When and Why are Customer Oriented Service Workers Attracted to Service Organisations

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DECLARATION

The author hereby declares that, except where duly acknowledged and referenced, this research study is entirely her own work and has not been submitted for any degree or other qualification in the Waterford Institute of Technology or any other third level institution in Ireland or abroad.

Sharon O'Brien
September 2018

DEDICATION

In memory of Dr Susan Whelan (RIP)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANCOVA	Analysis of Covariance
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ASA	Attraction-Selection-Attrition
CDL	Customer-Dominant Logic
CO	Customer Orientation
COD	Customer Oriented Deviance
COSE	Customer Orientation of Service Workers
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
FLE	Front Line Employee
GDL	Goods-Dominant Logic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JD-R	Job Demands-Resource Model
JDC	Job Demands Control Model
ICO	Individual Customer Orientation
IHIP	Inseparability, Heterogeneity, Intangibility, Perishability
OCB	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
OCO	Organisational Customer Orientation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDL	Provider-Dominant Logic
PE fit	Person-Environment Fit
PJ fit	Person-Job Fit
PO fit	Person-Organisation Fit
SOCO	Selling Orientation; Customer Orientation
SDL	Service-Dominant Logic
SL	Service Logic

ABSTRACT

When and Why are Customer Oriented Service Workers Attracted to Service Organisations (Sharon O'Brien)

The research broadens the knowledge of the customer orientation (CO) research stream by identifying that autonomy influences attraction and pursuit intentions of customer oriented job seekers/workers vs. low CO workers. Under-pinned by job demands-resources theory (JD-R), the research advances an integrative framework proposing that specific job attributes attract customer oriented workers. It is accepted that numerous factors influence job seekers' attitudes and behaviours, however, exploratory research (Study 1) indicates the particular importance of autonomy for such workers. This forms the basis for this study's original contribution to knowledge.

Using experimental methods, this research measures the effect of autonomy on two outcomes; organisational attraction (OA) and job pursuit intentions (JP) across two studies. Study 2 employs a factorial experiment with a between subjects design measuring the effect of autonomy on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of customer oriented workers/job seekers. Study 3 utilises a 2 x 2 factorial design (with random assignment) and extends Study 2 by introducing a treatment variable proven to influence customer oriented workers: customer contact. Both studies demonstrate that autonomy has a stronger influence on outcomes for customer oriented job seekers. Study 3 reveals that organisational customer orientation plays a mediating role in the relationship between autonomy and the outcomes, with customer contact moderating the relationship. A significant and unexpected finding is that the *high* autonomy; *low* contact proposition has the strongest effect on OA and JP, challenging prior research. This counter-intuitive finding is partially explained by JD-R and the job demand-control model (JDC) which predict jobs lacking challenges but offering autonomy draw less energy from workers as autonomy offers more opportunities to execute a job in a self-fulfilling manner buffering workers from detrimental job demands.

Theoretical insights include evidence of a symbiotic relationship between autonomy and CO for FLE workers. The findings inform JD-R, by using it in an attraction context and by investigating the nature of the causal relationship between resources and demands on job seekers' attitudes and behaviours. From a practical perspective, the research presents new insights on the importance of autonomy in attracting and recruiting customer oriented workers, offering value to practitioners in marketing and management fields.

~ CHAPTER ~

1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the purpose, scope and the relevance of the research. It commences with a discussion of the importance of the service sector which explicates the rationale and context for the study. The research gaps are outlined, and the research objective and the research method are described. The chapter concludes with the framework delineating the structure of the study.

1.2 SERVICE SECTOR - BACKGROUND

The service sector or tertiary sector is constituted of industries that primarily earn revenue through the provision of intangible products and services (WorldBank, 2018). The World Bank (2011) describes the sector as primarily knowledge-driven with a focus on value creation, producing intangible goods and spanning numerous industries in retail, transport, distribution, education, health, as well as other service-dominated businesses. A distinguishable feature of the sector is its reliance on human capital rather than natural capital; subsequently, the sector's growth has precipitated a spike in demand for more educated and skilled workers, particularly in developed economies (Gerhards, Mohr, and Troltsch, 2018; Hsieh and Chen, 2011). The resultant effect is that competition among service companies for the most talented employees has escalated in line with the growth of the service, thus driving service companies to design attractive and motivating reward packages to attract and retain the best individuals (Craig, 2017; Cross, Brashear, Rigdon, and Bellenger, 2007; Jena, 2017).

It is widely accepted that services and services trade are crucial for economic growth and employment (Gummesson, 2017). Service industries constitute the largest sector within domestic economies of OECD countries, with service production and delivery playing a significant role in economic activity and employment generating more than

two-thirds of gross domestic product (GDP) and globally creating more new jobs than any other sector (OECD, 2018). In the United States, over 80 per cent of gross domestic output and in excess of 85 per cent of jobs are in the service sector equating to greater than 14 million workers in the United States employed in sales positions (The Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Similarly, in an Irish context, the service sector is recognised as the main force driving the Irish economy, accounting for 70.4 per cent of Irish economic output in 2016 up from 69% in 2015 (CSO, 2018). Furthermore, according to the CSO, 1.68 million people work in service industries from a total of 2.20 million employed. Service exports are continuing to increase month-on-month increasing by 5.3% in April when compared with March 2018 while in the year to March 2018, there was an increase of 6.5% in service exports (CSO, 2018). The ESRI predicts above average growth in many service industries in Ireland in the period 2013-2020, particularly in financial and professional services, while growth in the accommodation and food sectors is projected to grow in-line with the overall economy, whereas agriculture, manufacturing and public services is expected to contract.

1.2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF DOMINANT LOGICS

Vargo and Lusch (2004) state that as the focus of marketing moved beyond its emphasis on distribution, the formerly dominant logic (goods-dominant logic) began to be considered deficient in the face of emerging challenges. This led to the consideration of service-oriented concepts and models which commenced in earnest in the 1970s. Central to this shift in perspective was Shostack's (1977, p. 73) seminal paper which promoted service marketing as a vital and valid field of research, albeit one that has since developed separately from mainstream goods-based marketing. In this paper, Shostack argues that

> "marketing offers no guidance, terminology, or practical rules that are clearly relevant to services…[because] the classic marketing 'mix', the seminal literature, and the language of marketing all derive from the manufacture of physical goods".

Subsequent to Shostack articulating this view, a number of important theories and perspectives emerged centred on conceptualising services. According to Fisk et al. (1993) when debate began in the early 1970s on service perspectives, the focus was largely on understanding the concept from the perspective of identifying differences

between products and services. Numerous definitions of service and services abounded as service perspectives were theorised. Services are sometimes considered to be processes, activities or interactions while Lovelock (2001) posited that rather than being a physical thing, a service is a process or a performance.

Tracing development in the area (Grönroos, 2006) describes how two internationally recognised schools of service marketing research developed in the early 1970s in Europe, one in the Nordic countries and the second in France (Grönroos and Gummesson, 1985). Both these schools of thought took the standpoint that a new marketing perspective was required, Grönroos (1982) representing the Nordic School, argued that marketing should not remain a business function on its own and held that customer preferences were influenced by a number of resources and interactions outside the scope of a marketing department i.e., employees. Customers were also considered co-producers in the service production process.

The US school of thought on service market research which developed simultaneously with its European counterparts was embedded on the IHIP (inseparability, heterogeneity, intangibility, and perishability) perspective conceptualised by Sasser (1974) to represent the elemental difference between goods and services. Analogous to Fisk et al. (1993), Edvardsson et al. (2005, p. 108) theorised that much research into the service research stream influenced by the US school perspective was concerned with the goods vs. services dichotomy with the genesis being that services are fundamentally different to physical products. Edvardsson et al. (2005) argued however, that none of the characteristics of services including the IHIP characteristics and other variants proposed by scholars were based on empirical research and instead were derived from anecdotes or observations from practical experience.

Central to the European and specifically Nordic School of thought was that in contrast to the traditional service marketing research perspective where the starting point was existing, goods-based marketing models, the Nordic School focused on the phenomenon of service in its marketing context. The debate on the phenomenon of service and the potential of a service logic to challenge the mainstream goods-based logic was further driven by Vargo and Lusch's (2004) important paper discussing a

new service-dominant logic for marketing. The authors argue that "the central implication of a service-centred dominant logic is the general change in perspective" (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, p 12). The authors proposed that the move towards a service dominant logic (SDL) is centred on an enhanced focus on operant resources (i.e., skills-based), specifically process management. The idea of service as a perspective was further developed by Vargo and Lusch (2004) who in their pivotal paper on (service dominant logic) SDL expanded the subject and contrasted service with services. This was the precursor to a shift in service research to examining service as a function involving customers in interactions (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

1.3 GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

Grounded in the marketing concept, customer orientation has emerged as a central construct in marketing literature, stemming largely from early work by Saxe and Weitz (1982). The large body of work on the construct has led to customer oriented workers being regarded as valuable resources who achieve enhanced (and wide-ranging) performance outcomes including positive financial effects (Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2012). While its importance and core meaning are undisputed, scholars are divided on the underlying conceptualisation of customer orientation (Korschun, Bhattacharya, and Swain, 2014; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2012). The theoretical foundation for this difference lies in customer orientation's setting within a nomological network of relationships. Specifically, customer orientation is conceptualised as either a set of worker behaviours aimed at attaining customer satisfaction or a psychological variable (Zablah et al., 2012). Increasingly, contemporary studies (including the current research) favour a psychological basis, influenced for example, by research including Zablah and colleagues' (2012) theoretically robust argument for a psychological conceptualisation founded on the work of Narver and Slater (1990) which justifies the conceptualisation of market orientation (i.e., firm-level customer orientation) as culturally based. Clarity on the underlying formulation of customer orientation is important, Prahalad and Bettis (1986, p. 491) argue that perspectives or guiding theory in a particular field is valuable in academic research but also in practice because businesses are driven by a prevailing

world view (or perspective). An organisation's world view determines the strategies and tools used to accomplish objectives and exists at the heart of an organisation (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015). Strandvik and Holmlund (2014) expand on this, positing that perspectives are embodied in concepts and models and influence an organisation's strategy and behaviour.

To date, much research into customer orientation has focused on identifying and empirically examining customer orientation outcomes (e.g., Konrad, 2018; Menguc et al., 2015; O'Dwyer and Gilmore, 2018; Zablah et al., 2012). There exists significant research into the mechanics of attracting job seekers in attraction literature (e.g., Craig, 2017; Jena, 2017; Van Horen and Pieters, 2013) but not from a customer orientation perspective. This deficit may be considered in the context of Jena's (2017) research which holds that there needs to be a fundamental change in the way organisations perceive their human resource approach and posits that workers should be viewed as a capital investment which ensures sustainability and strengthens competitive advantage. This approach favours identifying key talent deficits and strategically addressing insufficiencies (Konrad, 2018).

In a customer orientation context, despite widespread support in the literature for the importance of the construct (e.g., Jeng, 2018; Menguc, Auh, Katsikeas, and Jung, 2015; Zablah et al., 2012; Zhang and Yang, 2018) there is nonetheless a lack of research into establishing factors that specifically attract customer orientated job seekers in either research stream. Consequently, this study considers an important means to influencing long-term sustainable growth in the service sector; the attraction of customer oriented workers, and builds on previous work by investigating conditions under which customer oriented job seekers are attracted to service firms. Specifically, this research finds a particular importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers and demonstrates that when role autonomy is high that customer oriented job seekers are more likely to be attracted and pursue a role in an organisation vs. low customer oriented job seekers.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Given the importance of customer orientation to the service sector, the principal purpose of this research is to empirically identify the moderating boundary conditions best predicting why and when customer oriented service workers and job seekers are attracted to service organisations. Specifically, the research question guiding this research is: 'when and why are customer oriented workers attracted to service organisations'. The research question will be addressed through a review of the relevant literature across a number of pertinent research streams, an exploratory study and two experimental studies designed to address the research aims.

The research objectives are:

- Investigate and identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted to a service organisation and (ii) are most likely to pursue a front line employee (FLE) role in a service organisation.
- Establish if when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more (or less) attracted to a service organisation and are more (or less) likely to pursue an FLE role than low customer oriented job seekers.
- Examine the combined influence of autonomy and other job demands and job resources; these are (i) customer contact level, (ii) job complexity and (iii) organisational customer orientation on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions).

1.5 METHOD OF STUDY

The method of study commences with developing a comprehensive understanding from secondary research sources on the central components considered in the research question. Initially, a comprehensive picture of customer orientation, its genesis, antecedents and particular relevance for the service sector is explored and delineated. The attraction chapter investigates the mechanics and theories of attracting employees and examines attraction through the lens of customer orientation with a particular focus on the service sector. Relevant perspectives from research streams including branding, fit theory and attraction literature are also examined through the lens of

customer orientation. Accordingly, the literature review summarises the relevant secondary research and forms the basis for the thrust and direction of the study.

Based on this review of the literature, a series of in-depth interviews with customer service champions and their managers from a broad representation of service industries was undertaken. The objective is two-fold (i) establish what it is that attracts these customer oriented workers to their employing organisation, thereby gaining insight into the pertinent motivators and attractors for this cohort of workers and job seekers; and (ii) establish the importance of customer orientation for the organisation and how managers attract and identify the customer orientation of job seekers. This exploratory work clearly indicates the particular importance of role autonomy (both objective and subjective autonomy) for customer oriented service workers irrespective of their skill level and job complexity. This work will address objective 1; findings are presented in the qualitative findings chapter (chapter 5).

The next stage in the research study involves empirically testing role autonomy and other attraction factors (including job skill, customer contact intensity and perceived organisational customer orientation) using an experimental research design. The experimental research investigates the boundary conditions under which customer oriented job seekers and workers are (i) more or less attracted to service organisations; and (ii) are more or less likely to pursue a job with a service organisation. It is expected that this approach will establish the key influencing variables and moderating factors important in attracting highly customer oriented staff and facilitate their identification, examination and categorisation. The experimental research studies will address objectives 2 and 3, and the findings are presented in the quantitative findings chapters (chapters 6 and 7).

1.6 THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is structured in eight chapters, these are now outlined:

- **Chapter One – Introduction**

  This first chapter of the literature review presents the research context and objectives, in addition, it provides an outline to the research study and presents gaps in the literature. Additionally, background information detailing the importance of the service economy is presented. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the relevance of the study and provide an introduction to the research.

- **Literature Review – Chapters Two, Three**

  When conducting experimental research, Feuer, Towne, and Shavelson (2002) argue that a thorough review of the literature is vital. Accordingly, the literature review is central to the direction of the study, it describes extant research that informs and leads to the research conceptualisation and study design. The literature review is delineated into two chapters to facilitate a thorough review of relevant data and develop a comprehensive picture of each element and construct informing the context of the research question.

  Chapter 2 focuses on attracting service employees, and presents an overview of attraction factors and theories including fit theory, image congruence and branding. In addition, symbolic and functional job attributes and values are examined with a view to gaining insight into what attracts customer oriented workers to service organisations. Organisational attractiveness and attraction theories are examined in the context of the present research. The research model underpinning the study i.e., the job demand-resources model (JD-R) is described and its relevance to the research is outlined (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007).

  Chapter 3 addresses employee perspectives and centres on two concepts central to the research: (i) customer orientation and (ii) job autonomy. The customer orientation field has been extensively investigated yielding a rich and broad

expanse of information exploring the concept including its antecedents and outcomes within various contexts. For this study, while the origins and development of customer orientation from its genesis in the marketing concept are explored, the construct is considered specifically with respect to the current study and from the perspective of the service sector.

Role autonomy is recognised as an important resource for all workers irrespective of their level of customer orientation (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014), indeed Kant (Kant, 1795) viewed autonomy or self-mastery as being fundamental to each individual's well-being. However, extant literature indicates a particular importance of role autonomy in service roles. Such roles are invariably unbalanced with the service employee often holding a deferential position in respect to the customer, however, employee autonomy reintroduces some level of equality between the parties (Zablah et al., 2016).

- **Chapter Four – Research Methodology**

  This chapter outlines the research design and method of study employed to address the research question and objectives. The study's methodological perspective is outlined and the research rationale and contribution of the empirical research are presented. The research design, the research instruments, measures used and primary data collection are analytically described. The validity and reliability assessments of the research instruments are described.

- **Chapter Five – Qualitative Research Findings**

  In this chapter, the exploratory research findings from the in-depth interviews with customer service champions and their managers are presented. This is followed by discussion of the findings.

- **Chapter Six – Study 2 (Experimental Study)**

  This chapter presents the first experimental study and outlines the results of the pilot study and the empirical results. This study explores the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers and its effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. It employs a simple single factor design with one experimental condition (between subjects design) with two levels; (high autonomy; low autonomy) generating two treatment conditions. The findings are described and interpreted apropos the research hypotheses and extant literature.

- **Chapter Seven – Study 3 (Experimental Study)**

  The final study is presented in this chapter, the pilot study design and results, and the empirical results are described and explained with respect to the research hypotheses and the literature. This study uses an online panel, accordingly use of such panels in research is reviewed. Study 3 extends Study 2 by introducing a new treatment condition (i.e., customer contact level) generating four treatments. The study design (2 x 2 factorial design) has two treatment conditions: autonomy; customer contact and two levels in each treatment: high; low and random assignment across treatments. As for Study 2, the findings are described and interpreted apropos the research hypotheses and extant literature.

- **Chapter Eight – Conclusion, Recommendations and Contributions**

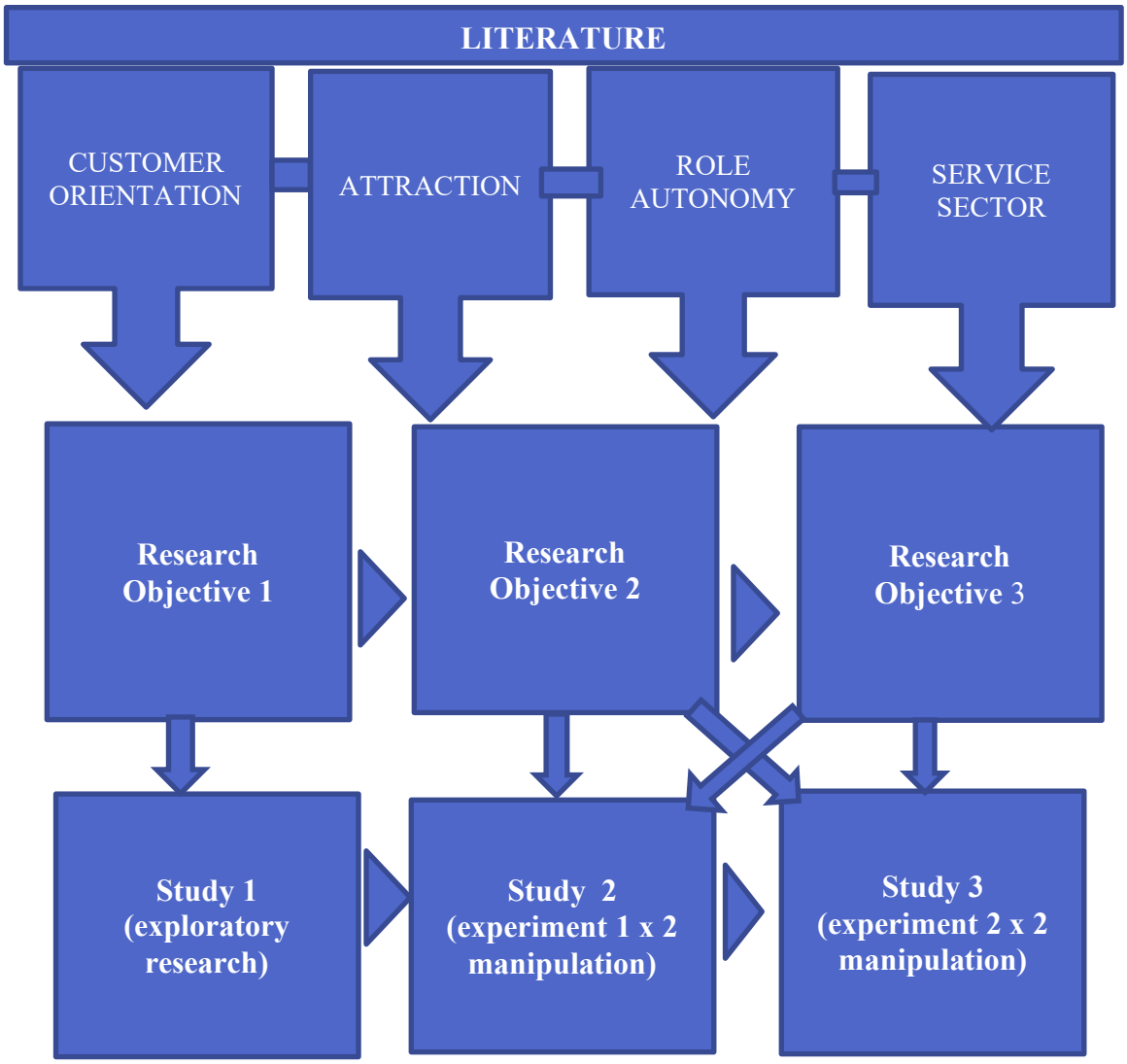
  The final chapter outlines and proposes theoretical contributions stemming from the research findings. Possible managerial implications and recommendations including considerations for recruitment, job design and internal marketing are then discussed. Finally, direction for future research is proposed and the limitations of the study are outlined.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This purpose of this first chapter is to introduce the research topic and outline its relevance and importance. The research question and objectives for the study are presented along with the gaps in the literature. This chapter also

provides a background analysis and examination of the sector and its value from an economic viewpoint was outlined and discussed. Finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined and Figure 1 presents a schema indicating how the literature across the different research streams (i.e., customer orientation, service sector and attraction) influences the proposed research studies.

