs data from both sides of the dyad: namely, employees and their customers. Such dyadic data might avoid the problem of common method bias (Homburg & Stock, 2004, 2005). If dependent variables and independent variables come from the same source at the same time, at least part of any association between these perceptually related variables might be due to common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). A way to avoid this bias is to use two different sources (e.g., employees and customers): one for independent variables and the other for dependent variables.

The study contributes to marketing research in several ways. First, the research identifies the often-overlooked consequences of employee behaviors (i.e., employee citizenship behavior and employee dysfunctional behavior) for customer perception and behaviors. The study highlights the importance of investments in employee extra-role behaviors. Second, this research contributes to social learning theory by proposing and empirically establishing a link between employee behaviors and customer behaviors. This study thus integrates the existing research domains of employee citizenship behavior, employee dysfunctional behavior, customer citizenship behavior, and customer dysfunctional behavior. Third, the moderator analysis reveals when the link between employee behaviors and customer satisfaction is strong.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model of this study is shown in Figure 1. It posits that ECB and EDB influence CCB and CDB through CS and CC. Moreover, the model suggests that several variables (relationship age, group size, and communication frequency) moderate the link between ECB and CS as well as the link between EDB and CS.

ECB is defined as “employee behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that, in the aggregate,

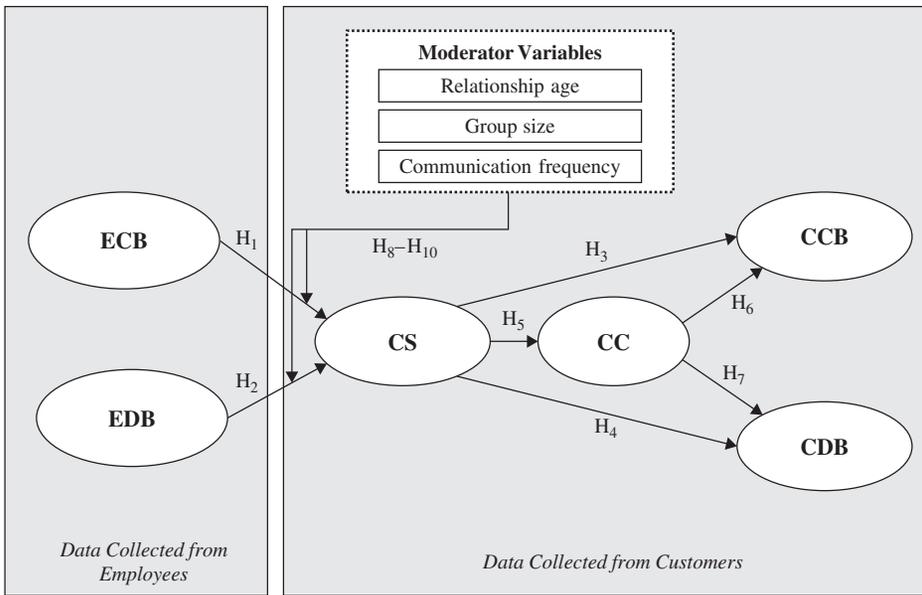


Figure 1. Conceptual framework and hypothesized relationships.

promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988, p. 4). Organ’s (1988) five categories of ECB are used in this study. “*Conscientiousness* means that employees carry out in-role behaviors well beyond the minimum required levels. *Altruism* implies that they give help to others. *Civic virtue* suggests that employees should participate responsibly in the political life of the organization. *Sportsmanship* indicates that people do not complain, but have positive attitudes. *Courtesy* means they treat others with respect” (Koys, 2001, p. 103).

EDB is defined as employee behavior that harms organizations and/or their members (Spector et al., 2006). Spector et al.’s (2006) five dimensions of EDB are used. “*Abuse* consists of harmful behaviors directed toward coworkers and others that harm them, either physically or psychologically through making threats, nasty comments, ignoring the person, or undermining the person’s ability work effectively. *Production deviance* is the purposeful failure to perform job tasks effectively the way they are supposed to be performed. *Sabotage* is defacing or destroying physical property belonging to the employer. *Theft* by employees is recognized as a major problem for organizations. *Withdrawal* refers to behaviors that restrict the amount of working time to less than is required by the organization. It includes absence, arriving late or leaving early, and taking longer breaks than authorized” (Spector et al., 2006, p. 448).

CCB is defined as “voluntary and discretionary behaviors that are not required for the successful production and/or delivery of the service but that, in the aggregate, help the service organization overall” (Groth, 2005, p. 11). Groth (2005) identified three dimensions of CCB: (1) providing feedback to the organization, which means providing solicited information to organizations that help them improve their service delivery processes, (2) helping other customers, which closely parallels the altruism dimension found in organizational citizenship

behavior, and (3) recommendation, which refers to recommending the business to friends or family members.

CDB is defined as customer behavior characterized as thoughtless or abusive that causes problems for the organization, its employees, and/or other customers (Lovelock, 2001). There is a growing interest among researchers and practitioners in customer dysfunctional behavior such as theft, shoplifting, fraud, vandalism, violence, resistance, aggression, and physical/psychological victimization (Fullerton & Punj, 2004). The growing interest in customer dysfunctional behavior is due to the prevalence of such behavior in service organizations and the enormous associated costs.