FIGURE 1 LINK BETWEEN LITERATURE AND RESEARCH STUDIES



~ CHAPTER ~

ATTRACTING CUSTOMER ORIENTED EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER TWO
ATTRACTING CUSTOMER ORIENTED WORKERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter commences by describing the key theoretical concepts and ideologies guiding the sector. The special relationship between customer orientation and service organisations is examined drawing on contemporary theory and perspectives. Following this, the chapter examines the attraction literature from a service perspective, which lies at the heart of the research question. The chapter focuses particularly on attraction mechanisms used by service organisations and explores what attracts customer oriented workers.

It is widely accepted that customer orientation has a particular relevance for the service sector (Anaza, 2012; Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata, 2002; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; O'Dwyer and Gilmore, 2018; Zhang and Yang, 2018). Due to services inherent intangibility and interactive nature, customers' evaluation of service performance and quality is largely predicated on the attitudes and behaviours of front line employees (Jena, 2017; Teng and Barrows, 2009). Service workers are the face of the service organisation in the eyes of the customer (Homburg, Wieseke, and Hoyer, 2009) and interact personally with customers in both retail and service encounters (Sirianni, Castro Nelson, Moralse, and Fitzsimons, 2009). Value formation, service quality and employee customer orientation affords service organisations the opportunity to differentiate themselves (Osborne, 2018). A customer oriented attitude among front line employees has been shown to improve performance and to enhance customer oriented and altruistic behaviours (Grizzle et al., 2009; Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Stock, 2016; Stock and Hoyer, 2005). For service organisations in particular, applicants' job pursuit decisions define the quantity and quality of the job seeker pool and understanding applicants' decision making processes and motivations facilitates organisations in targeting their recruitment activities more effectively (Barber and

Roehling, 1993; Boswell, Roehling, LePine, and Moynihan, 2003; Kulkarni, 2013; Vanderstukken, Proost, and Van Den Broeck, 2018; Yen, 2017). Accordingly, given the importance of customer orientation to the service sector, this chapter investigates the theories underlying attracting customer oriented workers specifically to service organisations and the factors that influence the job pursuit intentions of customer orientated workers.

2.2 SERVICE PERSPECTIVES AND IDEOLOGIES

Perspectives and dominant logic are considered important in business practice and academic research and are embodied in concepts and business models, these perspectives influence thinking and guide philosophies in organisations and subsequent management actions (Strandvik et al., 2014). Jaworski (2011) maintained that in some instances, researchers who reflect on the managerial significance and application of academic research believe the most important effect of academic investigations arise from the creation of new perspectives and concepts which challenge the current situation. This is exemplified by Vargo and Lusch's (2004) seminal paper which challenged the status quo of the goods-dominant logic (GDL) paradigm while acknowledging the veracity and legitimacy of the concept in the particular context of a manufacturing based economic view:

"the goods oriented, output focused model has enabled advances in common understanding and has reached paradigm status".

The 'service centred' view as proposed by Vargo and Lusch (2004) is an opposing perspective to GDL grounded in an increased focus on operant resources (specifically process management) with marketing being central to cross-functional business process. Its core tenet is that service in itself is dominant, therefore SDL transcends services marketing (i.e., a GDL approach) and specifically focuses on 'service' with knowledge the fundamental source of competitive advantage:

"marketing is a continuous series of social and economic processes largely focused on operant resources". (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, p. 5).

GDL was underpinned by the manufacturing based view of economics where the function of marketing was seen as the distribution of physical goods (Grönroos and

Gummesson, 1985). Lovelock (1983) posits that goods-dominant logic (GDL) lies in tangibility and physicality. Researchers such as Lovelock (1983) posit that a fundamental difference between a product and a service lies in the domain of physicality. In essence, while a consumer can purchase and own a physical product, value from a service is derived from its use and performance. Lovelock (2001) proposes that intangibility, a commonality in all services, means that the consumer cannot gain complete ownership regardless of whether the service is completely intangible or is combined in part with a physical product.

The goods centred view implied that the quality of manaufactured goods (e.g., tangibility, separation of production, consumption, standardisation and non perishability) are normative qualities (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985). However, Vargo and Lusch (2004) posit that these qualities are essentially only true of goods when viewed from the manufacturers' perspective. Scholars including Grönroos and Gummerus (2014) and Grönroos and Gummesson (1985) also explore the impact of the shortcomings of the goods-dominated marketing model as a contemporary guiding marketing theory. Central to its limitations is that its marketing mix approach is mainly centred on product purchase and does not consider consumption as an integral element of marketing theory. Conversely, the focus in service marketing is not on a product or a service but on the interactions inherent in service encounters.

Consumption is recognised as an integral element of a holistic marketing model. Central to the goods centred perspective is the view that the quality of manaufactured goods (e.g., tangibility, separation of production, consumption, standardisation and non perishability) are normative qualities (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985). Such research by Lovelock (2001) and other important work by pioneers in the research area (e.g., Shostack, 1977; Vargo and Lusch, 2004) promoted a wide and rich discussion on theories and perspectives conceptualising the service perspective and has informed and guided current thinking on dominant logics. Building on previous work, Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) consider how in the service field three influential perspectives are predominantly discussed in marketing literature. Service-dominant logic (SDL), service logic (SL) and customer-dominant logic (CDL) have

emerged as influential service perspectives (FitzPatrick et al., 2015; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015; Strandvik et al., 2014). Each of these perspectives have different emphases, however, as a group they describe and explain the characteristics of contemporary service organisations and business. Every marketing and service perspective has positive and negative aspects with different foci and motivations, consequently, they each have their own specific set of assumptions and differ vis-à-vis their emphasis. Accordingly, the three main service perspectives also differ in their scope and emphasis, SDL has a strong emphasis on value co-creation, SL promotes value-in-use while CDL focuses on value formation as well as value-in-use (Grönroos, 2006; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015; Medberg and Heinonen, 2014; Vargo and Lusch, 2008). However, despite their many differences, Russell-Bennett and Baron (2015) posit that each of the logics embraces the notion of customer participation in service and value formation. Table 1 presents a synopsis of each of these service perspectives or logics.

TABLE 1 PROMINENT SERVICE PERSPECTIVES

Logic	**Proponents**	**Scope**	**CO Application**
Service Dominant Logic	Vargo and Lusch (2004); Lusch and Vargo (2006b)	Looks beyond traditional GDL models to operant vs. operand resources. Focus on business systems and co-creation between parties on a societal level.	Creates practices within the organisation fostering employees' CO skills.
Service Logic	Grönroos (2006); Grönroos and Gummerus (2014)	Centred on dual process of value co-creation and interaction between organisation and customer. Focus on dyadic interaction/co-creation platform between provider and customer. Advocates organic understanding of interaction between actors, recognises continuity, dynamism in interactions.	Key principle is a platform of co-creation develops through direct interactions with actors (e.g., FLEs, customers) in value generation process.
Customer Dominant Logic	Heinonen and Strandvik (2015, p. 472)	Positioned as a marketing and business logic guiding organisations in understanding customers. Seen as a foundation model for business and not just a business function. Grounded in understanding customer logic and the process by which organisation's offerings become embedded in customers' lives.	Stresses pre-eminence of the customer as the main stakeholder. Champions the cause of the customer through focusing on customer logic the customers focus of activities.

2.3 VALUE FORMATION

As outlined, a key concept across the three service perspectives or dominant logics is value formation. This describes the process by which value effectively emerges rather than being deliberately created and focuses on use via physical and mental experiences. In accepting that products and services are both consumed as experiences by customers this then increases the importance of value formation and understanding user value (Yu, 2018).

Grönroos (2006) discusses how traditionally exchange has been considered the core concept of marketing, according to this view value for customers is embedded in the exchange. However, Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that in reality value for customers does not exist until they can make use of a product. In other words, value is customer driven and value emerges in their space rather than the company's space. This is expanded by leading researchers in the area, Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) who examine value formation from the customers' viewpoint, and argue that it centres on:

"customers emerging behavioural and mental processes of interpreting, experiencing and integrating offerings in their everyday lives". (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, p. 479).

Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) build on de Ruyter et al. (1997) and propose three value dimensions: practical/functional, emotional, and logical. Frequently used in service marketing research, Holbrook's (1994, 1996, 1999, 2006) multidimensional value typology explains the concept concisely and is based on three key distinctions:

- extrinsic vs. intrinsic value: in this case a product serves as a means to some further end rather than being appreciated for its own sake;
- self-oriented vs. other-oriented value: here the product is appreciated by the individual for their purpose as opposed to appreciating a product for the sake of others;
- active vs. reactive value: represents how the user uses the product vs. the effect of the product upon the passive user.

Holbrook's (1994, 1996, 1999, 2006) value typology considers the issue from the perspective of the customer and end user. From the perspective of the organisation,

value formation is concerned with the process of planning, designing and implementing consumer outcomes and is dependent on organisations' and the service workers' skills, capabilities and effectiveness in interpreting customer logic.

2.4 CO-CREATION

Service marketing theory has transitioned from 'services' to an overall 'service perspective' theory (Gummesson and Mele, 2010) and accordingly the focus of research into value creation has shifted from value exchanged between the firm and the customer to value co-creation (Gronroos, 2008, 2011). This change in focus was significant as it represented a migration from the relationship marketing perspective which views customers as perceivers of value from service providers' offerings. The service logic emphasises that value for customers is co-created during their use of offerings (as discussed by Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008).

Value creation and value formation have become dominant themes for managers informed by researchers including Bautista, Mazaj, and Cárdenas (2018); Campos, Mendes, Valle, and Scott (2018); Glanfield, Ackfeldt, and Melewar (2018); Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004); Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2018). Specifically, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) discuss how the meaning of value and the process of value creation have shifted from a product- and firm-centric view to personalised customer experiences. In this context, informed, networked, empowered, and active consumers are increasingly co-creating value with the organisation and the organisation's FLEs (Glanfield et al., 2018). The dyadic interaction between FLEs and customers is recognised as fundamentally important (Bautista et al. 2018; Matthews, Beeler, Zablah, and Hair, 2017; Menguc et al., 2015). Thus, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) contend that the interaction between the firm, FLEs and the consumer has become the locus of not only value creation but value extraction. This is driven by a shift from value to experiences whereby the market has evolved into a forum for conversation and interactions between consumers, consumer communities, and firms (Campos et al., 2018). Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004, p. 8) defined co-creation as:

> "the joint creation of value by the company and the customer; allowing the customer to co-construct the service experience to suit their context."

From a practical viewpoint, therefore co-creation may be perceived likely to manifest as purposeful partnering with customers to generate ideas, problem solve, improve performance, or create a new product, service or solution (Bautista et al., 2018). However, some researchers believe there remains ambiguity around the concept, in

their recent paper, Ramaswamy and Ozcan, (2018) argue that while the co-creation label has proliferated in marketing research, there is no coalescing consensus on what 'co-creation' is and what it means. Ramaswamy and Ozcan, (2018, p296-205) offer what they perceive to be a unifying and novel perspective by anchoring co-creation's underlying theory centrally "in creation through interactions". The authors' definition of co-creation is:

> "enactment of interactional creation across interactive system-environments (afforded by interactive platforms) entailing agencing, [a neologism; means both 'organising' and 'giving agency'; it thus designates a process by which various entities are connected, coordinated, and put in motion] engagements and structuring organisations".

The authors consider interactional creation as being enacted via interactions of "agencial assemblages", whereas they argue that "agencing engagements" and structuring organisations enable and constrain interactions. The interactive platforms they refer to are composed of heterogeneous relations between pertinent artifacts, processes, interfaces, and actors. Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2018) contend that interactive platforms assisted by digitalised technologies offer numerous interactive system-environments which connect "creational interactions" with how outcomes experienced by customers emerge from their underlying resourced capabilities.

Another concept receiving attention from some practitioners is value formation. Medberg and Heinonen (2014) contend that focus is shifting from value co-creation to value formation (Echeverri and Schlager and Maas, 2012; Heinonen et al., 2013). They argue that a shift in focus more radically to the customer domain also precipitates a change in the nature of value. In essence, where value co-creation assumes specific resource integration between the relevant actors (Vargo and Lusch, 2008) and is formed within the service in visible interactions, value formation refers to value formed for customers in their own context via invisible, mental actions (Heinonen et al., 2013). This perspective sees value emerging in three domains:

> "…by either the company, by the customer and company together, or by the customer alone" (Heinonen et al., 2013, p. 108).

The co-creation and value formation concepts inform and draw on earlier research into the concept of customer contact, which is recognised as describing a two-sided interaction between the organisation (personified by the FLE and the customer). From the organisational perspective, high levels of customer contact may introduce variability and uncertainty in the service delivery process (Dalal and Sharma, 2018). Whereas from the customer's perspective, it can precipitate information asymmetry

(Cruz-Ros and Gonzalez-Cruz, 2015). The literature proposes that customer contact is a multi-dimensional concept comprised of three core facets; communication time, information intensity, and intimacy (Cruz-Ros and Gonzalez-Cruz, 2015). In essence, as described by Mills and Margulies (1980) customer contact is concerned with interactions between the customer, the service organisation and the front-line employee. Cruz-Ros and Gonzalez-Cruz (2015) assert that for service organisations, customer contact is fundamental to defining, classifying, and analysing services beyond traditional service features and applies to high and low contact organisations (Ponsignon et al., 2011). This view is supported by studies into service taxonomies which consider customer contact a key classification criterion (Victorino et al., 2018).

2.5 CO-CREATION, VALUE FORMATION: HIGH & LOW SKILLED CONTEXTS

As outlined, value formation and co-creation are key concepts in service ideologies. However, the extent to which an organisation can build value and co-create in partnership with customers is driven by its business model and its offering. Ponsignon (2011) explains that high and low contact models face distinct process design challenges. High contact models are linked to specialisation and create value through customer interaction and requires skilled frontline employees (FLEs) to develop relationships with customers defined by partnership and a major challenge is customer variability. Low contact models include problems in differentiation and customer loyalty inherent in models based on mass market offerings.

In a service context, irrespective of the model, the quality of the relationship between the customer service worker and the customer has a significant impact on FLE job satisfaction and important job outcomes (Stock, 2016; Stock 2017). In more specialised services, the customer-employee dyad is often characterised by a partnership type relationship (Menguc et al., 2016; Zablah et al., 2016) However, in more utilitarian settings (e.g., call centre environments, fast-food restaurants), the relationship between customers and FLEs are largely transactional, one-off and short-lived (Zablah et al., 2016). Rychalski and Palmer, (2017) argue that some high contact; low FLE specialisation roles e.g., the call centre sector has adopted many of the industrialisation principles to reduce costs associated with customer service. In this

model, formal controls (e.g., scripts, smiling at every customer) are deemed necessary to ensure consistent service quality (Paul et al., 2015). However, these constraints reduce employees task range and complexity and according to Stock (2016) make the employees more prone to boreout. Paul et al. (2015) argues that such controls constitute "iron cages" that reduce employees' autonomy and trigger undesired customer reactions. Such a scenario prevents employees from developing a significant rapport with the customer and as a result, the employee's role will be more deferential in such relationships (Matthews et al., 2017; Stock, 2016; Zablah et al., 2016).

2.6 SERVICE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction in a service context is generally accepted as a transaction-specific measure, essentially customers evaluate their perception of performance relative to their expectation in each service encounter, independently of other occasions (Bitner et al., 1994; Parasuraman, 1988; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). This emphasises the importance of every service encounter between frontline employees and customers (Cross et al., 2007).

Zablah et al. (2016) explores the reciprocal nature of customer-employee satisfaction, the study identifies a 'mirror effect' where employee satisfaction drives customer satisfaction and how the reverse is also true (i.e., an 'inside-out – outside-in' phenomenon). Significantly, in their analysis of the 'mirror effect' of customer and employee satisfaction, Zablah and colleagues found that satisfaction between customer-employee dyads is reciprocal and symbiotic. In other words, customer satisfaction's impact on FLE job satisfaction, may account for a significant degree of the observed empirical relationship between FLE job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. This study also finds that role autonomy is fundamental to the success of such dyadic relationships and that FLE-customer dyads with autonomy are more successful overall. Although the mirror effect exploring employee satisfaction – customer satisfaction link is not universally supported, other studies confirm the satisfaction mirror effect including Silvestro's (2016) research into drivers of business performance and Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) who also investigate and find

support for satisfaction mirror effects which may be outside-in predominant, inside-out predominant, or bidirectional.

Given services inherent intangibility and element of coproduction, customer satisfaction in a service context is more dependent on an efficient and productive customer-employee relationship. Customer satisfaction has been shown to be an antecedent of customer loyalty; defined as a customer's attitude to the service (Bakker et al., 2008; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Rampl and Kenning, 2013; Stank et al., 1999). Consequently, evaluating service performance is critical for industries in the sector, Chahal and Devi (2013) support the argument that management of customer orientation and service quality are the most efficient method of maintaining a competitive position in service industries, and of improving organisational performance (Brady et al., 2012; Grizzle et al., 2009; Zablah et al., 2012).

Stank et al. (1999) addressed the issue of defining organisational service performance as the level of a service, and posit that it can be categorised into two critical aspects: operational and relational performance. Operational performance is concerned with the service features, while relational performance is focused on the service delivery process. Both these facets ultimately influence a customer's satisfaction with the service they receive from the organisation. Addressing customer satisfaction in a service economy context, Ramaswamy (1997) argue that customer satisfaction can be defined as a customer's overall judgement on disconfirmation between the expected and perceived service performance. In other words, if the perceived performance meets or exceeds their expectation, the customer is satisfied; if not the customer is dissatisfied. This is a concern for service organisations, as their inherent intangibility and the element of co-production means that service employees often become the personification of the service and the organisation in the eyes of the customer (Brown et al., 2002; Ponsignon et al., 2011; Teng and Barrows, 2009). As outlined, prevailing conditions in the service sector mean that the actual service and the frontline employee are often indistinguishable to the customer (Chahal and Devi, 2013). Accordingly, attracting highly customer-oriented employees is a vital element in achieving sustained competitive advantage (Palmatier et al., 2007).

2.7 CONCEPTUALISING JOB SEEKER ATTRACTION AND JOB PURSUIT

A clear understanding of the candidates' perspective (i.e., what they are looking for in an employer) coupled with understanding what makes an organisation attractive to desired applicants is fundamental to addressing the research question. According to Barber and Roehling (1993), applicant attraction and job pursuit encompass three stages. From the job seeker's perspective, the first stage consists of extensive search and screening which culminates in gathering information about job opportunities. In the second stage, interested job seekers become applicants and seek to meet possible employers at interviews and possibly receiving job offers. The final stage centres on the candidate making a final job choice (Jaidi et al., 2011). Aiman-Smith et al. (2001) discuss how organisational recruiters frequently interchange and blend two distinct experiences i.e., being attracted to an organisation and job pursuit intentions. However, Aiman-Smith et al. (2001) consider organisational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions to be separate and distinct concepts which are likely to be influenced and predicted by different factors. They operationalise organisational attraction as an attitude towards the organisation and job pursuit intention as a behaviour, e.g., an attempt to secure an interview with the organisation.

2.7.1 Organisational Attraction

While Rynes et al. (2003) contend that organisational attractiveness refers to the degree to which job applicants perceive organisations as places to work, Aiman-Smith et al. (2001, p. 228) assert that organisational attractiveness is best described as:

> "an attitude or expressed general positive affect toward an organisation and toward viewing the organisation as a desirable entity with which to initiate some relationship".

Studies suggest a strong correlation between perceptions of organisational attractiveness and applicant decisions including job pursuit, acceptance and choice intentions (Turban et al., 2001). The evidence in the literature is that organisational attractiveness affords organisations the potential to achieve a competitive advantage in their endeavours to attract employees (Cable et al. 2003). Jiang and Iles (2011, p. 106) in their investigation into organisational attractiveness as perceived by candidates describe the construct as:

"the power that draws applicants' attention to focus on an employer brand and encourages existing employees to stay".

Turban et al. (1998) found that for job seekers, organisational image, person-job fit and organisational culture were all found to be related to organisational attractiveness. The influence of candidate personality was highlighted by Lievens et al. (2001), this study found several personality characteristics that moderated the effects of job and organisation attributes on perceived organisational attractiveness e.g., candidates with high levels of conscientiousness preferred larger companies, while candidates with high levels of openness were more attracted to multinationals. Hennig-Thurau (2004) and Menguc et al. (2015) hold that individual customer orientation plays a role in job choice and organisational attraction with customer oriented workers more likely to be attracted to roles with high levels of customer contact.

2.7.2 Intention to Pursue

Intention to pursue a job is also identified as important as it indicates behaviour which may lead to action, such as making a job application or accepting a job offer (Aiman-Smith et al., 2001). Elaborating on Chapman et al. (2005), Jaidi et al. (2011) distinguish between three job pursuit outcomes: (i) job pursuit intention, i.e., an individual's wish to apply and stay in the applicant pool; (ii) job pursuit behaviour, i.e., submitting a job application, attending an interview; (iii) job choice, i.e., actual acceptance of a job offer. Chapman (2005) contends that job pursuit intentions includes all variables measuring an individual's wish to apply for a job and indicates a willingness to enter or stay in the applicant pool while Beenen and Pichler (2014) conceptualises job pursuit as intentions, decisions, or behaviours indicative of a job candidate's interest in an organisation. Using the theory of planned behaviour which explains how attitudes and perceptions guide human behaviour, Jaidi et al. (2011) argue that the primary antecedent of job pursuit behaviour is the intention to pursue a specific job. Accordingly, Jaidi et al. (2011) contend that job pursuit intention is predicted by:

(i) the extent to which individuals have a positive or negative evaluation of pursuing a specific role (i.e., job pursuit attitude);

(ii) the perception of social pressure to apply for a role in a specific organisation (i.e., subjective norm); and

(iii) perceived control over relevant resources to obtain a job offer in that organisation (i.e., perceived behavioural control).

The importance of recruiter influence has been found to have an effect on job pursuit intentions; researchers including Chapman et al. (2005) and Jiang and Iles (2011) found evidence that recruiter characteristics, particularly competence, friendliness and evidence of shared values (e.g., customer orientation) represented signals of organisational culture, and accordingly exert an indirect effect on candidate intentions.