Customer satisfaction (CS) is defined as a cognitive and emotional response to service experience (Oliver, 1997; Yi & La, 2004). Customer commitment (CC) is defined as “an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in an organization” (Meyer & Smith, 2000, p. 320). Initially developed to explain employee commitment to organizations, the concept also applies to the customer context (Johnson, Herrmann, & Huber, 2006).

HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses Related to Main Effects

According to social learning theory, human learning takes place vicariously through observing the effects of other people’s behavior on the social environment (Bandura, 1977; Davis & Luthans, 1980). Social learning theory contends that “an individual notices something in the environment, the individual remembers what was noticed, and the individual produces a behavior” (Crittenden, 2005, p. 961).

A service encounter is a social “environment” created by service employees, and customers within the service encounter become immersed in the social learning process. “Behavior” then becomes the experience derived from the interactions between employees and customers. ECB and EDB are employee behaviors exhibited in service encounters. Therefore, customers may “produce behavior” such as CCB and CDB through social learning of ECB and EDB during interaction with employees.

The service encounter situation parallels other social situations, in that individuals have the opportunity to observe and learn the behavior of other people (especially employees) through ongoing interactions. Moreover, the citizenship behavior of employees is consistent with the “environment” in social learning theory. Bommer, Miles, and Grover (2003) argue that the citizenship behavior of employees entails cues in the environment, and the modeling of citizenship behavior engenders further citizenship behavior. In order to maintain reciprocity norms, citizenship behavior is likely to be induced by the social context. In addition, Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly (1998) propose that if individuals work in environments including others who serve as models for dysfunctional behavior, these individuals are more likely to behave dysfunctionally. Bandura (1977) proposes that people acquire dysfunctional behavior such as aggression by watching others act in such a manner.

When do customers' responses actually occur? This study seeks to find the answer from the stimulus–organism–response (S-O-R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). According to this theory, a stimulus is conceptualized as an influence that arouses an individual (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001). Research on service encounters indicates that the attitudes and behavior of employees influence customer perceptions of service (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996). Because employee attitudes and behavior are “contagious,” they spill over onto customers during service encounters (Bowen, Gilliland, & Folger, 1999). Therefore, ECB and EDB can be understood as the stimulus in the S-O-R framework.

The stimulus affects an individual or an organism. “An organism is represented by affective and cognitive intermediary states and processes that intervene in the relationship between the stimulus and individuals' responses” (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001, p. 180). Consistent with this definition, CS is conceptualized as the organism, because it is an “affective and cognitive” state.

The final element in the S-O-R framework is the organism's response. The response is defined as the final actions, reactions, or responses emitted, which can be described by two behavioral dimensions: approach and avoidance behaviors (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Previous research has demonstrated that the response can be applied to various contexts. In environmental psychology, approach behaviors are represented by the desire to remain, explore, or work in an environment, whereas avoidance behaviors refer to the exact opposite (Mattila & Wirtz, 2000). In the retail environment, approach behaviors refer to intentions to stay or revisit, while avoidance behaviors refer to desire to leave or no intention to revisit (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001). Because the goal of this research is to examine the impact of the social environment on customer behaviors, CCB and CDB are used as the outcome variables in the S-O-R framework.

It is proposed that when customers observe and learn ECB or EDB, they might process affective and cognitive states and exhibit CCB or CDB. There is support in the literature for this proposition (Bell & Menguc, 2002; Pritchard & Silvestro, 2005; Yoon & Suh, 2003). Previous research shows that ECB contributes to CS (Castro, Armario, & Ruiz, 2004; Netemeyer & Maxham, 2007). Altruistic employees help customers to solve their problems, and they assist each other so that customers are better served. Courtesy and sportsmanship create a positive climate among employees that spills over to customers. Conscientious employees are expected to go beyond customer expectations. Civic virtue ensures that employees improve customer service and CS (Koys, 2001; Morrison, 1996).

This study also proposes that the more EDB employees exhibit, the less satisfaction customers perceive. Harris and Ogbonna (2006) claim that there is a negative relationship between EDB and employee rapport with customers. For example, employee abuse might lead to stressful conditions and thus undermine employee rapport with customers, which in turn disrupts customer satisfaction. Deviance and withdrawal prevent employees from providing optimal service to customers. Harris and Ogbonna (2002) note that EDB erodes normal service delivery. Furthermore, deviance and theft by employees damage the physical property of the organization, which leads to poor service and low CS.

Social exchange theory posits that individuals direct their reciprocation efforts toward the source from which benefits are received (Blau, 1964). Social exchange relationships evolve when the “individual who supplies rewarding services to another obligates him. To discharge this obligation, the second must furnish

benefits to the first in turn” (Blau, 1964, p. 89). When customers are satisfied with a service, they feel obliged to reciprocate by engaging in citizenship behaviors that benefit the organization (Bettencourt, 1997; Groth, 2005).

Bandura (1986) argues that dysfunctional behaviors are motivated by a variety of aversive experiences that arouse people emotionally. CS is proposed as an antecedent of customer dysfunctional behavior, because it is essentially an emotional construct. Furthermore, aggression theory contends that service experience requires an “interpretation or cognitive appraisal in order for valenced emotional responses” (e.g., dissatisfaction) to emerge (Rose & Neidermeyer, 1999, p. 12). The person held responsible for the obstacle to goal attainment then becomes the object of dissatisfaction and dysfunctional behavior “in an attempt to remove the impediment and punish the perpetrator” (Rose & Neidermeyer, 1999, pp. 12–13).

Much of the earlier work implies the mediating roles of CS and CC between employee behavior and customer behavior. Pritchard and Silvestro (2005) propose that employee loyalty affects customer satisfaction, which in turn affects customer loyalty. However, they do not argue that employee loyalty has a direct effect on customer loyalty. Thus, this study proposes that employee behaviors influence customer behaviors via customer perceptions such as CS. Hence, the hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Employee citizenship behavior increases customer satisfaction.

H2: Employee dysfunctional behavior decreases customer satisfaction.

H3: Customer satisfaction increases customer citizenship behavior.

H4: Customer satisfaction decreases customer dysfunctional behavior.

ECB and EDB are not posited to affect customer commitment directly. There is no theoretical basis for the idea that ECB and EDB would be direct antecedents of customer commitment. Instead, customer satisfaction is expected to affect customer commitment (Bansal, Irving, & Taylor, 2004; Bettencourt, 1997). The reason is that “a high level of satisfaction provides the customer with repeated positive reinforcement, thus creating commitment-inducing emotional bonds. In addition, satisfaction is related to the fulfillment of customers’ social needs, and the repeated fulfillment of these social needs is likely to lead to bonds of an emotional kind that also constitute commitment” (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002, p. 237). This notion is consistent with the research suggesting that CS mediates the relationship between customer perceptions (e.g., CC) and organizational constructs (Bettencourt, 1997).

H5: Customer satisfaction increases customer commitment.

In accordance with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), this research proposes that customer commitment leads to CCB. Because highly committed customers have an emotional attachment to and identification with an organization’s goals and values, they are interested in the welfare of the organization and are willing to reciprocate efforts (i.e., citizenship behavior) with respect to past benefits

received (Bettencourt, 1997). Bettencourt (1997) argues that CC is an antecedent of customer citizenship behavior.

This study proposes that CC has a negative effect on CDB. According to social control theory, individuals who are committed to institutions are less likely to deviate from norms and engage in dysfunctional behaviors (Stewart, 2003). The more commitment customers feel to an organization, the more likely they are to continue doing business with that organization (Bansal, Irving, & Taylor, 2004). In order to maintain the relationship, committed customers will not engage in dysfunctional behavior. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H6: Customer commitment increases customer citizenship behavior.

H7: Customer commitment decreases customer dysfunctional behavior.

Hypotheses Related to Moderating Effects

Moderator variables are selected from several streams of research. The marketing literature on service employees has identified a number of context variables that affect employee–customer interactions (Cannon & Homburg, 2001; Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). The relationship marketing literature on the interaction between employees and customers has also identified important context variables (Bolton, 1998; Deeter-Schmelz & Ramsey, 2003; Johlke & Duhan, 2000).

Individuals may respond differently to the same stimulus because of the individually differing characteristics of the dyadic relationship with the employee. The proposed model suggests three moderators: relationship age, group size, and communication frequency. Other variables such as customer demographic factors, psychographic profiles, and personality traits were also considered (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002). However, behavioral scientists argue that demographic factors may not provide sufficient insight into marketing segments (Dmitrovic & Vida, 2007). Whereas the psychographic literature offers insights to marketers as to different possible customer segments, it does not go far enough in revealing the customer motivation related to employee–customer interaction (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002). In addition, managers encounter practical difficulties in the measurement and identification of customer personality traits. Hence, this research focuses on three contextual factors: relationship age, group size, and communication frequency.

Relationship Age.¹ Relationship age is defined as the number of years and months that a customer has been served by the employee. Relationship age with the employee is likely to affect the nature of the S-O relationship. The social psychology literature suggests that “people in lengthy or highly involved relationships would have opportunities to gather information about one another,

¹ It could be argued that relationship experience would be a better term than relationship age. Unlike “age,” however, “experience” has a dual meaning, so that it might not deliver the intended meaning and could confuse the readers. For example, Pine and Gilmore (1998) define experience as events that engage individuals in a personal way. Further, Schmidt (1999) notes that experience provides sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values that replace functional values that have been at the heart of traditional features-and-benefits marketing. Therefore, the authors decided to use “age” instead of “experience” to avoid the confusion.

more motivation to acquire information, and more motivation to integrate that information into coherent representations” (Swann & Gill, 1997, p. 748). As the relationship matures, customers acquire more information about the employee, leading to an increased influence of employee behaviors on customers. Furthermore, over time, the interactions between a customer and a particular employee become encoded as a script. This may increase mutual understanding and promote employees’ delivery of service toward customers. Therefore, the influence of employee behaviors on customers is expected to increase. Thus, it seems reasonable to predict that:²

H8a: Relationship age with employees increases the positive effect of employee citizenship behavior on customer satisfaction.

H8b: Relationship age with employees increases the negative effect of employee dysfunctional behavior on customer satisfaction.