2.8 JOB CANDIDATES' DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

While organisations are concerned with attracting the best candidates, as previously outlined, securing the right position in the right organisation is also important to potential employment candidates; Rynes and Cable (2003) found that employment candidates are equally concerned about choosing the right organisation as choosing the right job. From the organisational viewpoint, decisions determine the number and quality of the applicant pool (Barber and Roehling, 1993). From the candidates' perspective, their job decision involves costs and primarily time (Barber and Roehling, 1993). Kulkarni (2013) further posits that application intention choices have repercussions for candidates' job-related needs and for self-selection into organisations that may serve as a substitute for organisational socialisation (Cable and Turban, 2001). This draws on Maslow's theory of motivation which proposes that people have levels of needs, ranging from basic biological, physiological to more complex self-fulfilment requirements (Maslow, 1943).

Specifically, in a work context, Schneider (1987) posits that individuals have specific needs from their work, and seek jobs in organisations that best fit their needs. This is echoed by Kulkarni (2013) who define job choice as a series of decisions a candidate makes, commencing with their evaluation of information obtained from various sources, leading to job choice or employment pursuance decisions. While Harold and Ployhart (2008) found that the connection between initial preferences at job choice stage and final choice can change, nevertheless initial decisions can be important in setting the job choice path (Boswell et al., 2003). The complexity of the subject is further illustrated by Osborn's (1990) assertion that candidates' decision-making

tactics move from non-compensatory to compensatory as the recruitment process progresses. However, while the link between the initial preferences at the beginning of the process and the final job decision may be weak, initial decisions can exert important influence in establishing the job path (Boswell et al., 2003; Kulkarni, 2013). It is also likely that there will be between-person variance, in other words high customer oriented candidates may assign different weightings to attributes of organisational attractiveness than lower customer oriented candidates. For the purpose of this study, factors influencing the attraction of customer oriented workers at the start of the process i.e., before they become a candidate will be investigated.

2.9 JOB SEEKER MOTIVATIONS

Applicant attraction and candidates' decision-making process has a rich history of research over several decades with researchers examining a wide variety of predictors of applicant attraction. Nolan and Harold (2010) use the instrumental-symbolic framework to test the influence of symbolic or intangible attributes (e.g., brand image, on job candidates' attraction to organisations. Acknowledging the complexity of applicants' job pursuit decision-making process, Nolan and Harold (2010) contend that a myriad of factors is at play in such an important decision. They hold that symbolic attributes are more influential than instrumental attributes (e.g., pay). In other empirical research, scholars have identified a significant number of factors shown to influence employment candidates' job pursuit intentions and decisions (Behling et al., 1968; Breaugh, 2013; Carless, 2005; Kulkarni, 2013; Harold and Ployhart, 2008). Chapman et al. (2005) posits that six broad factors influence candidates, these include: job and organisational characteristics, recruiter characteristics, perceptions of the recruitment process, perceived fit, perceived alternatives and hiring expectancies. Some of the most prevalent influencers are brand image (Nolan et al., 2013; Nolan and Harold, 2010); candidates' self-perceived marketability (Harold and Ployhart, 2008; Highhouse et al., 2003; Slaughter et al., 2005); social influence and social comparisons i.e., expectations of influential reference groups (Kulkarni, 2013) and fit between the candidate and the role and the organisation (Anaza, 2012; Avery et al., 2015; Farrell and Oczkowski, 2012; Gazzoli et al., 2013; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011). The following sections explore the effects of (i) organisational

brand/brand image, (ii) candidate' perceived marketability and (iii) impact of social influence. The influence of fit is explored in more detail in Section 2.10.

2.9.1 Organisational Brand Image

Theurer et al. (2018) proposes that at its core, employer branding is the articulation of an organisation's brand positioning within its human resources department to attract the best candidates and retain the best employees. Consequently, employer branding is focused on fine-tuning the positioning within the organisation with the aim of drawing the best applicants (i.e., the most desirable with the best fit), and communicating operating principles and values to ensure that candidates understand these and are invested in them (Gilani and Cunningham, 2017). Prior literature including Nolan and Harold (2010); Nolan et al. (2013); Highhouse et al. (2003); Turban and Cable (2003); Slaughter et al. (2014) clearly indicates that job seekers are attracted to companies with a favourable organisational image. Lee et al. (2013) posit that job candidates weigh organisational image and reputation in job searching, job pursuit, and final job decision. The influence of a positive organisational image is such that job candidates may be willing to accept lower salaries to work for a prestigious organisation (Catanzaro et al., 2010). Nolan et al. (2013, p. 300) considers brand image:

"people's malleable impressions of specific aspects of a company".

As discussed by Theurer et al. (2018) brand image is an intrinsic identifier of an organisation; organisations work to shape these images through the information they present to their stakeholders including potential employees. Brach et al. (2015) investigates the influence of organisational reputation and prestige and posits that organisations' reputation and status, or soft assets are important in generating a competitive advantage which is difficult to imitate. According to Heilmann (2010) the corporate image potential recruits identify is based on their personal view of the organisation as an employer. Consequently, the reputation of an organisation is important as it affects the likelihood of potential candidates pursuing a role with the organisation (Slaughter et al., 2014). Bidwell (2013) proposes that superior organisational status and reputation in the employment market may result in achieving sustained advantage in accessing desired human capital. Accordingly, firms with

higher status have substantial advantages in attracting employees because these employees believe that working at high status organisations signals their own ability and helps them to develop their careers, this is particularly applicable to skilled applicants or individuals that have a high self-value (Theurer et al., 2018).

2.9.2 Candidates' Perceived Marketability and Social Influence

Research in the field of social psychology on the self-serving bias finds that applicants consistently overestimate their abilities and consider that they possess the abilities and characteristics necessary for success (Harold and Ployhart, 2008; Kruger and Dunning, 1999). Harold and Ployhart (2008) applied self-serving bias in their research and find that candidates often perceive themselves to possess a high level of marketability and personal value. Importantly, Trank et al. (2002) found that applicants with actual high abilities were more likely to value different job and organisational values than lower ability applicants. High ability applicants perceive that they are among the most attractive applicants and expect to receive more appealing employment offers (Choi, Cicero, and Mobbs, 2017). Choi et al. (2017) indicate that perceived marketability of candidates influences their weighting of role and organisational attributes. At the early stage of recruitment, applicants rely on perceptions of their own marketability, such perceptions may influence the weighting of attributes of organisational attractiveness. At later stages in the process, candidates will have a better understanding of their actual marketability and the weightings they assigned to attributes may change to reflect their actual or true marketability.

Kulkarni (2013) argues that job choice decisions are also guided by social comparisons and social influence. In accordance with the theory of social comparison (Festinger, 1954), Choi et al. (2017) found that job seekers make comparisons between themselves and similar others, and in the face of job decision ambiguity (i.e., scarcity or perceived scarcity of information) are inclined to act in accordance with choices their peers make as the perceived value of the job choice decision appears higher when similar others verify it. This has been demonstrated to be important to customer oriented individuals, who have a strong need for social connection, in this vein, Kulkarni (2013) posits that there may be strong norms for some individuals about choosing particular employers

in certain social contexts. Similarly, Van Hoye and Lievens (2007, 2009) found that word of mouth by reliable peers and family also determines perceptions of organisational attractiveness and job acceptance decisions (Van Hoye and Saks, 2010). Informational social influence has a strong bearing on perceptions of organisational attractiveness with negative word of mouth hindering recruitment advertisement effects (Kulkarni, 2013; Theurer et al., 2018). When job applicants are faced with a scarcity of information, Kulkarni (2013) posits that they are likely to turn to their social context for information, this is particularly the case when the job decision is perceived to be extremely important and/or emotionally significant.

2.10 FIT

There is substantial evidence in the literature that fit is best recognised as a multidimensional phenomenon with potential candidates likely to evaluate different levels and aspects of fit when making decisions about employment options (Harold and Ployhart, 2008;Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Therefore, understanding the influence of fit-attraction on candidates' decision-making is important for organisations. Oh et al. (2014) argues that irrespective of the particular fit concept considered, good fit generally leads to positive outcomes for both the person and situation or environment (Edwards, 1991).

2.10.1 Person-Organisation Fit

Person-organisation fit (PO) concentrates on the wider facets of suitability between employment candidates and the organisation (Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011) and pertains to the degree of congruence between a potential employee's personality and values and those of the organisation (Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011; Lievens and Highhouse, 2003; Nolan and Harold, 2009). Extant literature indicates that job candidates are largely attracted to organisations based on their perception of person–job and person–organisation fit and this also has an on candidates' intentions to apply (Carless, 2005; Chapman et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Van Vianen (2000) posits that person-organisation fit has two distinct dimensions:

- complementary fit;
- supplementary fit.

Complementary fit refers to the situation when a candidate's specific skills and knowledge is missing from an organisation. Conversely, supplementary fit occurs when a candidate possesses skills or characteristics that are similar to employees already in the environment. From a recruitment perspective, person-organisation fit is pivotal, as potential employees associate symbolic information with employer brand image and use this to form perceptions of person-organisation fit (Vanderstukken et al., 2018; Yen, 2017). Prior research indicates that job seekers compare potential employing organisations to their own values, needs and personalities to identify the extent of fit with organisation (Schneider et al., 2002).

2.10.2. Person-Environment Fit

The literature is emphatic in support of the importance of compatibility between an employment candidate and their potential work environment (Whelan, Davies, Walsh, and Bourke, 2010). This understanding of fit is conceptualised as person-environment fit (PE), and refers to the degree to which the candidate and the job environment are in harmony. Lewin's (1951) thesis that behaviour is dependent on the person and environment is one of the most influential principles in social psychology. This argument proposes that personal and environmental factors (PE fit) interact to shape and influence an individual's behaviour (Lewin, 1951).

PE fit also draws on image congruity theory which is based on the principles of cognitive dissonance, Festinger (1954) contends that this is a feeling of tension that comes into play when an individual acts in a manner inconsistent with their beliefs or when they simultaneously hold two contradicting cognitions. The theory refers to an accord between an individual's actual self-mage and a product or organisational brand image as self-congruity, while fit between an individual's ideal self-perception and a product brand image is referred to as ideal congruity (Nolan and Harold, 2010). Consequently, when deciding between comparable products or organisations, consumers will reliably choose the product portraying images that match the consumer's actual and ideal self-perceptions (Nolan and Harold, 2010). Image congruence, as described by Heath and Scott (1998) occurs when individuals associate

themselves with a brand that they believe possesses similar characteristics to their own image of themselves.

In the context of attracting job seekers, Nolan and Harold (2010) contend that self-congruity is akin to person-organisation fit, as it denotes a fit between the image of the job candidate and the organisation. Therefore, ideal congruity epitomises a match between the organisation's image and the image the job candidate has of their desired self and is predicated on a conviction or belief that working for a particular organisation can alter or enhance an individual's current self-image (Nolan and Harold, 2010). Kristof-Brown and Guay (2011) defined person environment fit as the degree of compatibility or match between individuals and their work environment. Person-environment fit has significant influence over outcomes such as employee satisfaction, altruistic behaviours and successful outcomes for the organisation and the individual employee (Grizzle et al. 2009; Hennig-Thurau and Thurau 2003; Jiang and Iles 2011; Kristof-Brown and Guay 2011; Salanova et al. 2005; Zablah et al., 2012). Strong person-environment fit has been found to be negatively related to adverse outcomes including customer oriented deviance (COD), turnover intentions and negative behaviours (Babakus et al., 2009; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2012; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2014). Harold and Ployhart (2008) posit that in the recruitment process, it is important that organisations present information allowing the candidates to make accurate assessments around their perceived fit with the organisation. Research indicates that P–E fit research typically examines only fit between a worker and a single aspect of the work environment (e.g., the organisation, role, or co-workers) and its impact on outcomes (Jansen and Kristof-Brown 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2002) while other fit measures such as person-job and person-organisation examine multiple dimensions (rather than individual measures) of PE fit.

2.10.3 Person-Job Fit

Within the wider field of fit, person-job fit (PJ) has been shown to be positively related to job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), performance (Anaza, 2012; Avery et al., 2015; Gazzoli et al., 2013; Grizzle et al., 2009) and negatively related to turnover and customer oriented deviance (Babakus et al., 2009;

Jiang and Iles, 2011; Priyadarshi, 2011). Person-job fit relates explicitly to the degree to which there is congruence between an employee's skill-set, knowledge and abilities and the demands of the job. In other words, the construct indicates a candidate's suitability to a specific role.

The nature and applicability of 'person-job fit' is considered by Donavan et al. (2004), their study proposes that person-job fit mechanism is an effective tool in identifying and matching service employees with appropriate roles which will in turn produce more effective job outcomes (e.g., customer oriented individuals are shown to perform better in organisations with climates supporting customer orientation) (Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015). Donavan et al. (2004) argue that PJ fit is greater than a person's abilities and extends to their personality. This builds on Holland (1977) who argued that both the employee and the job have personalities and that fit is predicated on congruence between each party's personality and when there is a strong fit then performance is enhanced. Nolan (2013) asserts that person-job fit has two dimensions; (i) demands-abilities fit, this relates to the level of congruence between the demands of a job and the abilities of the candidate; (ii) needs-supplies fit, this relates to the degree of similarity between the needs of candidate and the support provided by the organisation (Edwards, 1991; Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011). Consequently, person-job fit helps to ensure that the candidate chosen has the necessary skills demanded by the role (Priyadarshi, 2011) and should be prioritised in the recruitment process.

2.11 ATTRACTING CUSTOMER ORIENTED WORKERS

Existing marketing literature has demonstrated the role that the customer orientation of customer facing workers plays in influencing performance (e.g., Donavan, Brown, and Mowen, 2004; Saxe and Weitz, 1982). Individual customer orientation is associated with increased satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour (Donavan et al., 2004). Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) argues that compatibility between workers and their employing organisation has been positively related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment and career success and negatively related to turnover intentions. The evidence is empathetic that engaged, customer oriented workers exhibit higher job satisfaction, deliver greater service

quality, achieve enhanced customer satisfaction, and perform better than those who are not customer oriented (Menguc et al., 2015)

Consequently, attracting such workers and establishing what attracts them is an imperative for service organisations. Fit theory demonstrates that perceived fit (between the individual, the job and the organisation) will influence individuals' job choice decisions and important job outcomes (Chuang et al., 2016; Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011). Donavan et al. (2004) highlights that individual characteristics and situational variables together determine outcomes, for example, the interaction between worker and work situation affects performance, burnout, job retaliation and retention. This is further supported by Jin, Sun, Jiang, Wang, and Wen, (2018) who find that role clarity (vs.§ role conflict) tended to reduce burnout.

Research further demonstrates that job outcomes are also predicated to a large degree on the level of fit between the worker and their job and the organisation (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Liao and Subramony (2009) using the maxims inherent in fit theory and self-concept theory posit that customer oriented individuals are more likely to be attracted to specific roles and particular types of organisations i.e., customer oriented organisations. The assertion is that individuals with high levels of customer orientation are more likely to be attracted to high contact roles and organisations that share their values. However, there is a dearth of empirical evidence demonstrating the factors that attract customer orientated individuals to organisations and whether customer oriented workers are more likely to be attracted to customer oriented organisations.

Extant research has indicated that certain factors are accepted to improve performance outcomes for customer oriented workers and Liao and Subramony (2009) assert that customer oriented individuals are more likely to be attracted to roles offering higher levels of contact with customers. This is supported by Donavan et al. (2004, p. 128), who argue that customer orientation (a personal characteristic) will be more influential on worker satisfaction and performance as workers spend more time in contact with customers (a situational variable). Additionally, the role of organisational climate as an attractor is also discussed by Nolan and Harold (2010) who posit that image congruity theory whereby job seekers are attracted to organisations they perceive as

having characteristics similar to their own may prove relevant to job choice. Using this logic, customer oriented workers would be more likely to be attracted to organisations espousing similar values to their own. Another factor demonstrated empirically to be important to customer oriented workers is role autonomy. In their seminal study, Hennig-Thurau (2004) developed a conceptualisation of the customer orientation of service employees (COSE) and argues that self-perceived decision-making is fundamental to the effective performance of customer oriented workers. The research along with other studies (e.g., Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2015; Stock, 2016) support the synergistic relationship between customer orientation and role autonomy and indicate that roles offering high autonomy will be more attractive to customer oriented workers. These factors (i.e., customer contact role, service climate, role autonomy) which are accepted to improve performance outcomes for customer oriented workers are explored in more detail in the following sections.

2.11.1 High Customer Contact Roles

It is acknowledged that customer-oriented behaviours of service workers are important to build, maintain and develop customer relationships (Chakrabarty, Brown, and Widing, 2013; Guenzi, De Luca, and Troilo, 2011, Stock, 2016) and build customer satisfaction (Huang, 2011). This is particularly the case for service organisations which require:

"close, personal contact between customers and employees" (Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, and Brown, 2005, p. 61).

In such contexts, customer orientation is fundamentally important as it is grounded in the social context where human interaction is central (Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015). Accordingly, Liao and Subramony (2009) posit that customer facing roles are more likely to be more attractive to customer oriented workers and they are more likely to work in such roles rather than less (customer) proximal roles. Donavan et al. (2004) found that the influence of customer orientation on worker job satisfaction and commitment is stronger when service workers spend more time in contact with customers, this is further supported by Zablah et al. (2016) and Matthews et al. (2017).

Using Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition model, Liao and Subramony (2009) argue that workers whose personality attributes and interests predispose them to be customer oriented are more likely to be attracted to, selected for, and remain in roles that require more contact with customers (Schneider et al., 1980). Job fit is stronger between customer oriented workers and FLE roles; as customer oriented individuals are better at understanding customer needs and consequently more likely to demonstrate customer oriented behaviours and perform altruistic behaviours (Hogan et al., 1984). However different roles even in the same organisation will require different levels of customer contact (Donavan et al., 2004). For customer oriented workers, the positive influence of customer orientation on commitment and job satisfaction will be stronger for employees when their role requires higher levels of customer contact (Donavan et al., 2004).

2.11.2 Customer Oriented Service Climate

A fundamental aspect of contact employees' tasks involve interaction with customers and an organisation's service quality depends to a large extent on the quality of these interactions. Salanova et al. (2005) argues that service climate, a collective and shared phenomenon is an antecedent of service quality. Accordingly, organisational values provide a direction for employees' decisions, with perceptions of the work environment, most noticeably the organisation's values, a determining factor in the level of ambiguous demands experienced by workers. Furthermore, service roles require a high degree of interpersonal work, which produces higher levels of stress, however, positive perceptions of the work environment can help alleviate strain (Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2017). For service organisations, a customer oriented climate plays a key role in supporting employees, and can precipitate high levels of engagement and shared perceptions about the quality of the organisation's service climate (Jiang and Iles, 2011; Paul et al., 2015; Stock, 2016).

According to value congruence and the similarity attraction paradigm (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), employees are expected to perceive higher co-worker relationship quality when they share common values, as this implies stronger social integration leading to enhanced job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Image congruence theory

(i.e., whereby individuals associate themselves with a brand that they believe possesses similar characteristics to their own image of themselves). It is to be expected that customer oriented job seekers will identify stronger congruence between themselves and an organisation with an overt customer oriented culture (Nolan and Harold, 2010).

Schneider (2008) describes service climate as employees' shared perceptions of the procedures, and customer service behaviours and standards that are supported and expected by the organisation. Such shared perceptions of an organisation's workforce coalesce to influence the organisation culture. Building on this collective perspective of service climate, Chan (1998) considers service climate strength to be a group-level construct that captures the degree of consensus among customer facing employees on service climate perceptions (e.g., Schneider et al., 2002). Climate strength also correlates with workers' organisational commitment and can lead to positive worker behaviours, including improved organisational citizenship behaviours Stock (2016).

Mirroring Schneider et al.'s (2002) understanding of unit climate strength, Stock (2016) describes climate strength as the degree of dispersion or concentration in workers' shared perceptions of the unit's focus on customer need satisfaction as required by managers. This conceptualisation assumes that in strong situations, units' policies toward customer need satisfaction are obvious and unambiguous in managers' attitudes and actions. This results in less variation among employees about the degree of unit CO and precipitates a diminution of the influence of individual difference variables in effecting performance (Stock, 2016). In weak situations (i.e., lower climate strength), policies may be more ambiguous, thus resulting in wider variation in worker perceptions and precipitating greater possible influence of individual difference variables on performance. Climate influence was also investigated by Grizzle et al. (2009) who demonstrated in their seminal study that service climate has a direct effect on unit profitability. The study found that unit customer oriented behaviours were found to influence profitability without associated increase in costs. Significantly, Grizzle et al. (2009) argues that the research findings indicate that organisations should focus on creating a climate supportive of customer orientation if they are to profit from recruiting customer oriented workers.

2.11.3 Role Autonomy or Empowerment

Formative studies into the customer orientation construct indicate the unequivocal influence of autonomy on the performance of customer oriented workers. A seminal study by Brown et al (2002) into customer orientation proposed that the construct can be sub-divided into two dimensions. The first dimension (i.e., needs) relates to the employee's belief that he has the tools, authority and ability to meet customers' needs. The second dimension (i.e., enjoyment) pertains to the extent that the worker gets pleasure from interacting with customers. Building on Brown et al. (2002), Donavan et al. (2004) posit that customer oriented workers have an internal drive to pamper customers, read customers' needs and develop a personal relationship with customers.