Group Size. Group size is defined as the number of customers that an employee serves simultaneously. Originally, group is defined as “two or more people who interact and influence one another” (Myers, 2005, p. 286). According to Myers’ definition, customers working interactively would constitute a group. Group size can create a heightened sense of psychological distance between employees and customers. Thus, an increase in group size may result in more “de-individualized” situations, which prevent customers from identifying employee behaviors individually (Pearce & Giacalone, 2003, p. 63). For example, altruistic employees may help customers facing problems. However, a great psychological distance from the employee may prevent customers from observing such an employee behavior. Therefore, this study predicts that ECB exerts a small impact on CS when groups are large. Similarly, the present research proposes that the negative impact of EDB on CS is low in large groups; a greater psychological distance from the employee may prevent customers from observing EDB. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H9a: Group size reduces the positive effect of employee citizenship behavior on customer satisfaction.

H9b: Group size reduces the negative effect of employee dysfunctional behavior on customer satisfaction.

Communication Frequency. Communication frequency is defined as the amount of contact between employees and customers (Farace, Monge, & Russell,

² One could argue that relationship age would be highly correlated with CS and CC. The reason is that, if a customer is not satisfied, it is doubtful that the relationship would age. However, the theory underlying the link between relationship age and CS or CC is not well specified. Furthermore, a number of researchers have employed relationship age as a control or moderator variable (e.g., Bolton, 1998; Levin, Whitener, & Cross, 2006; Verhoef, Franses, & Hoekstra, 2002). Empirically, the correlation between relationship age and CS or CC is found to be low (–0.20 to 0.09) across data sets. Therefore, the magnitude of correlation between relationship age and CS or CC does not pose a threat to the validity of the analysis. The authors wish to thank the anonymous reviewer for this insight.

1977). Frequent communication with employees would make customers feel comfortable with employees, thus allowing customers to observe ECB and EDB clearly (Becerra & Gupta, 2003). Communication often acts as the link between customers and employees and provides the means for employees to influence customer responses (e.g., CS) (Johlke & Duhan, 2000). The more frequent the communication between them, the less ambiguity in observing and interpreting employee behaviors (e.g., ECB, EDB) (Hoegl & Wagner, 2005).

Kacmar et al.'s (2003) findings provide insights into the communication patterns of ECB-CS and EDB-CS relationships. Because communication in the EDB-CS relationship can be confrontational and negative, more frequent interactions might exacerbate problems in the relationship. Thus, customers interacting frequently with dysfunctional employees may have a negative impression of them and will thus report low satisfaction (Kacmar et al., 2003).

On the other hand, given that pleasant interactions occur with employees who exhibit citizenship behavior, frequent communication would accentuate the positive relationship between ECB and CS. These divergent patterns should become stronger as customers interact more frequently with their employees. These arguments lead to the following hypotheses:

- H10a:** Communication frequency increases the positive effect of employee citizenship behavior on customer satisfaction.
- H10b:** Communication frequency increases the negative effect of employee dysfunctional behavior on customer satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection and Sample

Data were collected from instructors and students at a private foreign language academy in Korea. Korea spends more on private education than any other member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. The nation's private education costs accounted for 2.9% of the gross domestic product in 2002, while that of OECD members averaged only 0.7%. The annual cost of private English education amounts to \$15 billion in Korea (Kang, 2006).

Private foreign language institutes in Korea can be viewed as a commercial exchange, because students pay for their education. Just like any other business, the goal of the academies is to satisfy their students. Instructors design courses to meet the needs and wants of their students. Furthermore, students can easily switch from one academy to another or stay with their preferred academy. Marketing by academies to prospective students is identical to marketing in any other service sector. Therefore, students in Korean private academies could be treated as customers, whereas instructors could be viewed as employees (Halbesleben, Becker, & Buckley, 2003; Obermiller, Fleenor, & Raven, 2005; Williams & Anderson, 2005). In a similar vein, several researchers view that students are customers and instructors are employees. Hennig-Thurau, Langer, and Hansen (2001) developed a model of student loyalty from a review of the

relationship marketing literature. Williams and Anderson (2005) conducted an empirical test on the participatory nature of service creation in education.

Educational service was deemed suitable to the present study for several reasons. First, customers (students) in the classroom interact with employees (instructors) as they consume the educational service. Furthermore, the survey in this study focused on students enrolled in conversation classes. They can observe employee behaviors accurately during their extensive experience with employees. This setting allows customers to exhibit citizenship behavior through helping each other to achieve common goals. Yoon (2003) has illustrated that students actually exhibit citizenship behavior in Korean private schools. In addition, dysfunctional behaviors such as violence and aggression in the classroom are often cited as a major concern in the educational sector (Lawrence & Green, 2005). Kim (2006) reports that 27.5% of students experience dysfunctional behavior such as violence and bullying. Kang and Kim (2000) also point out that dysfunctional behavior at Korean schools is serious and continues to increase at an alarming rate.

More detailed information about the setting of the present research is as follows. Educational programs are delivered in a classroom setting, and the length of the program is usually one month. Conversation courses include English (88%), Japanese (16%), and Chinese (9%).

Two survey instruments were used to test the hypotheses of this study: one to measure employee behavior and the other to measure customer perceptions and behavior. The employee sample comprised 123 instructors. They were given the questionnaires personally by the researcher. Each questionnaire was coded so that one can match customers to employees. Confidentiality was assured to the employees. The sample consisted of 33% males and 67% females. The mean age was 32.62 (SD = 8.81); 4.2% had held their current position for less than 3 months, 16.7% between 1 and 2 years, 33.6% 2–5 years, 25.2% 5–10 years, and 20.3% more than 10 years.

The customer sample comprised 590 students. They were assigned individually to 123 employees, yielding an average of 4.8 customers per employee. Although the ratio of customers to employees was small, the customers were selected randomly from the organization's files to ensure representativeness. Confidentiality was also assured to the customers. The customer sample consisted of 52% males and 48% females. The mean age of the customers was 24.46 (SD = 4.82).

This study focuses on the employee as the unit of analysis. Therefore, multiple customer responses for each employee were aggregated and linked to that of the employee.

Measures

As the survey was conducted in Korean, the instrument prepared originally in English was translated into Korean. It was checked for accuracy by means of the conventional back-translation process.

Employee Measures. ECB was assessed with eleven items, which were based on Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) measure, after minor rewording and omission of several items that were inappropriate for the current context. Employees

responded to items using 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*.

EDB was measured with twelve items from the Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C) (Spector et al., 2006). Not all items from the original scale were selected, because several were inappropriate for a classroom setting. Each item required a rating of how frequently a dysfunctional behavior is encountered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*.

Customer Measures. CCB was measured with twelve items adapted from prior research (Groth, 2005). Participants indicated the extent of agreement with particular issues on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. These items reflected the degree to which customers make recommendations, provide feedback to the organization, and help other customers. Some items were modified to be compatible with the setting of the present study.

Because of the lack of CDB indices, an index was constructed to measure CDB. The present study used index-development procedures based on the work of Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer (2001). They propose several critical aspects of analysis: content specification, indicator specification, and collinearity of indicators. First, the definitions of CDB were reviewed and the domain of the concept was specified. The indicators were then specified for the CDB index so that the research could capture the entire scope of the latent variable. Fifteen items of dysfunctional behavior were adapted from Ball, Trevino, and Sims (1994), Bennett and Robinson (2000), and Spector et al. (2006). The chosen items focused mainly on customer behaviors that cause problems for the organization, employees, and other customers. Several marketing academics and institute instructors were provided with the initial items and definitions of the construct, and they were asked to check the wording. For all items considered, they stated that eight items might be good indicators for the considered construct. Specifically, five items were dropped because judges identified them as being too ambiguous, unclear, and inappropriate for the current context. Two items that were rated as nearly identical in wording and meaning were also eliminated. Finally, the Variance Inflation Factors on the eight items reveal that multicollinearity problems were unlikely (the highest VIF was 1.365, far below the benchmark of 10). Therefore, all eight items were retained in the CDB index. Each item requested a rating of how frequently a behavior is revealed, using 7-point scales ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *every day*.

CS was measured with three items developed by Bettencourt (1997). These items were used to measure cognitive and emotional responses to service experience with the employee. Customers responded to items on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

CC was measured with three items from the organizational commitment scale used by Bansal, Irving, and Taylor (2004). Customers responded to items using 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Relationship age with the employee was measured by asking each customer how long (in years and months) he or she had been served by the employee. The number of months was then converted to fractions of a year. Group size was obtained from company records, and it was confirmed by each employee.

Communication frequency was measured with four items based on previous research (Kacmar et al., 2003). The items asked students to describe the frequency of their class-related communication with their lecturer on a 7-point scale: 1 = *once or twice in the last 6 months*, 2 = *once or twice every 1–3 months*, 3 = *once or twice each month*, 4 = *once or twice each week*, 5 = *3–5 times each week*, 6 = *once or twice each day*, and 7 = *many times daily*. A list of scale items and their measurement properties is provided in the Appendix.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The conceptual model depicted in Figure 1 was tested using partial least squares (PLS) (Chin, 2005). A PLS analysis is appropriate when the model incorporates both formative and reflective indicators, when the assumption of multivariate normality cannot be made, and when sample sizes are relatively small (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001; Fisher & Grégoire, 2006; White, Varadarajan, & Dacin, 2003).

The present study specifies ECB, EDB, CCB, and CDB by using formative indicators. Based on the decision rules that Jarvis, Mackenzie, and Podsakoff (2003) developed for determining whether a construct is formative or reflective, it seems appropriate to use a formative model for these constructs. The direction of causality runs from items to constructs. Items are defining characteristics of the constructs, and changes in the items cause changes in the constructs. Additionally, indicators are not interchangeable, so that dropping the indicator alters the conceptual domain of the construct. Most notably, these indicators do not need to be highly correlated with each other. For example, “missing class” and “not following directions” in items of customer dysfunctional behavior are not related to each other. Furthermore, because dysfunctional behavior captures deviant or undesirable behavior, the items might suffer from an inadequate distribution problem, such as highly skewed data or extreme values from positive kurtosis. For these reasons, PLS was deemed appropriate for this study.

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics and the correlations of constructs and moderator variables. Measurement issues were examined separately for formative or reflective items. In the case of formative measures, traditional assessments of individual item reliability and validity are inappropriate and irrelevant, because observed correlations among these indicators are not meaningful (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). Instead, a collinearity test was performed using a variance inflation factor from SPSS, because high collinearity among formative measures would produce unstable estimates and make it difficult to separate the specific effect of individual indicators on the construct (Mathieson, Peacock, & Chin, 2001). A check for multicollinearity revealed that the variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all of the constructs are acceptable (i.e., between 1.103 and 1.497).