In another influential study, Hennig-Thurau (2004) developed a conceptualisation of the customer orientation of service employees (COSE) including their technical skills, social skills, motivation and self-perceived decision making authority. Self-perceived decision-making authority is associated with empowerment which is widely discussed in services literature (Bowen, 2002; Bowen, 2016). Although these studies propose different dimensions of customer orientation, they share the assessment that a crucial prerequisite for customer facing employees is the ability and authority to meet customer needs. This perspective is widely supported with many studies conceptualising customer orientation proposing that autonomy is a prerequisite for customer oriented workers, as it enables and empowers the worker to meet customer needs (Matthews, Beeler, Zablah, and Hair, 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). Therefore, it is likely that a job offering role autonomy will be more attractive to customer oriented workers. Hennig-Thurau, (2004) asserts that self-perceived decision-making authority relates to the extent to which an employee feels they are authorised to decide on issues concerning customers' needs and has two dimensions i.e., subjective autonomy and objective (or firm-induced) autonomy (Stock, 2016). Objective autonomy (or firm-led autonomy) is the level of autonomy granted by the employer to the individual employee (extrinsic autonomy) while subjective autonomy (intrinsic autonomy) is the level of autonomy the individual employee believes or feels they have in their role (Stock, 2016). Significantly, Hennig-Thurau (2004) found that a lack of employee

autonomy can be frustrating for customers and can damage customer-employee relationships.

2.12 THEORIES OF ORGANISATIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS

Several models of organisational attractiveness have been proposed in the literature. Two of the most widely used are Schneider's (1987) Attraction Selection Model (ASA) which considers recruitment from the perspective of the organisation and Behling et al.'s (1968) theories of job choice which addresses the issue from the viewpoint of the job candidate. The third model discussed is the job demand and resources model (JD-R), while this is not specifically an attraction model, it asserts that many different combinations of job demands and resources determine employee well-being and that every job has risk factors associated with job stress, these factors can be classified as job demands and job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli, 2001).

2.12.1 Attraction Selection Attrition Model (Schneider, 1987)

Schneider's (1987) ASA model influences Kristof's (1996) fit theory and identifies how organisational values have been found to influence people's job choice decisions. The model has often been used in research into person-organisation fit, it contends that candidates are attracted to different types of organisations, depending on specific personal interests, personality and personal needs e.g., achievement, affiliation, power and stability (Jiang and Iles, 2011). While there are many intriguing propositions in Schneider's framework, the testable predictions in the ASA model are based on its major proposition that organisations become more homogeneous over time (Schneider, Goldstein, and Smith, 1995).

Among the propositions implied in the ASA framework, most important is that individuals are more likely to be attracted to, selected by, perform better in, and remain in organisations compatible with their personal values and characteristics. The ASA model builds on Tom's Image Model (1971) and proposes that an organisation's employees are crucial and unique in that they are attracted to their employer and chosen by their employer. A central tenet of the model is that applicants are attracted

to organisations with similar values to values they themselves respect and which match their personality. The model (presented in Table 2) holds that the outcomes of three processes: (i) attraction (ii) selection (iii) attrition control the nature of employees in an organisation and in turn, determines the culture of the organisation. While there are many intriguing propositions in the ASA framework, the testable predictions in the model are based on its major proposition that organisations become more homogeneous over time (Schneider, Goldstein, and Smith, 1995).

TABLE 2 CONCEPUTALISATION OF THE ASA MODEL

Process	Premise
Attraction	Appeal is predicated on congruence between the organisation's values, culture and candidates' personalities.
Selection	An organisational phenomenon enabling firms to identify and choose candidates with the skills to best fit requirements. Recruitment refers to activities with the goal of identifying and attracting employees.
Attrition	Contends employees who do not fit the organisational culture will leave.

2.12.2 Critical Factors Theory

Behling, Labovitz and Gainer's (1968) seminal study examined attraction from the candidates' perspective, these are presented in Table 3. Their study on applicant job choice remains influential in recruiting theory including job-pursuit intentions, organisational attraction and job choice. Behling et al. (1968) proposed scenarios representing job choice, identified as: (i) objective factors (ii) subjective factors (iii) critical contact theory. Behling et al. (1968) has informed the models developed by recruitment researchers to build an enhanced understanding of candidate-organisation attraction and the process of job-choice decision making undertaken by candidates.

TABLE 3 THEORIES OF JOB CHOICE (BEHLING, LABOVITZ & GAINER, 1968)

Theory	Premise
Objective Factors	Candidate' job decisions are based on tangible attributes pertaining to the role and the organisation. Candidates consider advantages and disadvantages of organisations based on the tangibles offered (e.g., pay, location). Candidates will consider how attractive and important each attribute is and will form an overall evaluative judgement about the organisation. These considerations form the basis for outcomes including attractiveness perceptions, acceptance intentions and choice behaviours, therefore information gained through this evaluative process drives job related decisions.
Subjective Factors	Proposes candidates evaluate less objective aspects of the organisation's environment to form judgements about their fit with the organisation vis-à-vis psychological needs, values and personality. The theory argues that attraction intentions and choices result from finding an organisation that provides the best fit to their needs, values and personality.
Critical Contact	Argues candidates lack full details about the role and organisation's environment to make fully informed decisions and therefore tend to rely on characteristics of the recruiter and the particular organisation's selection process in making a decision about whether to accept the position.

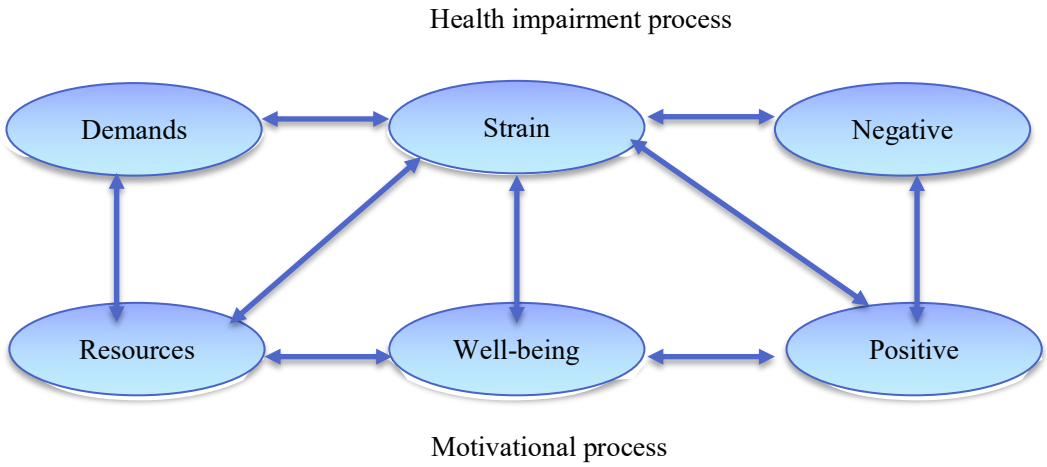
While Behling et al.'s (1968) theories have remained influential, Osborn (1990) in building on this work argues that candidate decision strategies will change as the recruitment processes advances. Osborn (1990) asserts that early in the recruitment process, candidates rule out unattractive options by using non-compensatory strategies. As the process moves on to later stages, strategies become compensatory with high values on some factors compensating for low values on others. Consequently, while it is important to appreciate which attributes influence organisational attraction across the different recruitment stages, it is important to understand why the weighting of specific attributes may change. In the context of this study, establishing whether differences exist between the weighting assigned by high customer oriented candidates differs from weightings assigned by their low customer oriented counterparts is important.

2.12.3 Job Demands and Resources Model

Bakker et al.'s (2007) job demand and resources model (JD-R) is a heuristic model which postulates that employee well-being is shaped by two categories of working conditions (i.e., job demands and job resources). The JD-R model asserts that many

different combinations of job demands and resources determine employee well-being and influence important job outcomes. At its core, JD-R assumes that any inherent job demand and any job resource may affect employee health and well-being. It differs from other stress models such as the job demands control model (Karasek, 1979) as it is heuristic in nature, thereby affording it broader scope and more flexibility. Schaufeli and Tari (2014) posit that heuristic methods such as those employed in the JD-R model improve the pace of finding solutions in conditions where a comprehensive search may be unfeasible. Accordingly, as an heuristic model, instead of relating specific sets of constructs to each other, JD-R represents a way of thinking about how job characteristics may impact the employee and organisational outcomes (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). In addition, Rupp, Shao, Thornton, and Skarlicki (2013) argue that heuristic models are appropriate for investigating deontic factors (i.e., duties, obligations, ethical considerations) such as social exchange with an organisation, an area which is central to the relationship between workers and their employer. The model takes consideration of individuals' personality factors as part of the nomological net of relevant factors precipitating effects on outcomes thereby adding to its relevance to the current research. The JD-R model is presented in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2 JOB DEMANDS MODEL (BAKKER ET AL., 2007)



While all jobs have inherent risk factors associated with job stress, these factors can be classified within broad, general categories (i.e., job demands and job resources). The JD-R model asserts that many different combinations of job demands and resources determine employee well-being (Demerouti et al., 2001). The model holds that job demands are the most crucial prediction of job strain, while job resources are the most crucial predictors of work motivation, learning, commitment and engagement. In this context, job resources function as moderators in interactions with strain and as predictors in interactions with motivation and learning.

Job Demands: These refer to physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of a job that require sustained physical and or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills. Consequently, job demands are associated with physiological and or psychological costs (Bakker et al., 2007).

Job Resources: These are physical, psychological, social or organisational facets of a job that are functional in achieving work goals, result in a reduction of job demands and associated physiological and psychological costs or stimulate employees' personal growth, development and learning. Therefore, resources are not only valuable as a tool to cope with job demands but they are also important in their own right and are recognised as important in the attainment or protection of other valued resources. Bakker and Demerouti (2007) discuss how job resources may be located at the level of the organisation, interpersonal and social relationships, the organisation of work and the level of the task. Significantly, while not specifically identified in the JD-R model, from a psychological perspective, customer orientation has been identified in prior research as an important individual difference variable in workers in customer service roles (Karatepe and Aga, 2012).

JD-R proposes that a motivational process is precipitated by copious job resources. In this vein, Schaufeli and Taris (2014) argue that work environments that offer many resources encourage workers' willingness to concentrate their abilities and efforts to the work task. Therefore, job resources play an extrinsic motivational role, as they initiate the desire to spend compensatory effort thereby reducing job demands and fostering goal attainment. Van den Broeck et al. (2008) argue that job resources also

play an intrinsic motivational role in that they satisfy basic needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Therefore, job resources such as autonomy serve to stimulate work engagement through the achievement of work goals and the satisfaction of basic needs. Significantly, this affective-motivational state fosters positive organisational outcomes including commitment and improved performance.

Transactional theories of stress (Podsakoff, LePine, and LePine, 2007) examine the nature of job demands and job resources in more depth and propose the existence of an underlying hierarchy. For example, workers may perceive job demands as either a hindrance (i.e., negatively related to engagement and positively related to burnout) or a challenge (i.e., positively related to engagement) (Crawford, LePine, and Rich, 2010; Lazarus, 1968). For customer facing workers, job demands include challenging customer interactions, while job resources are aspects of the job and person that enable front line employees to achieve work goals and also enables these workers to cope with job demands including self-efficacy and supervisor support (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Nahrgang et al., 2011; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Zablah et al., 2012). Working conditions may also precipitate job stress, Rhee et al. (2017) used the JD-R model to investigate the effect of co-worker behaviours and found that colleagues' incivility was negatively related to job performance and that employees' self-efficacy buffered the negative outcomes.

Importantly, for the current research, Zablah et al. (2012) contend that in addition to proposing that job demands and resources are common to all roles, significantly, the model predicts that demands and resources interact to influence outcomes (e.g., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). Zablah further argues that the job stress dimension of the strain process results from service workers' exposure to conflicting situational stimuli (i.e., stressors) while performing their jobs. Whereas the job engagement component focuses on the degree to which FLEs are invested in their organisations and have positive attitudes toward their roles.

In the context of the current research, the principles of the JD-R model hold that role autonomy is considered a resource, while customer contact is a demand. Extant research however, indicates that for customer oriented workers, customer contact will

be viewed as either a positive demand (i.e., a challenge) or a resource (i.e., given their propensity to enjoy meeting customer needs). Bakker and Demerouti (2007) propose that the combination of high demands and high resources produces the strongest levels of motivation and the model contends that job demands are the most crucial prediction of job strain, while job resources are the most crucial predictors of work motivation, learning, commitment and engagement. In this context, job resources function as moderators in interactions with strain and as predictors in interactions with motivation and learning. Stock (2016) argue that the determinant of whether a factor is a job demand or a resource depends on how it is perceived by the worker at the specific time. This is supported by JD-R theory which holds that workers' individual perceptions at a given time determine whether a factor is demand or a resource. Arguably, an employee's perspective of whether a factor is a demand or resource may be shaped by their individual CO level (Hennig-Thurau, 2004)

2.13 MODEL CHOICE

Schneider's (1987) person-based perspective of organisational behaviour i.e., Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) framework is one of the most widely used models for establishing attraction. Primarily, the testable predictions in the ASA model are based on its major proposition that organisations become more homogeneous over time. Accordingly, while organisations may be heterogeneous and diverse in many aspects, with workers of different age, gender, background, race; nevertheless, the personalities, values and consequently organisational culture are homogenised over time (Slaughter, 2005). As outlined, in the first instance, the framework predicts that job seekers will be attracted to organisations where the modal personality is similar to their own. The second process constitutes the selection element of the model which proposes that organisations tend to hire individuals that are most similar to the organisation's current members. The third process is attrition, the assumption here is that individuals whose personalities do not "fit" with their colleagues will be more likely to leave.

Given that the current research is concerned particularly with attraction from the job seeker's perspective, only the first stage of the ASA model would be relevant and although attraction studies have utilised the model in this way (Anaza, 2012; Van Hoye and Saks, 2011) it is nevertheless focused on attraction from the organisation's perspective. Conversely, although primarily a stress model, the JD-R model presents an opportunity to specifically investigate particular factors of interest to the present research (i.e., job demands and job resources). While it is not an attraction model per se, the JD-R is widely used outside of the realms of employee stress and burnout as a conceptual framework to test hypotheses (e.g., employees' propensity to innovate, Huhtala and Parzefall (2007); compassion at work (Rhee, Hur, and Kim, 2017), models of safety behaviour at work, Nahrgang et al., (2011); influence of customer orientation on job outcomes, Zablah et al. (2012); negative aspects of autonomy on customer oriented workers, Matthews et al. (2017)). The model's popularity lies in its heuristic nature which serves to offer researchers a broader scope and flexibility and represents a way of considering how job attributes impact both the employee and the organisation.

Accepting that JD-R is not specifically a theory of organisational attraction, the appropriateness of the model for the current research vis-à-vis the more prescriptive ASA and Job Choice models (which consider attraction more from the organisations' perspective) lies in its heuristic nature and the fact that it theorises that every job has risk factors associated with job stress; factors that can be classified as job demands (e.g., customer contact) and job resources (e.g., role autonomy). In this way, the heuristic underpinning of the JD-R model facilities the exploration of the impact of known attraction factors (i.e., customer contact and organisational customer orientation) and a proposed attractor (i.e., role autonomy) on behavioural and attitudinal outcomes in the context of the interplay between job demands and job resources. JD-R has not been commonly used to investigate attracting job seekers, however, Table 4 details some studies which have successfully used the model in this context.

TABLE 4 STUDIES USING JD-R IN AN ATTRACTION CONTEXT

Study	Author(s)	Journal	Objective
The Global Context and People at Work	Kraimer, Takeuchi, & Frese, (2014)	Personnel Psychology, Volume 67, Issue 1.	Uses JD-R theory to underpin research into extent recruitment advertising shapes the applicant pool.
JD-R & employee health and well-being: The moderating role of contract type	van den Tooren & de Jong (2014)	Career Development International 19.1 (2014): 101-122.	Investigates if main tenets of JD-R moderated by type of contract (temporary vs permanent). Finds temporary workers more likely to benefit from buffering role of autonomy than permanent workers.
Understanding students' motivation towards proactive career behaviours through goal setting theory and JD-R.	Clements & Kamau, (2017)	Studies in Higher Education, 2017	Examines students' motivations towards career behaviours. Results show students higher in mastery had greater perceived employability.

2.14 CONCLUSION

The research question focuses on attracting customer oriented workers to service organisations, accordingly, this chapter presents theories and key concepts on service perspectives, value formation and co-creation. This chapter also tackles an aspect central to the research; what attracts customer oriented job seekers to service organisations. Attraction factors investigated include organisational brand image, candidates' perceived marketability and social influence and the multi-dimensional phenomenon of fit theory. Factors such as organisational branding, customer contact and role autonomy were explored for their influence in an attraction context.

Theories of organisational attractiveness were investigated and the JD-R model was presented as the model underpinning the research (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). The appropriateness of the model stems from its heuristic nature, it theorises that every job has risk factors associated with job stress; i.e., job demands and job resources. Therefore, the JD-R model facilities the exploration of the impact of known attraction factors (e.g., customer contact) and a proposed attractor (e.g., role autonomy) on job candidate outcomes. The next chapter focuses on another important theme in the research; customer orientation, the genesis of the construct is traced and outlined with a particular focus on its relevance to the service sector. Of central relevance to the current research, the influence of role autonomy or empowerment for customer facing employees is also investigated.

~ CHAPTER ~

3

EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVES: CO & ROLE AUTONOMY

CHAPTER THREE
EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVES: CO & ROLE AUTONOMY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter investigated factors central to the attraction of customer oriented workers to service organisations. This current chapter explores CO and the influence of role autonomy and its function in attracting customer oriented workers to service organisations.

Conceptualised by Brown et al. (2002) as an employee's tendency to meet customer needs and latterly by Zablah et al. (2012) as a work value, individual customer orientation is demonstrably proven to be related to positive organisational and individual performance outcomes. The large body of work on the construct has led to customer oriented workers becoming regarded as valuable resources as they precipitate enhanced performance outcomes (Babakus, Yavas, and Karatepe, 2017; Menguc et al., 2016; Moon, Hur, and Hyun, 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). Customer oriented workers are shown to promote stronger engagement (Donavan et al., 2004); competitive differentiation (Babakus et al., 2007); improved performance (Saxe and Weitz, 1982; Zablah, Franke, et al., 2012); exhibit higher job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012) and achieve enhanced customer satisfaction and retention (Menguc et al., 2015).

The importance of employee customer orientation to service organisations is encapsulated by Schlager et al. (2011) who posit that customers' experiences of a service are fundamentally created through employee-customer interactions. Essentially, services are characterised by intangibility, with the service experience co-created by the employee and the customer (Catanzaro et al., 2010; Sousa and Coelho, 2013; Zablah et al., 2012). Given the inherent intangibility of services, service organisations have a fundamental requirement for customer oriented workers, as such workers have been shown to be instrumental in creating and sustaining customer satisfaction (Varghese and Edward, 2015). Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) expand

on this argument and posit that in a service context the customer perspective is particularly important. However, to date research into the construct has largely focused on the outcomes precipitated by customer orientation and has not examined why and when customer oriented workers are attracted to service organisations. In many industries within the service sector (e.g., hospitality and tourism), service workers are central and inseparable from service delivery, to the extent that workers represent or become the service organisation in the eyes of the customer (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata, 2002). This important role that front line employees (FLEs) play, i.e., as the organisation's central protagonist in customer relationships gives some insight into the importance of role autonomy for FLEs. In his seminal paper, Hennig-Thurau (2004) describes role autonomy as being one of four essential elements in the customer orientation of service workers (COSE).

This chapter examines the customer orientation construct, and explores its shared origin with market orientation in the marketing concept and investigates the influence of role autonomy on important outcomes for customer oriented FLEs.

3.2 GENESIS OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Described by Saxe and Weitz (1982) as the manifestation of the marketing concept at the individual worker level, customer orientation has been the object of sustained interest for several decades. Although historically, studies investigating the marketing concept have focused on market orientation or firm-level customer orientation (Zablah et al., 2012), interest in employee customer orientation (i.e., manifestation of the marketing concept at the individual level) has been compelled, in part by the expectation that customer orientation is a valuable resource that positively influences important psychological (e.g., organisational commitment) and job outcomes (e.g., performance) among frontline employees (e.g., Brown et al., 2002; Donavan, Brown, and Mowen, 2004). Although market orientation emerged prior to customer orientation as a central construct in marketing literature, both constructs share a common grounding in the marketing concept and are essentially both manifestations of the same underlying phenomenon (Kelley, 1992; Saxe and Weitz, 1982; Zablah et al., 2012).

3.3 THE MARKETING CONCEPT - OVERVIEW

The marketing concept is long acknowledged as a cornerstone of marketing management thought and practice (Segal and Giacobbe, 2008). A significant body of knowledge exists on the marketing concept including early work by McKitterick (1957). While variations of the definition have been proposed, practitioners agree that at its core, the concept elevates the customer to the centre of an organisation's focus (Christian, 1958; Kotler and Levy, 1969; Levitt, 1969). Harrison-Walker (2001) traces the evolution of the marketing concept from its growth in the mid-1950s when the conventional assessment of marketing was that the key to profitability was greater sales volume with marketing's responsibility to sell whatever the company produced. Consequently, marketing methods were oriented toward a short-term, tactical process of personal selling, advertising, and sales promotion. Webster (1988) explains how post-war abundance of products and more affluent consumers led to the abandonment of short-term tactical sales and adoption of a long-term, strategic orientation that encouraged businesses to ascertain the needs of their customers and so the 'marketing concept' evolved.

Marketing literature emphatically demonstrates that the adoption of the marketing concept is the foundation for successful organisational performance (Brown et al., 2002; Catanzaro et al., 2010; Donavan et al., 2004; Grizzle et al., 2009; Homburg et al., 2012; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Sousa and Coelho, 2013). Accordingly, improved business outcomes are achieved by adopting a distinct organisational culture and business philosophy that holds the customer at the centre of the organisation's strategy and operations (Deshpande and Webster, 1989; Deshpande et al., 1993). Despite acceptance of the importance of the marketing concept, the concept essentially exists as a philosophy guiding the allocation of resources and the formulation of strategies, thereby giving rise to ambiguity around its effectual operationalisation in practice. In response to this equivocality, Kohli and Jaworski (1990) developed the three pillars of the marketing concept into precise manifestations of the concept in actual business practice. These pillars are (i) customer focus; (ii) co-ordinated marketing strategies; (iii) profitability. By putting strategies in place to address the designated 'pillars' of

the marketing concept an organisation is considered market oriented (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990).