In the case of reflective measures (e.g., CS and CC), reliabilities and average variance extracted were examined (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The reliabilities of reflective measures were greater than the recommended 0.7. The average variance extracted for each measure was greater than the recommended 0.5, suggesting convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). A comparison between the

Table 1. Summary Statistics and Correlations among Constructs.

Focal Constructs	Correlations								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. ECB	1.00								
2. EDB	-0.50	1.00							
3. CCB	0.17	-0.32	1.00						
4. CDB	-0.16	0.11	-0.25	1.00					
5. CS	0.04	-0.23	0.67	-0.54	1.00				
6. CC	0.14	-0.12	0.76	-0.34	0.68	1.00			
Moderator Variables									
7. Relationship age	-0.09	0.01	0.07	0.45	-0.20	0.09	1.00		
8. Group size	0.08	0.23	-0.26	0.11	-0.24	-0.39	-0.36	1.00	
9. Communication frequency	0.08	-0.10	-0.11	0.24	-0.23	-0.10	-0.52	0.36	1.00
Summary Statistics									
Number of items	11	12	9	8	3	3	1	1	4
Mean	5.77	2.00	4.96	2.63	5.67	5.29	11.29	28.74	4.32
Standard deviation	0.64	0.24	0.54	0.42	0.63	0.87	10.96	29.32	0.53

average variance extracted by each of the constructs and the shared variance indicates discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

To test for path significance, the study used bootstrapping (generating a large number of random samples from the original data set by sampling with replacement) with 500 re-samples (Chin, 1998). PLS does not generate an overall goodness-of-fit index for the research model, because it does not attempt to minimize residual item covariance or make any distributional assumption. Thus, this study examined the R^2 values and the structural paths instead (White, Varadarajan, & Dacin, 2003).

Results Related to Main Effects

Table 2 summarizes the results of hypothesis tests. The model demonstrates good explanatory power, because the R^2 values for the endogenous constructs range from 0.48 to 0.82. All are within the ranges typically reported in structural model research (White, Varadarajan, & Dacin, 2003). This is noteworthy for dyadic data, because a possible common method bias has been ruled out. All paths are statistically significant and satisfy Chin's (1998, p. 12) recommendation that path coefficients exceed 0.2 in order to be deemed to exert a "substantial" impact, as opposed to "just being statistically significant."

H1 predicted a positive relationship between ECB and CS, and the results confirm it ($\gamma = 0.31, p < 0.001$). H2 predicted a negative relationship between EDB and CS, and the results also confirm this prediction ($\gamma = -1.00, p < 0.001$). H3 and H4 predicted that CS would influence CCB positively and CDB negatively. These hypotheses are both supported ($\beta = 0.23, p < 0.01$ for the CS-CCB path and ($\beta = -0.56, p < 0.001$ for the CS-CDB path).

H5 predicted a positive relationship between CS and CC. This hypothesis is supported ($\beta = 0.72, p < 0.001$). H6 and H7 predicted that CC would influence CCB positively and CDB negatively. These hypotheses are supported ($\beta = 0.66, p < 0.001$ for the CC-CCB path and ($\beta = -0.57, p < 0.001$ for the CC-CDB path).

One might wonder whether ECB and EDB influence CC, CCB, and CDB directly. This possibility was thus examined. In an additional analysis,

Table 2. SEM Results for the Structural Relationships.

	CS	CC	CCB	CDB
ECB	0.31***			
EDB	-1.00***			
CS		0.72***	0.23**	-0.56***
CC			0.66***	-0.57***
Construct R^2	0.48	0.52	0.82	0.50

** $p < 0.01$, one-tailed test.

*** $p < 0.001$, one-tailed test.

Notes: ECB = employee citizenship behavior, EDB = employee dysfunctional behavior, CS = customer satisfaction, CC = customer commitment, CCB = customer citizenship behavior, and CDB = customer dysfunctional behavior.

an alternative model including the ECB → CC, EDB → CC, ECB → CCB, and EDB → CDB paths was run to validate the implicit assumptions of the hypothesized model. The results show that all direct paths are not significant ($\gamma = 0.15, p > 0.05$ for the ECB-CC path, $\gamma = -0.13, p > 0.05$ for the EDB-CC path, $\gamma = 0.02, p > 0.05$ for the ECB-CCB path, and $\gamma = 0.14, p > 0.05$ for the EDB-CDB path).

Results Related to Moderating Effects

The influence of the three moderator variables was also assessed. The present study followed a two-step procedure proposed by Chin, Marcolin, and Newsted (2003). The first step entails using the formative indicators in conjunction with PLS, so as to create underlying construct scores for the predictor and moderator variables. The second step then consists of taking those composite scores to create a single interaction term. To allow for easier interpretation and reduce the risk of multicollinearity, the predictor variables were standardized before multiplication. The results of the moderator analyses are given in Table 3.

With regard to relationship age with employees, the study predicted that relationship age would moderate the effect of ECB on CS as well as the effect of EDB on CS (H8a and H8b). The findings indeed show what was expected. This indicates that the greater the relationship age, the greater the impact of ECB and EDB on CS ($p < 0.05, p < 0.001$, respectively)

With respect to group size, H9b is supported ($p < 0.001$). On the other hand, H9a is not supported ($p > 0.01$). One possible explanation for this finding may be the peculiarity of the research setting. Customers could identify ECB regardless of group size. For example, they can interact “unofficially” with their employees after class. Through such activities, customers can identify and observe ECB often. With regard to communication frequency, H10 predicted that communication frequency moderates the impact of ECB and EDB on CS. The results are consistent with what was expected ($p < 0.01$).

Table 3. Tests of the Moderating Effects.

		Dependent Variable CS
ECB		0.36*
EDB		-0.94**
ECB × Relationship age with employees	(H8a)	0.07*
EDB × Relationship age with employees	(H8b)	0.52***
ECB × Group size	(H9a)	-0.02 (n.s.)
EDB × Group size	(H9b)	-0.15***
ECB × Communication frequency	(H10a)	0.07**
EDB × Communication frequency	(H10b)	0.25***

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

Note: n.s. = not significant.

DISCUSSION

Research Issues

How are employee citizenship and dysfunctional behavior related to customer citizenship and dysfunctional behavior? What are the roles of customer satisfaction and customer commitment in the relationship between these employee and customer behaviors? What affects the link between employee behaviors and customer satisfaction? This study suggests that the answers to these questions are twofold: (1) ECB and EDB affect CCB and CDB through CS and CC, and (2) there are contingency factors that strengthen or weaken the relationship between employee behaviors and CS.

Previous research examined ECB, EDB, CCB, and CDB *separately*. In contrast, this study integrates the research from different streams of work, incorporating both employee behaviors (ECB and EDB) and customer behaviors (CCB and CDB). The present study has thus investigated the relationship between *employee* behaviors and *customer* behaviors in a comprehensive framework.

An important contribution of this research is that $ECB \rightarrow CS \rightarrow CCB$ and $EDB \rightarrow CS \rightarrow CDB$ were identified as the causal chains. This finding is important for several reasons. First, this study extends the service–profit chain literature by uncovering the previously neglected relationships between employee citizenship behavior and customer citizenship behavior, as well as between employee dysfunctional behavior and customer dysfunctional behavior. The findings show that these behaviors are related through customer satisfaction. Second, it also extends the research on customer satisfaction. Prior work has not explicitly examined customer satisfaction as an outcome of employee behaviors or as an antecedent of customer behaviors. Overall, the links from ECB to CS to CCB and from EDB to CS to CDB suggest that customer satisfaction represents one of the underlying pathways through which customers reciprocate with similar behaviors.

The results also show that employee citizenship behavior and employee dysfunctional behavior can have a significant impact on customer commitment through customer satisfaction. Few studies to date have explicitly considered the psychological mechanism through which ECB and EDB influence customer commitment.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that customer commitment partially mediates the effects of CS on CCB and CDB. This mediating role of customer commitment is important for several reasons. First, it offers complementary findings to the prior view that customer commitment is a significant driver of customer behavior³ (Bettencourt, 1997). Second, it extends the research stream on CCB and CDB by uncovering the antecedents (i.e., CS and CC). Specifically, the study reveals that CS would be translated into customer commitment, and customer commitment would affect CCB and CDB. Although both CS and CC are direct predictors of CCB and CDB, the study finds the causal ordering between CS

³ The role of customer commitment has been frequently studied in the marketing literature. A recent meta-analysis by Palmatier et al. (2006) indicates that customer commitment improves customer loyalty and firm performance. Bansal, Irving, and Taylor (2004) support the notion that customer commitment affects intentions to switch service providers. Harrison-Walker (2001) also demonstrates that customer commitment is associated with word-of-mouth communication.

and CC as a determinant of CCB and CDB. The study provides support for the view that customer satisfaction precedes customer commitment.

The study also examined moderator effects in the employee–customer behavior link. The results show that this link is strong when relationship age and communication frequency are high. These findings make an important contribution to the literature, because they suggest the conditions under which employee behavior affects customer perceptions (i.e., CS).

Managerial Implications

The findings yield a number of significant managerial implications. This research demonstrates empirically that employees are valuable resources for the organization. In order to achieve customer satisfaction, managers should increase employee citizenship behavior and decrease employee dysfunctional behavior in the workplace. If managers encourage employee citizenship behavior only, but neglect employee dysfunctional behavior, they may not succeed in increasing customer satisfaction. This study illustrates the importance of considering both types of employee behavior (i.e., citizenship behavior and dysfunctional behavior).

A practical implication of this study is that employees may play a key role in eliciting citizenship behavior from customers. Employees can increase customer citizenship behavior by showing citizenship behavior toward them. On the other hand, employees may also play a role in creating dysfunctional behavior among customers. Managers should monitor employee dysfunctional behavior and intervene (e.g., by changing the design of the tasks in the organization) whenever needed.

Managers must understand these types of employee behaviors if they wish to provide better service to customers. Managers need to establish systems that can identify employee citizenship behavior and employee dysfunctional behavior. They can then reward employees for citizenship behavior or punish them for dysfunctional behavior. Additionally, managers can train and motivate employees to exhibit citizenship behavior and to avoid deviant behavior in the workplace. Furthermore, management should develop the recruiting process that can eliminate potentially dysfunctional employees and select those who are likely to show citizenship behavior. For example, companies could use employee behavior inventories in employee selection. Like personality tests, they might be a useful tool for predicting citizenship and dysfunctional behavior among prospective employees.