3.4 MARKET ORIENTATION – OVERVIEW

As outlined, the marketing concept is accepted as a theoretical construct, in contrast, however market orientation and customer orientation refer to the implementation of the construct in a 'real-life' context. Given that market orientation has been established as a positive organisational performance antecedent with the construct being investigated for over five decades and recognised in management literature since the 1920s (Strong, 1925) a rich body of literature on the construct exists. Cross et al. (2007) states that by the 1950s, market orientation was viewed as an operationalisation of the marketing concept at the organisational level (i.e., firm-level customer orientation). Shapiro (1988) conducted extensive research into market orientation and describes a market-oriented organisation as one in which (i) information on all important buying influences every corporate function, (ii) strategic and tactical decisions are made inter-functionally and inter-divisionally, and (iii) divisions and functions make well-coordinated decisions and execute them with a sense of commitment. Kotler (1972) in deliberating the importance and influential reach of market orientation posits that it is closely related to the fundamental thinking behind marketing itself. The premise underpinning market orientation as postulated by Kotler (1972) and others (e.g., Gazzoli et al., 2013; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Zablah et al., 2012) is that a company must address the needs and wishes of its customers adequately in order to ensure that after experiencing a high degree of satisfaction they become loyal customers.

3.4.1 Outcomes of Market Orientation

Early interest in market orientation fixed on the ability of management to shape the values of organisations (Cross et al., 2007). As empirical investigation continued, knowledge of the concept grew and theories examining the effects of organisational structure on market orientation eventually precipitated support for a cultural understanding of the construct as opposed to a behavioural conceptualisation (Cross et al., 2007; Narver and Slater 1990; Zablah et al., 2012). Over time, attention moved to

the identification of positive performance outcomes of market orientation including for example, relational outcomes such as satisfaction and trust (Cross et al., 2007; Stock and Hoyer, 2004). However, it was not until a formative study by Saxe and Weitz (1982) expanded knowledge of the concept by identifying a link between a salesperson's individual customer orientation and performance that its potential was understood. Improved employee organisational commitment precipitated by employees' belief that their employer practices the marketing concept was demonstrated by Jaworski and Kohli (1993) and Kohli and Jaworski (1990). The link between market orientation and performance established by Narver and Slater (1990) and Kohli and Jaworski (1990) provided the conceptual basis and catalyst for further exploration of the construct. Following these early empirical studies, the positive relationship between market orientation and business performance has been well-documented (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990; Rogelberg et al., 1999).

3.4.2 Market Orientation – Conceptualisation

Despite recognition of its importance, Zablah et al. (2012) discusses how some researchers continue to disagree over the conceptualisation of the nature of the construct with some practitioners defining market orientation in behavioural terms while others consider the construct a manifestation of a firm's culture. Supporting the behavioural perspective, Kohli and Jaworski (1990) conceptualise market orientation as a set of behaviours adopted by the organisation primarily centred on generating, disseminating, and responding to customers' needs. The alternative cultural or psychological view positions market orientation as being determined by strongly embedded values and beliefs prioritising customers' interests and serving to guide organisational behaviours and decision making. Building on Narver and Slater's (1990) important paper arguing for a cultural perspective, Zablah et al. (2012) make a robust argument for a psychological understanding of the construct and their reasoning has gained traction for this perspective (Brach et al., 2013; Brach et al., 2015; Gazzoli et al., 2013; Menguc et al., 2015; Singh and Venugopal, 2015; Sousa and Coelho, 2013). The crux of Narver and Slater's argument (1990) is that market orientation cannot plausibly exist as a set of activities operating without reference to an underlying

system of values of the organisation. Narver and Slater (1990, p. 235) posit that if an organisation's market orientation existed as a set of activities independent to the underlying belief system of the organisation, then it could easily be embedded and replaced by the organisation at any time, which is patently not the reality. Narver and Slater conclude by determining that market orientation reasonably must be the manifestation of an organisation's culture. Other exponents of this argument include Cross and colleagues who in their analysis of market orientation (Cross et al., 2007) find that the prevailing view in the literature is that organisations that have achieved higher levels of market orientation create a culture that supports the marketing philosophy.

The two perspectives (behavioural and psychological) also offer differing views on the operationalisation of market orientation within an organisation. According to Kohli and Jaworski (1990) market orientation is the activities involved in the implementation of the marketing concept. Three practices (i) intelligence generation, (ii) intelligence dissemination, and (iii) responsiveness to market intelligence represent the operationalisation of market orientation. Whereas Narver and Slater (1990) posit that market orientation is a one-dimensional construct. This construct consists of three distinct components (i) customer orientation, (ii) competitor orientation, and (iii) inter-functional coordination. Other lesser-cited views also exist, for example Ruekert (1992) defines market orientation as the extent to which an organisation (i) obtains and uses information from customers, (ii) develops a strategy which will meet customer needs, and (iii) implements that strategy by being responsive to customer needs and wants. Despite these different definitions, it is universally accepted that market orientation is the realisation of the marketing concept at the organisational level. The advantages of being a market oriented organisation are explicit; market oriented organisations demonstrate stronger business outcomes including achieving higher levels of financial performance (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, Licata, et al., 2002; Jaworski, 2011; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990; Zablah et al., 2012). Narver and Slater (1990) posit that an organisation that improves its level of customer orientation will enhance its performance in the market place. This is because market oriented firms are defined by their enhanced understanding of customers' needs and their ability to offer solutions to those needs. Finally, Zablah et al. (2012) explain

that the marketing concept has two central dimensions, which can be operationalised to produce various positive outcomes in a business environment: (i) market orientation or firm-level orientation, and (ii) customer orientation. Homburg et al. (2011) posit that researchers often study either customer orientation of firms under the umbrella of market orientation (e.g., Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990) or from the perspective of individual employees (e.g., Franke and Park 2006) as customer orientation.

3.5 CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

The second foundational element of the marketing concept is customer orientation, which is recognised as the implementation of the marketing concept at the individual level (Gazzoli et al., 2013; Brockman et al., 2012). Although both constructs share a common origin in the marketing concept, research into customer orientation (i.e., employee-level customer orientation) and market orientation (i.e., firm-level customer orientation) have largely proceeded along parallel paths with researchers generally focusing specifically on one construct (Zablah et al., 2012). While market orientation refers to the focus of an organisation on the macro environment i.e., the wider market including competitors, stakeholders and interested groups, customer orientation is centred on a micro level, i.e., a focus on customer need satisfaction at the individual employee level, most commonly conceptualised through employee-customer interactions (Grizzle et al., 2009).

Customer orientation was first proposed by Saxe and Weitz (1982) as the manifestation of the marketing concept at the individual employee level. A substantial body of knowledge has accumulated on the research stream over the past four decades, due to empirical studies demonstrating that customer orientation is a valuable resource that positively influences important psychological outcomes including organisational commitment and job performance among frontline employees (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, Licata, et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004; Grizzle et al., 2009; Zablah et al., 2012). Such studies have identified customer orientation as an important resource in helping frontline sales and service workers manage the demands associated with customer-contact roles Studies demonstrating the role that customer orientation plays

in improving organisational and individual outcomes have been instrumental in making customer orientation a central construct in marketing literature; Hennig-Thurau (2004) discusses how it is well established in the literature that organisations with employees that behave in a customer-oriented way, perform to a higher level than organisations who do not focus their activities on customer needs (Brach et al., 2013; Hennig-Thurau 2004; Narver and Slater 1990; Zablah et al., 2012). Essentially, due to their boundary-spanning roles, frontline employees play a crucial role in service delivery and building successful relationships with customers.

Customer oriented workers in customer facing roles are shown to promote stronger engagement (Donavan et al., 2004); competitive differentiation (Babakus et al., 2007); enhanced performance outcomes (Zablah et al., 2012); improved performance (Saxe and Weitz, 1982); exhibit higher job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012) and achieve enhanced customer satisfaction and retention (Menguc et al., 2015). Customer facing employees therefore are direct participants in implementing the marketing concept (Brown et al., 2002), and their attitudes and behaviours towards customers determine customers' perceived service quality and satisfaction (Babakus et al., 2009). Supported by such emphatic empirical research, customer orientation has become a central construct in marketing literature; Hennig-Thurau (2004) discusses how it is well established in the literature that organisations that behave in a customer-oriented way and employ customer oriented frontline employees, perform to a higher level than organisations who do not focus their activities on customer needs (Brach et al., 2013; Hennig-Thurau 2004; Narver and Slater 1990; Zablah et al., 2012). Donavan et al. (2004) argue that customer orientation has reciprocal benefits for the organisation and the employee; customer orientation not only precipitates enhanced job performance, it also has positive effects on employee job satisfaction. As outlined, it is accepted that customer orientation precipitates positive individual and organisational outcomes achieved through a focus on achieving superior customer satisfaction (Babakus et al., 2017). However, there are two alternative perspectives prevalent in the conceptualisation of customer orientation. Scholars are divided on the perspective of whether customer orientation is predicated on organisational processes directing employee behaviours or whether it is a trait inherent in some individuals. Stock and Hoyer (2005) described

these as the two facets of customer orientation; an attitudinal and behavioural component (Anaza 2012; Bakker et al., 2007; Cross et al., 2007; Shin et al., 2012).

3.6 CONCEPTUALISING CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Although it is widely accepted that customer orientation is an important construct with significant outcomes including organisational performance and customer satisfaction, scholars disagree on the underlying perspective defining the construct (Homburg et al., 2009; Korschun et al., 2014; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2012). The theoretical foundation for this difference lies in customer orientation's setting within a nomological network of relationships. Specifically, the construct is conceptualised as either a set of worker behaviours aimed at attaining customer satisfaction or a psychological variable. Such is the divide that Zablah et al. (2012) and Korschun et al. (2014) posit that agreement between the different perspectives may never be achieved. However, definition of a cohesive underlying perspective for any construct is important in research. Prahalad and Bettis (1986, p. 491) argue that perspectives are valuable in academic research and business practice because businesses are driven by a prevailing world view of the strategies required to accomplish goals and assist decision-making.

Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) posit that an organisation's world view is stored as a shared cognitive map or a set of schemas within the organisation. Stradvik et al. (2014) also discuss this and posit that perspectives are embodied in concepts and models and influence not only thinking but also actions taken. Accordingly, while the distinction between a psychological or behavioural conceptualisation of the construct is important, from a theoretical and managerial perspective, researchers championing either discipline agree that important individual differences inherent in frontline employees influence their on-the-job performance and the extent to which they will strive to satisfy customer needs (Grizzle et al., 2009). The following sections consider the two perspectives for customer orientation.

3.6.1 Customer Orientation as a Behavioural Construct

Saxe and Weitz's (1982) formative work on customer orientation favours a behavioural construct for understanding the concept and has influenced much of the thinking on customer orientation and its influence. The argument underpinning their SOCO scale (sales orientation; customer orientation) is that customer oriented selling is the extent to which sales people practice the marketing concept from the perspective of encouraging customers to make a purchase and in doing so satisfy the sales person's individual needs. Saxe and Weitz (1982) posit that customer oriented salespeople avoid behaviour that increase the possibility of a sale at the expense of compromising the customer's interests. A behavioural-led underpinning of the construct implies the focus is not on values and predispositions, but on activities. Accordingly, a behavioural framework depicts customer orientation as a set of behaviours designed with the intention of satisfying customer needs.

Much of the initial work on conceptualising customer orientation centred on measuring the effectiveness of salespeople and the extent to which they demonstrated customer oriented selling practices. In their influential study, Saxe and Weitz (1982) contend that customer oriented selling is a behavioural construct and is manifested at the level of the front-line employee through their interactions with customers. Saxe and Weitz's (1982) work has continued to influence much of the literature focussed on conceptualising customer orientation, including Homburg et al.'s (2011) investigation into the optimum level of salesperson customer orientation; customer satisfaction (Hennig-Thurau, 2004); corporate social responsibility (Brik et al., 2011; Korschun et al., 2014); selling techniques (Flaherty, 2015; Grizzle et al., 2009; Hariandja, Simatupang, Nasution, Larso, 2014); sales force effectiveness (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, Licata, et al., 2002); organisational impact (Schwepker, 2003); influencing employee behaviour (Skålen, 2009). However, other practitioners contend that customer orientation is best viewed from a personality perspective manifested as an individual tendency of boundary spanning employees to meet customer needs.

3.6.2 Customer Orientation as a Psychological Construct

A psychological characterisation of customer orientation asserts that the construct has a personality-based theoretical foundation. An early and widely cited study into customer orientation using a personality underpinning was conducted by Brown et al. (2002, p. 111) who defined customer orientation as:

"an employee's tendency or predisposition to meet customer needs in an on-the-job context".

Brown et al. (2002) based their conceptualisation on emphatic evidence in the literature that customer service employee personality and performance are linked. Elaborating on this, Zablah et al. (2012, p. 24) proffers additional evidence based on robust methodology that individual customer orientation is more logically understood from a psychological perspective than as a set of behavioural responses and define the concept as:

"a work value that captures the extent to which employees' job perceptions, attitudes and behaviours are guided by an enduring belief in the importance of customer satisfaction".

This description conceptualises employee customer orientation as an individual psychological work value, i.e., at a fundamental level customer orientation influences how employees conduct themselves in their job role but is influenced by other personality factors and the particular work context. Such a (psychological) categorisation of the concept proposes that customer orientation is formed from lasting beliefs about frontline employees' attitudes to their work and work-related outcomes. This builds on previous work including Hogan et al. (1984) positing customer orientation is manifested through a combination of basic personality traits. Concentrating on the hierarchical approach to personality traits and influence (Mowen, 1999), this conceptualisation is contrary to the formative work completed by Saxe and Weitz (1982). Personality traits, as defined by Mowen and Spears (1999) are enduring and they act to modify an individual's behaviour in specific situations. Brown et al. (2002), in developing this theme propose that basic personality traits work in conjunction with a given situational context to produce surface traits, i.e., customer orientation. In other words, customer orientation is influenced by personality traits and ultimately influences job outcomes e.g., individual performance (Brown et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004) thus indicating the effect that the manifestation of

customer orientation at the individual level has on organisational market orientation. The contention being that customer orientation results from an amalgamation of traits inherent in the individual and the specific context of the particular work environment. This supports the view that customer orientation influences the performance of service staff and influences important outcomes including employee performance and organisational performance (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaefer, 2007).

3.6.2.1 Surface Personality Traits

Surface traits as proposed by Cattell (1957) are the building blocks of personality. The contention is that when source traits together are exposed to other variables in an individual's environment they make up surface traits, which are the traits identified as components of an individual's personality. A surface trait is comprised of the source traits that can be observed in an individual, these are easily observable and common clusters of behaviour. For example, 'altruism' is a surface trait and underlying source traits that precipitate altruism include unselfishness, sharing, consideration and empathy. Because they are more embedded in an individual, Cattell (1957) considered source traits to be more influential than surface traits in studying personality. In accepting the psychological principle that CO is a surface trait, it logically follows that CO will be manifested to varying degrees in different individuals (Zablah et al., 2012). The literature strongly supports the premise that individuals possess varying levels of customer orientation (Brown et al., 2002, Donavan, Brown and Mowen, 2004). In other words, when looked at through the prism of a psychological lens, customer orientation is an inherent value; essentially it is part of the individual's personal traits and their personality and for each individual it lies along a continuum (Steenkamp, de Jong, and Baumgartner, 2010).

3.6.2.2 Customer Orientation – Genetic and Neurological Insights

A more recent approach to understanding an individual's predisposition for customer orientation is to use neurological science to identify its genetic markers. Bagozzi et al. (2012) examine genetic and neurological biomarkers to identify customer orientation in individual salespeople. Bagozzi and colleagues build on evidence in the

science literature suggesting that 'opportunity recognition' may have a genetic component. This characteristic was measured by Bagozzi and colleagues as it is identified as inherent to customer oriented selling. In addition, empathy was included as a measure as it is strongly associated with customer orientation as referenced by Saxe and Weitz's (1982) assertion that customer orientation is linked to concern for the customer. The study investigated these characteristics from a neurological perspective using customer oriented and sales oriented individuals and drawing on evidence in neuroscience evidencing that empathic understanding occurs in the mirror neuron system in the brain.

The findings demonstrate that customer orientation (and not sales orientation) is positively related to activation of the mirror neuron system indicative of empathetic response, signifying that customer orientation is linked to caring for others. This provides strong support for Schwepker (2003) who found a high customer orientation threshold is a predictor of a high level of concern for oneself and others, while a low customer orientation threshold is indicative of a low concern for others and a high concern for themselves. Furthermore, the study found that customer orientation (and not sales orientation) is linked to the DRD4 gene, this gene encodes the D4 subtype of the dopamine receptor and signifies a predisposition for being creative, explorative and entrepreneurial; attributes associated with 'opportunity recognition'. Essentially, the study identifies biological and genetic differences between biomarkers for customer orientation and sales orientation thus supporting Saxe and Weitz's (1982) contention that rather than understanding or identifying with customers, instead, sales oriented individuals tend to exert pressure on customers. In contrast, customer oriented individuals appear to have a stronger tendency towards empathy (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010). The findings of Bagozzi et al.'s (2012) study in emphasising neurological and genetic biomarkers for customer orientation and sales orientation presents additional insight into understanding the construct and identifying high (and low) customer oriented individuals and support the view that customer orientation is inherent in individuals (i.e., a psychological construct).

3.7 ORGANISATIONAL CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

As discussed by Menguc et al. (2015) positive outcomes precipitated by customer orientation are not guaranteed and depend on other variables that co-exist within a broad framework of personal, work and situational factors. For example, Grizzle et al. (2009) discuss the significant influence of organisational climate (i.e., the manifestation of the marketing concept at the firm level) which may precipitate positive or negative effects on employee customer orientation. The study found that climate or culture has a significant effect on the customer oriented behaviours of customer facing workers. As outlined previously, a seminal study by Narver and Slater (1990) explored the impact that culture has on an organisation's climate and posited that culture precipitates a significant effect on workers' organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Overall, the literature provides empathetic support for the existence of a strong relationship between organisational customer orientation and individual customer orientation. The underlying argument is that organisations that support a customer oriented climate and recruit employee customer facing employees who practice the marketing concept at the individual level are more likely to have stronger relationships with customers and better performance outcomes.

3.8 ANTECEDENTS OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Employee customer orientation is crucial to enabling a service organisation to become market-oriented. The evidence in the literature is unequivocal that customer oriented employees are better prepared to anticipate customer concerns and develop tailored solutions for customers as a means of maintaining customer satisfaction (Anaza, 2012; Babakus et al., 2009; Brown et al., 2002; Hennig-Thurau, 2004). The literature illustrates how customer orientation is instrumental in improving job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and citizenship behaviours in employees (Donavan et al., 2004; Gazolli et al., 2011; Paul et al., 2015; Shin et al., 2012). Consequently, an understanding of the influential antecedents effecting the construct is important. Zablah et al. (2012) and Donavan et al. (2004) both raise the issue of the direction of causality as being important to establish (i.e., whether customer orientation causes the effect or is caused by another variable). Research into employee customer orientation has investigated its antecedents by examining the relationship between the construct

and other factors (Anaza, 2012; Grizzle et al., 2009; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Hennig-Thurau and Thurau, 2003; O'Hara, Boles, and Johnston, 1991; Paul et al., 2015; Pettijohn, Pettijohn, and Taylor, 2000; Saxe and Weitz, 1982; Strong and Harris, 2004). Avila and Tadepalli (1999) discuss how there are numerous variables that could be used as antecedents to employee customer orientation including demographic factors i.e., age and gender have been shown to have an effect on individual customer orientation (O'Hara et al., 1991; Pettijohn, Pettijohn, and Luke, 1997). Overall, there is general agreement in the literature of the major antecedents of customer orientation, i.e., employee empowerment, organisational climate, role ambiguity, role conflict and self-efficacy (Caemmerer and Wilson, 2011; Cross et al., 2007; Chung and Schnieder, 2002; Grizzle et al., 2009; Zablah et al., 2012).

3.8.1 Organisational Procedures and Strategies

Strong and Harris (2004) assert that three main global organisational factors influence customer orientation i.e., relational tactics, human resource tactics and procedural tactics. Relational tactics are centred on achieving long term customer relationships achieved through a greater understanding of customer needs (Strong and Harris, 2004). Procedural tactics, according to Strong and Harris (2004) such as customer focused systems (e.g., customer relationship management tools), customer care and customer visit procedures also act as important antecedents to customer orientation. Defined processes and procedures have been shown to be effective job resources for customer oriented workers precipitating a positive impact on them (Menguc et al., 2016). The last global factor discussed by Strong and Harris (2004) is human resource tactics such as customer oriented training, employee goal-setting, and employee empowerment which are found to elicit a favourable impact on customer orientation. In particular, empowerment has long been identified as being an important antecedent of customer orientation (e.g., Hennig-Thurau 2004) and the construct is explored specifically for its impact on customer orientation and employee-customer dyad performance in more recent contemporary studies (e.g., Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah, Sirianni, Korschun, Gremler, and Beatty, 2016).

3.8.1.1 Autonomy

Bowen and Lawler III (1992), Grönroos (1990) and Hennig-Thurau (2004) have been strong advocates of the influence of empowerment on important job outcomes. Hennig-Thurau (2004) posits that autonomy (both objective and subjective autonomy) is a core dimension of the CO of service workers (COSE), the other dimensions identified are social skills and motivation and the required skills to do the job (i.e., '*uno acto'* skills) [essential skill/attribute]. The importance of autonomy is described by Hennig-Thurau (2004, p. 463) as:

> "employees' self-perceived decision-making authority corresponds to the extent to which service employees feel authorised to decide on issues that concern customers' interests and needs".