This study provides insight for the management of customer commitment. While managers generally focus on customer *satisfaction*, this study shows that customer *commitment* is also an important target. Thus, managers need to develop customer relationships enough to gain customer commitment. Managers could promote practices that facilitate personal relationships between customers and the organization (Johnson, Herrmann, & Huber, 2006).

The results with respect to moderator effects also provide interesting and useful implications. Customers who have long relationships and frequent communication with an employee may perceive employee behaviors, thereby showing high satisfaction. From the point of view of management, it is relatively easy to gain knowledge on relationship age, because customer information files can be used to assess this age accurately and economically (Verhoef, Franses, &

Hoekstra, 2002). Therefore, managers should develop strategies based on relationship age with customers.

A large group size in service encounters might be useful when employee dysfunctional behavior is prevalent. As interactions are likely to become minimal in such a case, the negative impact of employee dysfunctional behavior would be minimal. With respect to communication frequency, management could use various communication tools in order to increase the positive impact of ECB. Nevertheless, caution is needed, because this can also increase the negative impact of EDB.

All in all, managers need to find a suitable level of relationship age, group size, and communication frequency to achieve the best performance in a particular workplace. The results show that there is a trade-off between the positive and negative impacts of these variables. Therefore, managers must be creative in balancing the use of these variables strategically.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the study yields significant insights, there are several limitations worth addressing, and some promising areas arise for future research. First, the present research utilized a cross-sectional study in a single industry. The setting of an educational institution raises some concerns about the generalizability of the findings. The employee–customer interactions and their respective behaviors might be different from what one would normally encounter in typical service settings (such as banks, financial advisors, dentists). Future research should collect data in other settings and develop measures that reflect more typical employee–customer interactions.

Second, although the measures of citizenship and dysfunctional behaviors have been frequently used in prior research, they have some limitations. Specifically, most of the items do not focus on interactions between service providers and customers. Thus, one could argue that these employee and customer behaviors are assessed *indirectly*. Future research should develop the measures that correspond to the dyadic interaction between the service provider and the customer.

Third, reverse causality in the model cannot be ruled out, because this research design was cross-sectional. Cross-lagged research designs, which measure ECB, EDB, CC, CS, CCB, and CDB at more than one point in time, would provide more convincing support for the directionality implied by the hypotheses. Although gathering multi-wave data from matched pairs of employees and customers represents a considerable logistical challenge, such information would help address reciprocal relationships among the variables.

Finally, several other constructs might be added to the model. Studies show that customer justice perception, affect, and trust are linked to citizenship behavior (Podsakoff et al., 1990; Spector & Fox, 2002). Understanding how such variables are connected to the model would provide additional insights into ECB, EDB, CCB, and CDB. Additionally, some constructs could be introduced as potential moderators. For example, the link between employee behaviors and customer satisfaction might be moderated by involvement, relationship quality, or company image.

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APPENDIX

Scale Items for Construct Measures

Employee citizenship behavior

- Helps others who have heavy workloads
- Helps others who have been absent
- Does not abuse the rights of others
- Takes steps to prevent problems with other employees
- Informs me before taking any important actions
- Constantly talks about wanting to quit his/her job (r)
- Always focuses on what's wrong with his/her situation, rather than the positive side (r)
- Is always punctual
- Obeys company rules, regulations, and procedures even when no one is watching
- Keeps abreast of changes in the organization
- Attends and participates in meetings regarding the organization

Employee dysfunctional behavior

- Purposely damaged a piece of equipment or property
- Purposely dirtied or littered your place of work
- Came to work late without permission
- Taken a longer break than allowed
- Purposely did work incorrectly
- Purposely worked slowly when things needed to get done
- Purposely failed to follow instructions
- Stolen something belonging to the employer
- Took supplies or tools home without permission
- Been nasty or rude to a client or customer
- Ignored someone at work
- Blamed someone at work for an error that you made

Customer citizenship behavior

- Recommend XYZ to your family
- Recommend XYZ to your peers
- Recommend XYZ to people interested in the services business

Assist other students who have difficulty in understanding the textbook
Help others keep up with class
Explain to other students how to prepare homework correctly
Provide helpful feedback to student service
Informs the managers about the great service received by an individual employee
Provides information when surveyed by XYZ

Customer dysfunctional behavior

I miss class without reasonable justification.
I talk to fellow students during class.
I come to class late without permission.
I intentionally submit assignments later than I should.
I do not follow the instructor's requests and directives.
I focus on the negative side, rather than the positive side in class.
I put little effort into my class work.
I spend time fantasizing or daydreaming during class.

Customer satisfaction (Composite reliability [CR] = 0.91, Average variance extracted [AVE] = 0.77)

Compared to other foreign language institute, I am very satisfied with XYZ.
Based on all my experience with this institute, I am very satisfied.
My learning experiences at this institute have always been pleasant.

Customer commitment (CR = 0.90, AVE = 0.76)

I feel emotionally attached to XYZ.
I feel like part of the family with XYZ.
I feel a strong sense of belonging to XYZ.

Communication frequency (CR = 0.88, AVE = 0.64)

Initiate face-to-face conversations with the lecturer
Have face-to-face conversations with the lecturer that were initiated by him or her
Send the lecturer emails
Receive emails from the lecturer