Schneider and Bowen (1985) posit that given the level of impact they have on service delivery, it is important that FLEs are involved in organising and planning service activities. Menguc et al. (2015) argue that such involvement by empowered service workers will result in increased job satisfaction which in turn is proven to be beneficial for customers. This notion of empowerment and autonomy is discussed widely in the literature, Bowen and Lawler III (1992) posit that the argument for strategic empowerment by the organisation for employees includes quicker responses to customer requirements, adding to this argument, Grönroos (1990, p. 9) contends that:

> "front line employees…should have the authority to make prompt decisions. Otherwise, sales opportunities and opportunities to correct quality mistakes and avoid quality problems in these moments of truth are not used intelligently, and become truly wasted moments of opportunity".

Furthermore, Hennig-Thurau (2003, 2004) contends that the absence of employee autonomy can make customers frustrated and dissatisfied. In other words, the positive effect of employee empowerment extends to the customer. In addition, Bitner et al. (1994) find that customers evaluate the encounter more favourably when employees have the authority to adapt to meet their needs, this is supported in more contemporary research by Zablah et al. (2016) in their investigation into the 'mirror effect' of employee-customer satisfaction. For the reasons outlined, Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) contend that autonomy has a central place in motivational work design and reflects the extent to which a job-role allows an employee the freedom, independence, and discretion to schedule work, make decisions, and choose the methods used to perform tasks (Breaugh, 2013).

3.8.2 Role Ambiguity and Conflict

Prior research establishes that job stress, often conceptualised into two distinct dimensions i.e., role ambiguity and conflict is an influential antecedent to customer orientation (Zablah et al., 2012). Job demands such as role ambiguity and role conflict influence employee engagement (e.g., job satisfaction and organisational commitment) which is ultimately important for customer satisfaction. The importance of job stress and satisfaction is explored by Zablah et al. (2016), their study investigates the 'mirror effect' and finds that employee and customer satisfaction have a symbiotic reciprocal effect. Zablah et al. (2012) discuss role ambiguity and conflict and defines them as follows: role ambiguity is indicative of the degree to which FLEs are uncertain about what others (customers, colleagues, bosses) expect from them in their roles. Whereas role conflict denotes the degree of incongruity or the level of incompatibility of expectations communicated to an employee by managers and customers.

Role ambiguity and role conflict have been described by Cross et al. (2007) as both a mediating and moderating influence on individual customer orientation of frontline employees (depending on the context). Likewise, Caemmerer and Wilson (2011) suggest that role ambiguity and conflict may develop when customer-facing employees perceive themselves to be significantly more oriented towards service improvement than the organisation resulting in a 'gap in perception'. This incongruity has been discussed widely in the literature and is termed the 'service orientation discrepancy'. This phrase was coined by Parkington and Schneider (1979) to explain the phenomenon that occurs when service employees have higher service orientation levels than they perceive the organisation to possess. Studies show that such a perceived discrepancy is negatively correlated to employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, and employees' perceptions of services the organisation delivers (Caemmerer and Wilson, 2011; Cross et al., 2007). Where a significant discrepancy exists, employees may feel less supported and inhibited by the organisation to deliver effective customer service resulting in increased levels of role conflict among customer-facing staff. In the context of the JD-R theory and the transactional theory of stress (Boswell et al., 2003) role ambiguity and stress conflict are related job demands perceived by workers as challenging or threatening and often precipitate a

negative impact on their well-being (Hobfoll, 2012; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli, 2007). Job demands, as discussed by researchers (e.g., Crawford, LePine, and Rich, 2010) have a dual dimensionality and are comprised of challenge stressors and hindrance stressors. Crawford et al. (2010) proposed that challenges (e.g., workload, and job responsibility) while demanding, tend to precipitate positive outcomes (e.g., personal growth, mastery, goal attainment). Conversely, hindrances tend to be appraised as stressful demands that have the potential to thwart personal growth. Hindrances include demands such as role conflict, role ambiguity and difficult work environment which workers perceive as constraints and barriers which hinder goal attainment and potential rewards accruing as a result of being perceived as being good at their job. The negative outcomes of role ambiguity and job conflict have been widely explored in the research (Crawford et al., 2010; Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2012) and include poor individual performance, reduced participation in altruistic behaviours, increased turnover and negative impacts on customer satisfaction. There is evidence (i.e., Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2012; Zablah, Carlson, Donavan, Maxham III, and Brown, 2016) that given their high level of customer interactions the negative outcomes of role ambiguity and conflict are of particular concern in FLE roles where customer satisfaction is closely aligned to FLE behaviours and competence (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Marinova, Ye, and Singh, 2008; Menguc et al., 2015).

3.8.2.1 Boss Support

Another antecedent of customer orientation linked to stress and job satisfaction is boss support (Grizzle et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2012). Boss support sometimes referred to as organisational support or supervisor support (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli, 2001) is an environmental factor which dictates the extent to which the organisation supports workers. Babakus et al. (2009) argues that boss support helps alleviate the stresses faced by customer facing workers as they are simultaneously tasked with the dual requirements of establishing and simultaneously meeting customers' demands and meeting productivity and performance requirements. Sguera, Bagozzi, Huy, Boss, and Boss (2017) posit that boss support may be considered an

‘attractive inducement’ and when organisations offer support employee outcomes and organisational outcomes tend to be more favourable. Korschun et al. (2014) suggest that for FLEs in particular, such supportive environments in turn precipitate employee-organisational identification, conceptualised as a sense of sameness perceived by the employee with the organisation (Ashford, Harrison and Corley, 2008). In discussing the advantages of boss support, Xanthopoulou et al. (2012) suggests that it may constitute interventions focused on the empowerment of job resources and particularly coaching and may create engaged and productive workforces. For example, supervisors should set clear key performance indicators, i.e., goals that employees need to achieve and provide them with the necessary means required for task-completion (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998). Specifically, Xanthopoulou et al. (2012) contends there is evidence suggesting that redesign strategies including managerial support which enrich the work environment may also activate employees’ personal resources. The authors argue that job and personal resources may fluctuate from day-to-day, and such fluctuations determine how engaged employees are in their daily tasks. Therefore, organisations should promote strategies that aim at daily re-enforcements of resources, and not rely only on general redesigns. In other words, boss support needs to be ‘hands on’ and not a general goal.

The benefits of boss support may even go beyond creating productive and engaged workers, Sguera (2017) investigates the effects of perceived boss support on ethical (organisational citizenship behaviours) and unethical worker behaviour (counterproductive workplace behaviour). The study finds that supervisor-based self-esteem fully mediates the relationship between supervisor support and (un)ethical worker behaviour and that employee task satisfaction actually serves to intensify the relationship between supervisor support and supervisor-based self-esteem.

3.8.3 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, a vital component for job satisfaction (Hoffman and Ingram, 1991) has been identified as an important antecedent to customer orientation. The literature indicates that it plays an important function in supporting the psychological wellbeing of employees (Anderson, 2006). An individual’s attitudes, abilities, and cognitive

skills comprise the self-system, the self-system plays a major role in how individuals perceive situations and how they behave in response to different situations. (R. Anderson, 2007) contends that an individual's lack of self-confidence can result in an unsatisfactory experience for the customer and negative performance outcomes for the employee and organisation. An employee's self-efficacy in a customer service context indicates the employee believes they are capable of serving their customers adequately. In other words, self-efficacy is one of the required markers necessary to provide excellent customer service (Xanthopoulou et al., 2012). Building on Anderson (2007), Xanthopoulou et al. (2012) offers substantial support to the contention that job resources coincide with self-esteem, optimism, and self-efficacy in contributing to work engagement.

3.9 OUTCOMES OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

The evidence is unequivocal that CO has a positive influence on organisational and individual performance outcomes and is recognised as a predictor of job outcomes (Korschun, Bhattacharya, and Swain, 2014; Zablah et al., 2012) and has a marked effect on organisational performance (Narver and Slater, 1990; Singh and Ranchhod, 2004; Xanthopoulou et al., 2012). Donavan et al. (2004) found three main outcomes of customer orientation on job performance outcomes: organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs). Further empirical evidence demonstrates that employee customer orientation has specific influence over employee and organisational performance including financial performance (Gazzoli et al., 2013); employee customer identification (Anaza, 2012); customer satisfaction (Grizzle et al., 2009).

The following sections explore the impact of customer orientation and customer oriented behaviours on key individual outcomes, job outcomes and performance outcomes. Specifically, the impact of CO on organisational performance (Zablah et al., 2012); job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012); organisational commitment (Menguc, 2016); altruistic behaviours (Rupp et al., 2013); employee performance (Korschun et al., 2014); and customer satisfaction (Gazzoli et al., 2013) are discussed in more detail.

3.9.1 Organisational Performance (including Financial Performance)

Customer-oriented service employees are viewed as valuable resources who promote competitive differentiation and enhanced performance outcomes (Zablah et al., 2012; Menguc et al., 2015). The marketing literature has emphasised the role that employee customer orientation plays in influencing engagement and performance (Donavan et al., 2004; Saxe and Weitz, 1982). Evidence indicates that engaged customer-oriented employees have a positive influence on organisational performance, such employees have been shown to exhibit higher job satisfaction, deliver stronger service quality, achieve enhanced customer satisfaction and retention, and perform much better than those who are not customer oriented (Cross et al., 2007; Donavan et al., 2004; Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Narver and Slater, 1990; Zablah et al., 2012). Furthermore, Korschun et al. (2014) discuss how service employees play an essential role in sensing market demand, disseminating product information to customers and delivering value that is crucial in building customer loyalty and customer acquisition. Such studies demonstrate the important role that frontline employees play making them an important conduit linking organisations and customers (Homburg, Wieseke, and Bornemann, 2009; Korschun, Bhattacharya, and Swain, 2014; Saxe and Weitz, 1982).

Significantly, studies have also found an important link between customer oriented behaviours and organisation's financial performance. Narver and Slater (1990) in their study into the effects of market orientation on businesses found that it is an important determinant of profitability. Their study found that for non-commodity businesses, the positive relationship between market orientation and organisational profitability appears to be monotonic (i.e., varying in such a way that it either never decreases or increases). Whereas for commodity businesses a positive market orientation-profitability relationship is found only among organisations that are above the median measure for market orientation. This link between customer orientation and profitability is further illustrated by Grizzle et al. (2009) who demonstrate that unit customer oriented behaviours (COBs) are positively related to firm profitability. Importantly, the study found that unit COBs appear to positively influence unit profitability by producing an increase in sales without a concomitant increase in costs

thereby providing empirical evidence of a connection between employee customer orientation and unit profitability.

3.9.2 Job Satisfaction

Donavan et al. (2004) posits that FLEs with high levels of customer orientation experience correspondingly higher concentrations of job satisfaction than their less customer oriented colleagues. Anaza (2012) posited that customer oriented employees (in FLE roles, enjoying organisational support) are more absorbed and enthusiastic about their jobs and this is manifested as job satisfaction. Consistent with Locke (1976), Zablah et al. (2012) contend that employee satisfaction is a critical component in job engagement (i.e., a job state characterised by full emotional investment in one's job) as it describes an individual's positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of their job experiences. The literature is replete with the influence that employee job satisfaction and extra-role behaviour exerts over important outcomes, including turnover intentions, turnover and absenteeism (Gerhards et al., 2018; Hsieh and Chen, 2011).

3.9.3 Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment can be conceptualised as the strength of an employee's psychological bond and level of psychological investment in their organisation (Hunt, Chonko, and Wood, 1985). Alternatively, organisational commitment may be understood as a form of social identification which manifests in employees a greater willingness to engage in intra-role behaviours, extra-role activities, and organisational commitment (Anaza, 2012; Mael and Ashforth, 1992). Jaworski and Kohli (1993) posit that customer oriented workers will be more committed to their employing organisation when they believe that the organisation practices the marketing concept, this argument is also supported by Donavan (2004). However, Hennig-Thurau (2004), Menguc et al. (2015), and Zablah et al. (2016) suggest that organisational support for the marketing concept must be actively pursued by the organisation, for example the organisation must empower and customer facing employees in practicing the marketing concept. Such organisational support is likely to result in employees who strongly identify with their organisations and these workers will characteristically

display greater job engagement, extra-role behaviours and organisational commitment (Wright, Cropanzano, and Bonett, 2007).

3.9.4 Altruistic or Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCBs)

Extra-role behaviour is discussed by Zablah et al. (2012) who found while dealing with customers can at times be stressful for the employee, high customer orientation levels can 'protect' the employee and can lead to extra role behaviour. This idea of 'universal positive impacts' that customer orientation has for the organisation is further illustrated by Donavan et al. (2004), which found that altruistic organisational citizenship behaviours, whereby customer orientated employees are motivated to help other employees with a view to satisfying customers is another important facet of the individual customer orientation concept. Engaged employees invariably go beyond their job responsibilities by taking an active interest in improving customer service and firm productivity (Rupp, Shao, Thornton, and Skarlicki, 2013). According to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) an individual's willingness to integrate their self-concept with the organisation facilitates a psychological connection between the individual's views and those of the organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992).

Consequently, the individual begins to comply and adopt to the organisation's culture and norms thereby influencing the employee to conform to the organisation's requirements (Anaza, 2012). As outlined earlier, Korschun et al. (2014) discusses the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and how firms' favourable treatment of beneficiaries, stakeholders other than employees interacts to shape service employee responses (Shore and Eisenberger, 2007). However, the effects are not equal for all FLEs, significantly positive results are heightened for employees who view CSR as important to their self-view. Echoing the importance of customer orientation in job outcomes, Korshun et al. (2014) found that more positive outcomes are stronger in employees with strong psychological wellbeing and positive organisational identification; factors most associated with high customer oriented individuals.

3.9.5 Employee Performance

Employee job performance is defined as Zablah et al. (2012, p. 25) as:

"the extent to which an employee contributes to organisational effectiveness given the expectations associated with his/her work role".

In other words, this refers to the lengths that an employee will go to meet expectations of fulfilling their assigned role and contribute to organisational effectiveness (Korschun et al., 2014). Job performance is recognised as a complex concept encompassing a range of behaviours directed both internally (toward managers and colleagues) and externally i.e., toward customers (Anaza, 2012; Korschun, Bhattacharya, and Swain, 2014; Zablah et al., 2012). Although early work on job satisfaction and job performance suggest that due to the lack of a solid theoretical basis for a relationship, the concepts are best considered as separate outcomes (Locke, 1976), current evidence is indicative of an interdependent relationship (Brik et al., 2011; Wright et al., 2007).

Echoing Saxe and Weitz's (1982) landmark study which found evidence for a positive correlation between an employee's customer orientation and performance, Swenson and Herche (1994) also found that customer oriented selling behaviours are positively related to salesperson performance. This supports an earlier service sector study by Dunlap et al. (1988) which found that the highest performing staff exhibited higher levels of customer-oriented behaviour, given equal experience-levels. This theme was further developed by Donavan et al. (2004) who illustrated the additional benefits of service-employee customer orientation beyond its accepted effects on performance. Cross et al. (2006) also emphasised the importance of customer orientation and the role of salespeople in putting customer orientation into practice. This study illustrates how the performance of front line employees directly impacts the organisation's performance. This theme was also explored in detail by Grönroos (1978, 1982, 1984) and Skålén, (2009); Grönroos argues that because services are consumed and produced simultaneously, customers essentially co-produce the service experience with the FLE.

3.9.6 Customer Satisfaction

Gazzoli et al. (2013a) argues that because FLEs play an essential function in service delivery, it is expected that employees displaying higher levels of customer orientation will form more productive interactions and relationships with customers. These positive interactions in turn influence customers' perception of the quality of service delivered by the FLE, and ultimately the customer's overall satisfaction with the service and organisation (Gazzoli et al., 2013). This argument that service employees' behaviour (particularly in a services marketing perspective) plays a central role with regard to a customer's perception of satisfaction and service quality is widely supported (e.g., Brach et al., 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Sergeant and Frenkel, 2000).

Employee-customer interactions are particularly important in boundary-spanning roles where employees interact specifically with customers as part of the service; in these circumstances, service employees' customer orientation is thought to influence organisational performance (Barnes and Pressy, 2008; Bove and Johnson, 2000; Hennig-Thurau, 2004). Furthermore, taking a wider view, it is established that frontline employees are key to sensing market demand, disseminating product information to customers and delivering value that precipitates customer loyalty and customer acquisition (Korshun et al., 2014; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Narver and Slater, 1990). These critical functions make frontline employees an essential channel, linking organisations and customers (Homburg, Wiesede and Hoyer, 2009; Korshun et al., 2014; Saxe and Weitz, 1982). Moreover, Palmatier, Scheer and Steenkamp, (2007) advocate that a customer's loyalty to an employee can outweigh the customer's loyalty to the organisation and this serves as a moderating influence on sales effectiveness and performance (Korshun et al., 2014; Palmatier, Scheer and Steenkamp, 2007). This is further supported by Brach et al. (2013) who found a link between employee customer orientation (ECO) and customer orientation perceived by the customer (COCP). This has the result of rendering interactions between frontline employees and customers as a distinctly important influencer on customer satisfaction and ultimately organisational performance, thereby establishing the significant importance of frontline employee CO levels (Cross et al., 2007).

3.10 AUTONOMY – INTRODUCTION

The roots of autonomy as self-determination can be found in ancient Greek philosophy, in the idea of self-mastery. The role of autonomy as a leveller or way to provide equilibrium between parties was considered by Kant (Kant, 1795). Kant (Kant, 1795) believed autonomy or self-mastery was vital to an individual's well-being, particularly in light of the alternative to autonomy i.e., heteronomy whereby the individual is influenced by a force outside or separate to them. Likewise, Maslow (1943) argued that the most satisfied person is always autonomous, as autonomy helps goal realisation and is crucial to achieving sustained happiness. Autonomy is also recognised as a key concept in self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000) and is central to happiness and therefore arguably may be considered important to all workers in all roles. These views support Babakus et al.'s (2017) perspective that autonomy is a universal resource important to all individuals in all situations (e.g., private life, social life, public life, work life). The importance of self-mastery and autonomy is increasingly recognised as a vital resource in work contexts and is included in the JD-R model as both an individual resource and a job (Bakker, 2004). Specifically, in a work context, the importance of autonomy or role autonomy for employees has been widely explored, with the consensus being is that role autonomy is a fundamental job attribute or resource (Babakus et al., 2017; Stock, 2016; Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi, 2017; Slaughter and Greguras, 2009).

Researchers (e.g., Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Helena Lopes, Calapez, and Lopes, 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi, 2017; Wheatley, 2017) consider that in a work autonomy context, autonomy can originate from three distinct sources. Autonomy may be firm induced, individually inherent and customer induced. Firm induced autonomy is described by Hennig-Thurau (2004) as objective autonomy i.e., autonomy which is delegated by the firm to the FLE. Hennig-Thurau (2004) considers subjective autonomy as the level of autonomy an individual feels they have to execute their role, Hennig-Thurau (2004) proposes that this may be influenced by an individual's level of personal motivation. Customer induced autonomy is considered by Matthews et al. (2017) as the extent to which a customer is confident of the ability and skill of the FLE.

3.11 AUTONOMY AND EMPOWERMENT

Karatepe, Yavas, and Babakus (2007) posit that empowerment, autonomy and self-mastery are terms which are sometimes used interchangeably, for example, Kassim and Fong (2012) when investigating the customer orientation of bank employees considered autonomy and empowerment to be the same construct. This ambiguity exists across a number of disciplines, for example, in the field of social psychology Goodman, Epstein, and Sullivan (2018) discuss the need for a clear definition of empowerment and argues that capriciousness of its definition has made its conceptualisation difficult. In management and business research a common understanding of empowerment is that it involves a manager affording employees the discretion to make daily decisions as needed while performing job-related activities (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). Chebat and Kollias (2000) consider empowerment as the situation where a supervisor offers or gives an employee discretion to make decisions as needed while performing their job-related tasks.

A study of the literature on empowerment (e.g., Chebat and Kollias, 2000; Kassim and Fong, 2012; Yee, Guo, and Yeung, 2015) and autonomy (Babakus, Yavas, and Karatepe, 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Paul et al. 2015; Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi, 2017) indicates a subtle difference between the constructs. An empowered individual is given their mandate for action from their manager, i.e., they are given permission to act according to specific guidelines, accordingly, the moral responsibility for their actions resides with their manager (Goodman et al., 2018). An autonomous individual however assumes their own moral responsibility, the moral responsibility for their actions resides with them (Paul et al., 2015). In other words, an autonomous worker does not need to seek permission to make decisions (Hennig-Thurau, 2004) whereas an empowered individual is given permission or is empowered to perform specific tasks, the implication is that anything that falls outside of this may not be permitted. For the purposes of this research, role autonomy which adheres to the understanding of self-mastery (Kant, 1795) rather than empowerment (i.e., delegation) is considered.

3.12 AUTONOMY IN A CUSTOMER SERVICE SETTING

In some ways autonomy or self-mastery is the antithesis of service (Cuddy et al., 2008). In tracing the development of the service economy, Cuddy et al. (2008) explains that 'service' in its original format lies in the Latin 'servus' defined as 'slave' and theorises that many difficulties between employees and customers are embedded at a psychological level in its obsequious and submissive antecedents. This servile or deferential element to the service employee relationship is examined by Hennig-Thurau (2004) and Zablah et al. (2016), these studies emphasise the importance of employee autonomy in the employee-customer dyad which fosters a more equal relationship between the parties. Essentially, as discussed by Matthews et al. (2017) for front line employees, the constructs of autonomy and service which could in isolation be considered to be in opposition are actually complementary and interconnected. Nixon, Mazzola, Bauer, and Krueger (2011) discuss how job control, or job autonomy, is a manifestation of perceived control in the workplace; and high levels of job autonomy indicate that an employee has control over how or when his or her tasks are performed. Rogelberg, Barnes-Farrell, and Creamer (1999) argue that the most important components of service success may be having the autonomy (categorised as freedom from unnecessary management interference), to do what is needed to produce this desired outcome. This is particularly relevant in the dyadic FLE-customer relationship, where the relationship is often naturally imbalanced (i.e., as stated in the axiom common in customer service parlance 'the customer is always right' (Homburg, Müller, and Klarmann, 2011) however, significantly employee role autonomy reintroduces some level of equality between the parties (Babakus et al., 2017; Moon et al., 2017).

3.12.1 Autonomy as Described in the JD-R Model

Explicitly, JD-R recognises role autonomy as a job resource with two distinct dimensions; it is conceptualised as both a personal and a job resource (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). The theory maintains that every job is made up of factors which can be classified into two distinct categories (i) job resources and (ii) job demands, these interact to influence job outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Zablah et al., 2012). Job demands include challenging customer interactions, while job resources are

aspects of the job and person that enable front line employees to achieve work goals and also enables these workers to cope with job demands including self-efficacy and supervisor support (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Nahrgang et al., 2011; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Zablah et al., 2012). Role autonomy has been shown to buffer detrimental effects caused by a lack of resources (e.g., low OCO service climate) at the service encounter. The negative impact on workers of an unchallenging job has been widely explored with findings indicating that the lack of challenging work can lead to undesirable outcomes, including dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover and reduced work effectiveness and withdrawal however role autonomy has been shown to reduce such negative outcomes (Paul et al., 2016; Stock et al., 2016).

While normally considered a resource by workers, in some circumstances autonomy may be perceived as a job demand; Katz and Kahn (1978) argue that when an employee is new to a role, unsure of their role or experiences significant job demands, the worker may perceive role autonomy to be an additional job demand with this view changing over time as the worker gains more experience of the job. Furthermore, Matthews et al., (2017) argue that there are situations in which autonomy can add to pressure on customer oriented workers (e.g., when decisions they feel compelled to make are not advantageous to the customer), the authors refer to this as the 'dark side of autonomy', in such situations, role autonomy becomes a hindrance for customer oriented workers (i.e., a negative demand as opposed to a resource). In this context, worker autonomy has a duality; it can be perceived as either a job demand or resource depending on the situational context (Matthews, Beeler, Zablah, and Hair, 2017). Such negative aspects to autonomy have also been discussed in the context of 'sweethearting' or customer oriented deviance, where decisions are made by an employee in favour of the customer but which disadvantage the company (Brady et al., 2012; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2012). Accordingly, legitimate concerns about possible mis-use of delegated authority must be balanced with positive outcomes percipitated by empowering workers with autonomy (Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2012).

3.13 AUTONOMY AND CO – A COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIP

The importance of autonomy in a work context is multi-faceted, the literature is emphatic that role autonomy is fundamentally important to workers in general, however due to the uniquely bifurcated social landscape frontline employees face with the organisation on one side and customers on the other (Korschun et al., 2014) autonomy has a specific importance for such workers allowing them to complete their customer interaction tasks effectively while protecting their self-efficacy (Babakus et al., 2017; Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi, 2017; Paul et al., 2015). In addition, the literature indicates an added layer of importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers in a service setting. Customer oriented workers have a *need* to meet customer needs, as it is a requirement of their job, they also have a *want* to meet customer needs, as this is something they enjoy (Brown et al., 2002). This relationship between 'needing' and 'wanting' to meet customer needs was conceptualised by Brown et al. (2002) and is represented in their two dimension (i.e., needs and enjoyment) scale measuring CO.

The importance of customer orientation in a service context is highlighted by Grönroos (1978, 1982, 1984) in his argument that services are consumed and produced simultaneously. This assumes that in a service context, customers always co-produce services with front line employees. Consequently, customers of service organisations not only evaluate what they get, i.e., the outcome of the production process, but also, more importantly, the delivery, and in particular, the employees involved (Shostack, 1977, p. 79). Shostack (1977) and others (e.g., Brach et al., 2013; Chahal and Devi, 2013; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Paul et al., 2015) argue that services are inextricably entwined with their human representatives, in other words, the service employee is perceived to be the service. This can precipitate increased pressure on employees (Stock, 2016). Explicitly, the literature highlights how customer service roles with high levels of customer contact are fraught with difficulties, for example, tight controls as employed in more utilitarian settings (e.g., call centre environments) make it harder for FLEs to build effective customer relationships (Rychalski et al., 2017) with the FLE increasingly facing the risk of boreout as described by Stock (2016). However, the literature provides evidence demonstrating how role autonomy protects FLEs in

difficult customer interactions and serves as buffer against detrimental impacts (Matthews et al., 2017; Stock, 2016; Zablah et al., 2016). The literature demonstrates that effective co-production requires that customer oriented service workers have the required autonomy to make decisions during the customer interaction without having to revert to a manager. Employee role autonomy improves the service outcomes for the customer and organisation (Babakus et al., 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004); protects workers' self-efficacy in challenging customer interactions (Matthews et al., 2017) and provides a buffer against job stress and boreout (Stock, 2016).

3.14 AUTONOMY IN FLE AND CUSTOMER DYAD RELATIONSHIPS

Intangibility and blurred ownership of services combine to instil additional importance to customer-employee interactions. This is discussed by Chahal and Devi (2013) who propose that in a service context, customer involvement tends to be more involved and complex. In other words, the relationship is fundamentally a cooperative endeavour with the customer and the service employee co-creating the service experience. Hariandja, Simatupang, Nasution, and Larso (2014) further discuss how consumers' participation in a service context increasingly plays an active and in some cases a guiding role in service production and delivery becoming in effect a co-producer. Accordingly, as discussed by Hennig-Thurau (2004) the worker needs autonomy to effectively produce the service with the customer.

Given researchers such as Shostack (1977, p. 79) and Hennig-Thurau's (2004) proposition that service consumption and service workers' performance are indistinguishable, this cooperative element means that maintaining consistency in service delivery is more difficult requiring active participation from both parties (Lovelock and Gummesson, 2004). This drives service organisations to employ highly intensive customer focused strategies to maintain service standards (Chahal and Devi, 2013). Hennig-Thurau and Thurau (2003) further discuss how the behaviour of employees is central to a customer's perception of service quality and value creation. This is especially true for boundary-spanning employees whose role involves interacting with customers as part of the service encounter. Miller (2008) explores how elevated levels of human involvement between service providers and consumers

in addition to capricious consumer requirements combine to make the service delivery process increasingly complex. In essence, successful delivery requires varying degrees of employee skill, motivation, empathy and decision making authority on the part of the FLE.

Employee autonomy, specifically in an FLE context is particularly important given the importance of value creation in service logic, Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) discuss how value formation is dependent on the organisation and its peoples' skills, capabilities and effectiveness in interpreting customer logic. In a service context, scholars including Hennig-Thurau (2004) and Zablah et al. (2016) have demonstrated the importance that autonomy plays in the development of creative and effective employee-customer dyads irrespective of the complexity of the FLE role. This is also evidenced by Enehaug (2017) who found in a longitudinal case study of 'autonomy control and learning' that productivity improvements and positive work environment changes were made possible by fostering responsible autonomy among FLEs. The study found that FLEs exercised their autonomy to improve customer outcomes which in turn enhanced job and performance outcomes. Similarly, a recent study by Stock (2016) discusses how customer-oriented behaviours by empowered FLEs provides an important means to achieve satisfied and loyal customers and by extension sustainable competitive advantages. While Stock (2016) finds that FLEs' customer oriented behaviours are negatively impacted by impediments such as a lack of challenges at the customer interface, the study also reveals that role autonomy mitigates the negative effect of lack of challenges providing a buffer against their negative outcomes.

Building on previous studies including Grabon, (2010); Stock (2016) asserts that lack of autonomy is linked to firms' rules and enforced scripted communications which reduce variance in customer interactions thereby making the service delivery process less interesting for the employee which is a precursor to 'boreout'. Stock's (2016) findings indicate organisations should avoid extreme standardisation which may result in boredom for their customer facing employees and provide them with development opportunities. The study also reveals some contingency factors that can buffer the detrimental effects of FLEs' bore-out and concludes that firms should provide job autonomy to help FLEs cope with a lack of challenges which can culminate in

increased boredom. Menguc (2016) further argues that FLEs are demoralised by a lack of challenge in their jobs which may lead to a lack of engagement, potentially precipitating increased service failure and fractured customer relationships (Miao and Evans, 2013; Van der Doef and Maes, 1999).

3.14.1 Autonomy and Customer Satisfaction

Autonomy in an FLE context plays a key role is customer satisfaction. Specifically, Hennig-Thurau (2004) posits that a lack of employee autonomy frustrates customers with detrimental results for the both parties. This is further supported by Stock (2016) and Menguc (2016) who finds that role autonomy plays an important role for FLE workers in providing a buffer against challenges inherent in the role including 'boreout'. Contemporary literature further recognises the importance of employee–customer interfaces and the central role they play in service success (Brach et al., 2013; Hennig-Thurau and Thurau, 2003). The rationale behind the importance of autonomy in a service context is that FLEs require a high degree of flexibility in making on-the-spot decisions to satisfy customers (Babakus et al., 2017).

Liu, Lee, and Hung (2017) discuss how service quality including FLE-customer interactions positively influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Conversely research also indicates that prior negative service experiences including customers' experiences with different firms increases their cynicism levels, ultimately making it more difficult to please these cynical customers (Balaji, Jha, Sengupta, and Krishnan, 2018). However, the research found that over time, a positive relationship between a cynical customer and an FLE can increase customer satisfaction among highly cynical customers. As argued by Hennig-Thurau (2004) in their seminal paper on COSE (customer orientation of service workers) this demonstrates the importance of a strong relationship between a customer and FLE.

Zablah et al. (2016) explores the reciprocal nature of customer-employee satisfaction, the study identifies a 'mirror effect' where employee satisfaction drives customer satisfaction and how the reverse is also true (i.e., an 'inside-out – outside-in' phenomenon). In other words, customer satisfaction's impact on FLE job satisfaction,

may account for a significant degree of the observed empirical relationship between FLE job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. Although the mirror effect exploring employee satisfaction – customer satisfaction link is not universally supported (Kolar, Erčulj, and Weis, 2018), other studies endorse the satisfaction mirror effect including Silvestro's (2016) research into drivers of business performance and Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) who also investigate and find support for satisfaction mirror effects which may be outside-in predominant, inside-out predominant, or bidirectional.

Extant research demonstrates that customer and FLE relationships in functional or utilitarian service industries are often transactional and volatile when compared to relationships within the participative/co-creative industries which are comparatively emotionally bonded and enduring (Donavan et al., 2004; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Paul et al., 2015; Spivack and Milosevic, 2018). However, Hennig-Thurau maintains that irrespective of the complexity of the service and the FLE's job role, the quality of the customer-FLE interaction is important, as is the need for service organisations to be resolute in their support of positive customer engagement. Ponsignon (2011) describes how low-contact business models (i.e., service standardisation) traditionally centre on transactions rather than the relationship between the parties (these tend to be more transient or short-term customer-employee interactions, typified by call centre or fast food type interactions). However, this while this model is often effective in situations involving standardised processes with low risk and uncertainty for the organisation and the customer (Paul et al., 2015) such a restrictive working environment and lack of empowerment may precipitate higher employee turnover and boreout and result in weaker FLE-customer relationships (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Stock, 2016). Irrespective of the complexity of the job, Zablah et al. (2012) argues that once an employee is customer-facing, two resources are important; their level of CO and their level of autonomy. Specifically, customer orientation improves organisational outcomes, FLE outcomes and customer outcomes and it transcends job complexity (Donavan et al., 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009; Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2017). Furthermore, Matthews et al. (2017) argues that (irrespective of job complexity or setting i.e., utilitarian or participative) CO and autonomy protect FLEs in challenging customer interactions.

3.16 SYNOPSIS OF EXTANT LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a synopsis of the secondary research conducted on the service sector, attraction sector and commences with a summation of customer orientation. The customer orientation field has been comprehensively investigated yielding a rich and broad expanse of data exploring the concept from various perspectives. Given the magnitude of data in the research stream, the literature review is presented in three chapters, each investigating a specific aspect pertinent to the research question (i.e., service sector, customer orientation and attraction literature). The first chapter of the review examines the evolution of the service sector and presents and examines its growing significance globally. Its importance is illustrated by the fact that the sector generates more than two-thirds of gross domestic product (GDP) globally creating more new jobs than any other sector (OECD, 2018). By driving the exchange of ideas, know-how and technology, The World Bank (2015) argues that trade in services helps firms cut costs, increase productivity, participate in global value chains and improve competitiveness.

Value creation and service models are outlined and discussed and the use and benefits of high-contact and low-contact models explored, Ponsignon et al. (2011) describes the low-contact approach as a rigid and defined offering of mass services with specifications decided prior to the customer's involvement in the service process. A high-contact model is more tailored and costly, centring on the relationship between the parties, accordingly, it is more susceptible to customer-induced variability and reliant on customer oriented behaviours of front line workers. Crucially, therefore given services integral intangibility, service organisations have a specific requirement for customer oriented workers, such workers are particularly important to service organisations as they essentially co-create the service experience with customers. The sector's importance to global economies including the Irish economy coupled with its specific reliance on human talent necessitates understanding what attracts customer oriented workers. The second chapter presents an evolution of customer orientation including early seminal research into the construct (e.g., Brown et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004; Saxe and Weitz, 1982) through to more contemporary work establishing customer orientation's positive outcomes notably financial performance (Grizzle et al.,

2009; Menguc et al., 2016) to its role in reciprocal satisfaction between employee-customer dyads (Zablah et al., 2016). Established wisdom informs us that customer orientation and customer-oriented behaviours of service or frontline employees are fundamental to increasing customer satisfaction (Chakrabarty, Brown, and Widing, 2013; Stock, 2016). The importance of employee customer orientation to organisational performance has been well documented, with researchers demonstrating how organisational success rests to a large extent on the quality of its employees. This has been proven to be particularly pertinent in a service context where the service and the service employee often become indistinguishable to customers with such workers becoming the face of the organisation in the eyes of customers (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata, 2002; Donavan et al., 2004; Grizzle et al., 2009; Homburg, Müller, and Klarmann, 2011; Menguc et al., 2016; Zablah et al., 2012).

Customer facing workers have regular (and sometimes intense) face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with customers, and are the main actors in delivery of service quality (Karatepe and Aga, 2012). This is particularly the case in a service organisation context, they are regarded as strategic partners in the retention (and creation) of satisfied and loyal customers (Lin, 2006). In such contexts where workers interact frequently with customers, Hsieh and Chen (2011) argue that autonomy is a necessary resource for employees as it empowers them and provides them with the decision-making scope they need to meet customer needs. (Gerhards et al., 2018). In addition, Boshoff and Allen, (2000) determine that customer oriented service workers are instrumental in returning dissatisfied customers to a state of satisfaction via successful service recovery, which also requires a level of control and empowerment on the part of the employee, this is evidenced by Hennig-Thurau (2004) who found that a lack of employee autonomy frustrates customers. Furthermore, Hennig-Thurau builds the case for the particular importance of autonomy for customer oriented workers through his conceptualisation of the dimensions of the customer orientation of service workers (COSE) which finds that autonomy (both subjective and objective) is a core dimension of individual customer orientation. Given their level of customer interaction, it is unsurprising therefore that studies including Babakus and Yavas (2012); Karatepe and Aga (2012); Zablah et al. (2016) have demonstrated that frontline

employees have different requirements and face different pressures from other employees. Most notably they work in an environment which requires:

"close, personal contact between customers and employees" (Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, and Brown, 2005, p. 61).

Zablah et al. (2016) demonstrated the importance of FLE-customer relationships and illustrated how they are reciprocal and dynamic in nature. Based on their findings, Zablah and colleagues conclude there is a mirror effect of satisfaction between customers and FLEs, with satisfaction from one party reflecting back and influencing the other party's satisfaction levels. This illustrates the fundamental importance of customer orientation, particularly in a service industry context where for many customers the employee is seen as the personification of the service (Donavan et al., 2004; Menguc, et al., 2015; Teng and Barrows, 2009). However, tight labour market conditions make it increasingly difficult for organisations to attract customer oriented employees (Heilmann, 2010; Hsieh and Chen, 2011; Jiang and Iles, 2011). Consequently, it is important that organisations understand what these workers look for in a service organisation and what the attraction 'pull' factors are. This encapsulates the study's research problem: why and when are customer oriented service employees attracted to service organisations.

While the importance of customer orientation has been widely accepted, the underlying conceptualisation of the construct has divided scholars, with some arguing that customer orientation is best considered a set of behaviours (Homburg, et al., 2011; Korschun et al., 2014; Saxe and Weitz, 1982) while others (Brown et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004; Zablah et al., 2012; Menguc et al., 2015) hypothesise that customer orientation is personality driven; i.e., a personality trait (Brown et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004) or a work value (Zablah et al., 2012; Matthews et al., 2017). Increasingly, scholars are adopting a personality or psychological perspective for understanding customer orientation, this perspective is championed by Zablah et al. (2012) who present a broad and comprehensive argument supporting a psychological supposition. Zablah and colleagues' thesis succinctly rationalises that customer orientation and market orientation both measure the same construct (albeit at different levels of analysis i.e., firm level and individual level). In essence, as market

orientation is accepted as having a cultural (or psychological) foundation as presented by Narver and Slater (1990), it follows congruently that customer orientation has a psychological underpinning. Accordingly, this present study concurs with Zablah et al.'s (2012) (and Brown et al., 2002; Donavan et al., 2004) argument for a psychological understanding of customer orientation. Such a perspective supports the notion that different workers will have different individual levels of customer orientation. In a workplace context, this translates into workers with different customer orientation tendencies working together and interacting with and effecting different experiences for customers (Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2016).

The final chapter of the literature review draws on literature from the attraction and management research streams and examines ideas and theories through the lens of customer orientation in an attempt to identify what attracts customer oriented workers to service organisations. Measures of organisational attraction investigating functional and symbolic attributes identified as important in prior research are examined and considered from the context of attracting customer oriented workers (Cable and Turban, 2003; Carless, 2005a; Harold and Ployhart, 2008). It is recognised that individuals are attracted to those similar to themselves (Schneider, 1987; Schneider and Bowen, 1985); scholars including Catanzaro et al. (2010) argue that this extends to organisations that portray values job candidates admire or aspire to. It is also clear from prior research that the mechanics of attraction are both difficult to identify and mercurial, since attraction (even between similar groups of people) can be very different and deeply personal (Nolan and Harold, 2010; Slaughter and Greguras, 2009; Slaughter, Stanton, Mohr, and Schoel, 2005).

The importance of job seeker marketability is also explored, the evidence suggests that the more valuable an individual considers their skill-set, the more succinct and entrenched their requirements from the organisation may become. Also, in the context of customer orientation, the research identifies the growing recognition of role autonomy in a service setting. This was explored by Hennig-Thurau (2004) in his conceptualisation of the customer orientation of service workers identifying autonomy as one of four essential dimensions of customer orientation. Brady et al. (2012)

examines the pitfalls of too much or too little autonomy and the effect these scenarios have on service employees. Previous research indicates that jobs lacking challenges but offering high job autonomy draw less energy from a worker than for jobs where both challenges and autonomy are low (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Stock (2016) enlarges on this and argues that front line employees with high job autonomy levels have more latitude to execute their work in an authentic, self-fulfilling manner which weakens detrimental effects of a low challenge environment. The attraction of autonomy for customer facing employees is also explored by Zablah et al. (2016) who find evidence which shows the breadth of influence of autonomy in demonstrating how the effectiveness and performance of employee-customer dyads can be enhanced through delegated autonomy which in turn improves satisfaction for both parties.

3.17 CONCLUSION

The chapter traces the evolution of customer orientation and its shared origins with market orientation in the marketing concept. Along with the discussion of theoretical concepts, the antecedents of customer orientation and its influence over important worker, customer and organisational outcomes including financial performance, job satisfaction, altruistic behaviours and customer satisfaction for the service sector in particular were explored. The particular importance of role autonomy in a customer orientation and service context was also explored. The importance of role autonomy for FLEs was discussed in a seminal study by Hennig-Thurau (2004) who argued that along with skill and motivation, customer orientation is intrinsic to successful service delivery. More recent studies have empirically demonstrated the important influence that role autonomy has for customer, FLE and organisational outcomes (Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2016; Stock, 2016).

The following chapter describes the research methodology underpinning the study, the proposed contribution and the overall aim of the empirical research. Crucial to such a study are the principal philosophical assumptions informing the research methodology, these suppositions are discussed and the research objectives and the rational for the experimental research design employed are described and validated.

~ CHAPTER ~

4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research methodology underpinning the study, the proposed contribution and the overall aim of the empirical research. Crucial to such a study are the principal philosophical assumptions informing the research methodology, these suppositions are discussed and the research objectives and the rational for the experimental research design employed are described and validated. Thereafter, the data collection process is delineated, including the measures and the rationale for their choice, sampling issues and sample choices are also outlined. The research instruments are discussed including the two separate experimental research instruments used for Study 2 and Study 3, thereafter data preparation and study implementation including the pilot studies are reviewed. Comprehensive validity and reliability assessments are crucial to experimental data analysis, the findings from these tests are outlined in detail. Next, data preparation, including the creation of dummy variables and the statistical analysis undertaken is described. Finally, data from the manipulation tests and mediation assessments are reported.

4.2 THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Rigorous theory development based on strongly designed studies reflecting the scope of existing knowledge is central to the conceptualisation of research studies (Gersten et al., 2005). A common theme that runs through the literature review albeit in different contexts is the significance of role autonomy. Given the influence that autonomy has on important organisational and individual worker outcomes (including performance, job satisfaction, engagement and customer satisfaction) an analytical analysis and deliberation of autonomy as an attracting influence for customer oriented job seekers is an imperative. Role autonomy may be objective i.e., specific or measurable, this is often considered to be the level of autonomy bestowed on workers

by the organisation (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). However, it may also be subjective, this is considered the level of autonomy an individual feels they have in their role (Demerouti, Bakker, and Halbesleben, 2015; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Marinova, Ye, and Singh, 2008; Sousa and Coelho, 2013). Adding to its intricacy, role autonomy may be perceived as either a job demand or a job resource, with its interpretation depending largely on the particular environment and the individual. Although recognised as desirable for most boundary spanning roles (i.e., a job resource), Katz and Kahn (1978) propose that in some cases e.g., a new recruit in a challenging customer facing position may find a surfeit of role autonomy stressful (i.e., a job demand). Autonomy then has a dual dimensionality since it may operate as a job demand or job resource.

Given this understanding of role autonomy and the function it plays in influencing customer oriented workers, coupled with its effect on important outcomes, the job demands-resource (JD-R) model is used to underpin and facilitate research into autonomy's effect on the two research outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions) (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli, 2001). While JD-R is a stress model and therefore not a theory of organisational attraction, the pertinence of the model lies in its flexibility and conceptualisation of job roles into job demands and job resources. The model's tractability has resulted in it being used outside of its original purpose (i.e., job stress), for example, in the area of innovation, work safety and customer orientation (Huhtala and Parzefall, 2007; Matthews, 2017; Nahrgang et al., 2011; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Zablah et al., 2012). The model theorises that every job has contrasting aspects, these factors can be classified as job demands and job resources and these are the building blocks of every job. In other words, jobs are constituted of job demands and job resources and may be applied to all occupational settings, this is supported by extensive research providing evidence for the presence of two coincident processes; a constraining process and a motivational process (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Stock, 2016). Unequivocally, significant job demands can exhaust workers leading to a depletion of energy thereby precipitating a well-being impairment process. Conversely, job resources serve to nurture employee engagement and extra-role behaviour precipitating a motivational environment. Given that job demands and job

resources are foundation elements of a given job, they amalgamate into factors which attract interested job seekers. Accordingly, for the purposes of this research, job demands-resources theory (JD-R) is used to support an integrative framework proposing that autonomy is instrumental in attracting customer oriented job seekers and workers to customer facing roles.

4.3 RESEARCH RATIONALE

The theoretical domain for the research is concentrated in the discipline of customer orientation and draws on literature from the attraction research stream. Specifically, the context considers variables influencing the attraction of customer oriented workers and job seekers. The premise being that people are a service organisation's most important asset and can precipitate a competitive advantage. As delineated in the previous chapters, employee customer orientation has a very particular significance for service organisations, such organisations are typically characterised by high frequency employee-customer interactions where the service experience is essentially co-created by the customer and front line employee (FLE) (Brown, et al., 2002; Menguc et al. 2016). In such environments, the service and the employee often become indistinguishable to customers (FitzPatrick, Varey, Grönroos, and Davey, 2015; Grönroos, 1990; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). Consequently, given this special relationship between service workers and customers, the attraction of customer oriented job seekers is fundamentally important for the long-term sustainability of service organisations (Grizzle et al., 2009; Hennig-Thurau, 2004).

4.4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH – OVERALL AIM

The central tenet of this study is to empirically identify and isolate the conditions under which customer oriented job seekers are attracted to the service sector.

Customer oriented workers are shown to promote stronger engagement (Donavan et al., 2004); competitive differentiation (Babakus et al., 2007); improved performance (Saxe and Weitz, 1982; Zablah, Franke, et al., 2012); exhibit higher job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012) and achieve enhanced customer satisfaction and retention (Menguc et al., 2015). The context therefore for this study is exemplified by Schlager et al. (2011)

who argue that customers' experiences of a service are fundamentally created through employee-customer interactions. Essentially, services are characterised by intangibility, with the service experience co-created by the employee and the customer (Catanzaro et al., 2010; Sousa and Coelho, 2013; Zablah et al., 2012). Zablah et al. (2016) further emphasise the importance and influence of the FLE-customer relationship in a service context from an organisational perspective, employee well-being standpoint and customer loyalty viewpoint.

Explicitly, the study examines whether when role autonomy is high customer oriented job seekers are more attracted to service organisations and or are more likely to pursue a role in service organisations versus low customer oriented job seekers. The literature review demonstrates the importance of autonomy in an FLE context. In their seminal study, Hennig Thurau (2004) describes how role autonomy is a fundamental dimension of a customer oriented worker. More recent research (e.g., Stock, 2016) describes how role autonomy buffers the negative impacts of intense customer interactions on an FLE and Zablah et al. (2016) discusses how FLE-customer dyads perform to a higher level when they have a level of autonomy.

The specific objectives of the study are now outlined:

- Investigate and identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted to a service organisation and (ii) are most likely to pursue a role in a service organisation. While the importance of identifying the right people for customer facing roles has been highlighted in the literature for its positive effect on organisational outcomes (Cross et al., 2007; Edwards, 1991; Paul et al., 2015; Super, 1953; Zablah et al., 2012), there is a dearth of research into what attracts customer oriented workers. Understanding this is important as a customer oriented attitude among front line employees has been shown to improve performance and to enhance customer oriented and altruistic behaviours (Clements and Kamau, 2017; Grizzle et al., 2009; Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Menguc et al., 2015; Stock and Hoyer, 2005; Stock, 2016).

- Establish if when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more (or less) attracted to a service organisation and are more (or less) likely to pursue a role than low customer oriented job seekers. The important relationship between employee customer orientation and role autonomy in a service organisation context has been discussed widely (e.g., Menguc et al., 2015; Spivack and Milosevic, 2018; Wheatley, 2017; Zablah et al., 2016). Wall et al. (2008) posits that customer oriented FLEs need to have their organisations' support to act autonomously and fulfil their job tasks. Furthermore, role autonomy has also been shown to buffer the negative effects of high intensity customer interactions for FLEs (Matthews et al., 2017). This objective will help establish whether role autonomy attracts customer oriented job seekers to service organisation.

- Probe the combined influence of autonomy and other job and organisational attributes including customer contact level, job complexity and organisational customer orientation on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). Recruitment literature illustrates the complexity in understanding the motivations involved in attracting workers with some factors acting as mediating or moderating influences over other factors (Cable and Turban, 2005; Harold and Nolan, 2010; Thurer et al., 2016). Previous research into customer orientation has shown that customer contact may be an important factor in attracting customer oriented workers (Dalal et al., 2018; Donavan et al., 2004; Vitrino, 2018). Kristof-Brown and Guay (2011) investigate person-environment fit and draw on image congruence which holds that individuals are attracted to organisations with similar values to themselves, thus indicating that a customer oriented culture will attract customer oriented job seekers. Autonomy has been shown to be important to customer oriented workers, Stock (2016) argues that because of the nature of their role, where decisions need to be made quickly, customer facing workers need autonomy to do their job and because such workers are inclined to meet customer needs, they want autonomy. This leads to improved outcomes including performance, self-efficacy and customer satisfaction (Grizzle et al., 2009; Sekiguchi et al,. 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). This is also supported by Hobfoll (2001) who argues that resources

accumulate; in other words, the more resources a worker has, the more they will accrue.

4.4.1 Addressing the Research Objectives

Objective 1: Investigate and identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted to a service organisation and (ii) are most likely to pursue a front line employee (FLE) role in a service organisation.

Study 1, the exploratory study informs objective 1 through interviewing customer service champions and their managers to establish what factors attract customer oriented workers and what factors most influence them in pursuing an FLE role. The information gleaned from Study 1 informs the Studies 2 and 3 which further address this objective.

Objective 2: Establish if when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more (or less) attracted to a service organisation and are more (or less) likely to pursue an FLE role than low customer oriented job seekers.

Studies 2 and 3 address objective 2 by testing the influence of role autonomy on the behaviours and attitudes of customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented workers. Role autonomy is identified in the literature as important to all FLE workers and its importance to customer oriented workers in particular is established in Study 1

Objective 3: Examine the combined influence of autonomy and other job demands and job resources; these are (i) customer contact level, (ii) job complexity and (iii) organisational customer orientation on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions).

Studies 2 and 3 address objective 3. Study 2 tests the influence of role autonomy and job complexity on the behaviours and attitudes of customer oriented workers.

Study 3 tests the effect of role autonomy and customer contact level on the behaviours and attitudes of high vs. low customer oriented workers.

4.5 METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

A methodological perspective or research paradigm is a philosophical framework that guides how research is conducted and is based on people's philosophies and assumptions about reality and the nature of knowledge (Collis and Hussey, 2010). According to Kuhn (1970, p. 10) paradigms are a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be addressed and:

"are universally recognised scientific achievements that for a time provide solutions to practitioners".

This demonstrates how paradigms (notably in the social sciences) are believed to evolve organically or as part of a structured process over time as people's ideas about the nature of knowledge and reality changes. Therefore, changes in paradigms can evolve organically or as part of a structured process to address a specific problem or concept. However, it is generally accepted that two primary and opposing philosophical perspectives or paradigms exist as extremes along a line of models:

"moving along the continuum, the features and assumptions of one are replaced by the next" (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 42).

These two foremost philosophical doctrines are positivism (i.e., the natural sciences) and interpretivism (i.e., the social sciences). The two perspectives differ in their underlying assumptions about ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology (Holden and Lynch, 2004). Smith (1983, pp. 10-11) when discussing the polarity between the two perspectives argues that:

"in quantitative research facts act to constrain our beliefs; while in the case of interpretive research beliefs determine what should count as facts".

The core assumption of positivism is that reality is singular and objective and is not affected by the act of investigation with its goal being the discovery of theories based on empirical research. Under a positivist perceptive, Pachauri (2002) argues that the objective of research is to observe information empirically, examine causality and establish generalizable laws advancing knowledge. Practitioners focus on theories to explain and predict social phenomena and apply logical reasoning with precision,

objectivity and rigour underpinning their approach rather than subjectivity and intuitive means (Creswell, 2003). A core strength of the perspective is that it facilitates an efficient, effective method of collecting data from large samples and crucially identifies if causality is evident.

Conversely, interpretivism (also labelled as non-positivism, subjectivism or phenomenology is based on the principles of idealism stemming from work associated primarily with Kant (1795); at its core, it holds that individuals are intricate, unique and complex (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). The interpretivist view is that individuals experience and understand the same reality in different ways and have their own specific reasons for acting in the world, consequently, scientific methods are not an appropriate or adequate means of study. Its focus is strongly centred on understanding phenomena by examining them in their entire context (Holden and Lynch, 2004). Interpretivism is underpinned by specific assumptions including an understanding that the world is subjective, the researcher is an active part of the study and that the research is value-laden and to understand human action, one needs to achieve empathetic understanding and view the world through the eyes of the relevant actors. An advantage of this approach is that it attains validity with findings with deep meaning and insights albeit generally with small samples not derived from statistical analysis.

4.5.1 Pragmatism

Despite overt differences between the two main paradigms, some practitioners argue that instead of being constrained by a single paradigm, researchers should be willing to adopt and mix methods from different paradigms i.e., a pragmatic approach. Holt and Goulding (2014) argue in favour of 'methodological liberalism' whereby the methodologies should be tailored to the study requirements and that specific methods should be chosen on the basis that they fully address the research question and should not be constrained to a particular paradigm on ideological grounds. This view supports the idea that a mixed method approach leads to stronger research as it precipitates convergent validation of research results through greater internal cross-checking. Pragmatists assert this allows for weaknesses of one paradigm to be off-set against the strengths of the other. Accordingly, this pluralist approach is an attempt to cross the

divide between paradigms and embrace their differences in support of ultimately realising advanced knowledge. Consequently, while this study is predominantly grounded in the positivist tradition, it also encompasses an interpretivist element and therefore represents a blending of philosophical assumptions from both paradigms. As a result, both qualitative and quantitative data are generated leading to more rounded and robust findings.

4.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is described by Vogt (2011) as the science and art of planning and conducting studies to obtain the most valid findings. From an implementation perspective, it is a framework specifying the procedures required to obtain the necessary information to structure and address the research problem (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004). This research primarily adheres to a positivist philosophy while using an exploratory study in the interpretivist tradition to gain familiarity and insight and so helping to refine the research problem. Accordingly, the research adopts a two-phased approach employing exploratory and explanatory methods, the objective is to produce more rounded, meaningful data. While using an exploratory study in an interpretivist tradition to build knowledge around the problem and identity the key variables, the design primarily employs positivist methodologies, as a coherent research strategy will ensure that the methodology and design reflect the core assumptions of the main paradigm used in the study.

4.6.1 Explanatory Research

As this research is pragmatic, although largely based on a positivist philosophy, the methodology chosen to best address the research question and test the hypotheses is an explanatory research approach. Causal or explanatory research facilitates the testing of phenomena in a systematic and clearly defined quantitative method. This is an attempt to connect ideas to understand cause and effect, where one variable gets manipulated to see if it changes the outcome. Consequently, such an approach which facilitates testing research hypotheses in a highly structured and formal manner is most appropriate to examining conditions that predict what attracts customer oriented job seekers and workers to service organisations.

The initial phase of the study is exploratory (i.e., Study 1), the objective being to identify the views and attitudes of a group of customer service champions (i.e., customer oriented workers) and their managers on what attracted them to their organisation and what it is that they enjoy about their job. The value in this method is that it helps to build an understanding of the problem at the early stages of the project. This phase will inform The findings of this phase will feed into the second stage, the quantitative phase (i.e., Study 2 and 3), which will use an explanatory research design; employing an experimental approach. This phase of the study empirically tests specific conditions that best predict what attracts customer oriented workers and job seekers by conducting experiments where specific conditions are manipulated and empirically tested. Experimental research is recognised as being suited to testing phenomenon within structured and tightly defined boundaries (Gersten et al., 2005). Accordingly, the experimental studies will empirically test the impact of role autonomy and other organisational attractors for customer oriented job candidates. This strategy of exploring the variables initially with exploratory research and then conducting experimental research to increase knowledge and explain the phenomenon is known as explanatory research. For this study, experimental research plays a pivotal role in testing the hypotheses, the following section presents the principles of experimental research designs.

4.6.2 Experimental Research

Keppel, Saufley, and Tokunaga (1992) argue that scientific information is an organised body of knowledge derived from a rigorous, planned and coherent set of activities encapsulated in a scientific research method. This is understood as a systematic and structured process used to rigorously evaluate empirical observations while minimising bias from faulty or false reasoning. Ramos-Álvarez, Moreno-Fernández, and Catena (2008) posit that scientific research expresses a conceptual domain which is related to theories and research hypotheses and an empirical domain which in turn is linked to observations and data and the connection between the two is realised by the research method which is linked to the research hypotheses. Explaining the approach further, Maxwell and Delaney (2004) describe how experimental research fundamentally follows three intricate stages; conceptualisation, methodology, and

statistical analysis. Accordingly, data and scientific knowledge which emerges from research adhering to the tenets of the scientific method is recognised as objective, accurate, reliable and replicable. Given its rigorous nature, experimental research is recognised as complex and fraught with potential problems. Shadish, Cook, and Campbell's (2002) validity theory argues that research conclusions can potentially be questioned by concerns around validity. Such concerns include the validity of the construct, i.e., reasons that may produce incorrect inferences on the construct such as poor construct definition, or problems with empirical definitions linked to the construct. In addition, the value of the design depends on internal validity (i.e., why the inferences on the effect of an independent variable can be incorrect), and external (i.e., how the findings can be generalised across other populations and contexts). Concerns around the control of variables and sampling techniques employed is also of central importance. Ramos-Álvarez et al. (2008) assert that experimental studies are a two-stage process comprised of a structural element (i.e., statistical design) and strategic element (i.e., successful manipulation and control of variables). These stages are derived from and connected by the research plan which plainly states the problem being investigated.

Addressing statistical and strategic motivations, experimental research essentially is a methodology employed to investigate the relationship between two variables, in such a design (e.g., in the current research), the independent variable(s) is deliberately manipulated to observe the effect on the dependent variable(s). Yaremko, et al. (1986, p. 72) explain that in an experiment, the researcher controls the application of the treatment and one or more of the independent variables are manipulated to observe their effects on one or more dependent variables. The goal therefore of experimental research is to demonstrate that any changes in a dependent variable are the direct result of implementing a specified intervention (Gersten et al., 2005). Importantly, for the current research, experimental research permits causal relationships to be identified and is conducted in a systematic manner. Shadish et al. (2002) postulate that experiments are particularly suited to studying causal relationships as no other scientific method matches the characteristics of causal relationships as completely.
Drawing on philosopher John Stuart Mill's (1869) work, Shadish and colleagues explain that a causal relationship exists if: (1) the cause preceded the effect; (2) the

cause was related to the effect and (3) there is no alternative plausible explanation for the effect. In the current research, the presumed cause (i.e., role autonomy and customer contact – Study 3) are manipulated and the resulting outcome (i.e., effect on job pursuit and organisational attraction) are observed, this is typically how such experiments are structured (Shadish et al., 2002). Furthermore, in experimental research, variation of the cause is observed to see if this results in variation of the effect and any other plausible causes of the effect are considered during the experiment. The power of experimental research is highlighted by Feuer et al. (2002, p. 8) who argue that experimentation is the single best methodological approach for discovering systematic relationships between actions and their outcome. Formulated by Fisher (1936), the basic principles of experimental research require a number of conditions to be considered including randomisation, the appropriateness of the sample, replication and blocking.

4.7 HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses for both studies follow from the JD-R model's underlying assertion which observes that job demands and job resources define all job roles. Based on the evaluation of the customer orientation and attraction literature and the qualitative findings, it is clear that customer service champions place considerable emphasis on the level of decision-making authority (i.e., a job resource) in their job while key job demands in a service role include customer contact and job skill (Demerouti, Bakker, and Halbesleben, 2015; Den Hartog and Belschak, 2012; Lopes, Calapez, and Lopes, 2015; Sousa and Coelho, 2013). The research hypotheses for both studies are also informed by fit theory which suggests that workers are attracted to organisations based on their perceptions of congruence between both the organisation and their own personal values (Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Schneider, 2008; Slaughter et al,. 2005; Zablah et al., 2012).

4.7.1 Study 2 – Research Hypotheses

Grounded on the observations gleaned from the literature review and exploratory research findings in Study 1 (detailed in chapter 7), the following hypotheses are presented for Study 2. The statistical models are presented in Figures 3 and 4

S2H1: *High levels of customer orientation among job seekers are positively related to attitudinal job outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction) for customer facing roles in service organisations.*

S2H2: *High levels of customer orientation among job seekers are positively related to behavioural job outcomes (i.e., job pursuit intentions) for customer facing roles in service organisations.*

S2H3: *There will be a two-way interaction between autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction to service organisations.*

S2H4: *There will be a two-way interaction between autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards service organisations.*

S2H5: *(i) Customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role. The positive relationship between autonomy, customer orientation and organisational attraction is further moderated by job skill/complexity such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower.*

S2H6: *(i) Customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions (ii) with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role. The positive relationship between autonomy, customer orientation and job pursuit intentions is further moderated by job complexity such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower.*

S2H7: *There will be a positive relationship between high levels of customer orientation and factors such as company reputation with organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.*

FIGURE 3 STATISTICAL MODEL – DV: ORGANISATIONAL ATTRACTION

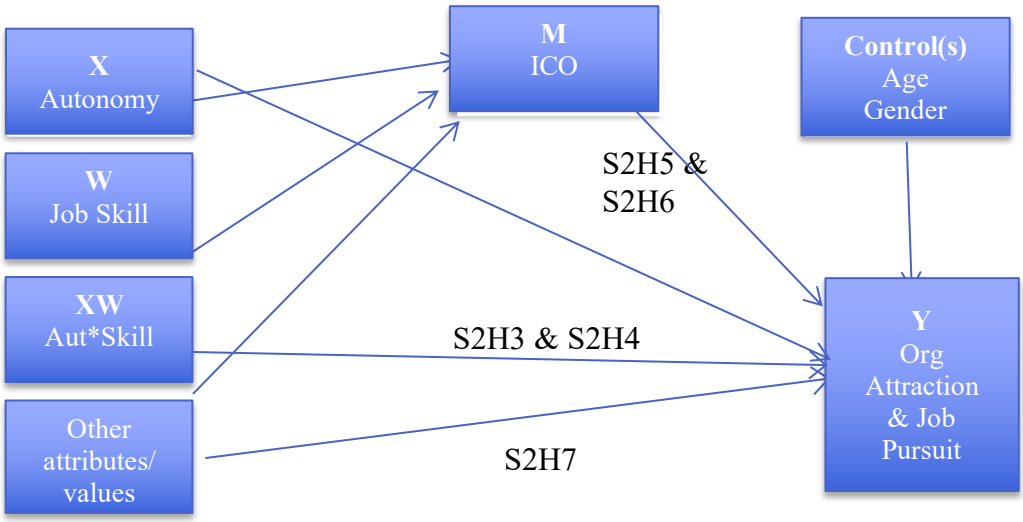
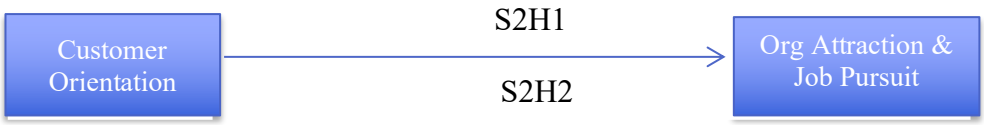


FIGURE 4 EFFECT OF CO ON ATTRACTION



4.7.2 Study 3 – Research Hypotheses

Study 3 extends Study 2 by introducing another variable proven to influence customer oriented workers i.e., customer contact (e.g., Brown et al., 2002; Liao and Subramony, 2009; Menguc et al., 2015). The statistical model for Study 3 is presented in Figure 5.

S3H8 *Autonomy and customer contact time will predict customer oriented workers' organisational attraction towards customer service roles in service organisations.*

S3H9 *Autonomy and customer contact time will predict customer oriented job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards customer service roles in service organisations.*

S3H10 *There will be a three-way effect of autonomy, customer contact time and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction towards service organisations.*

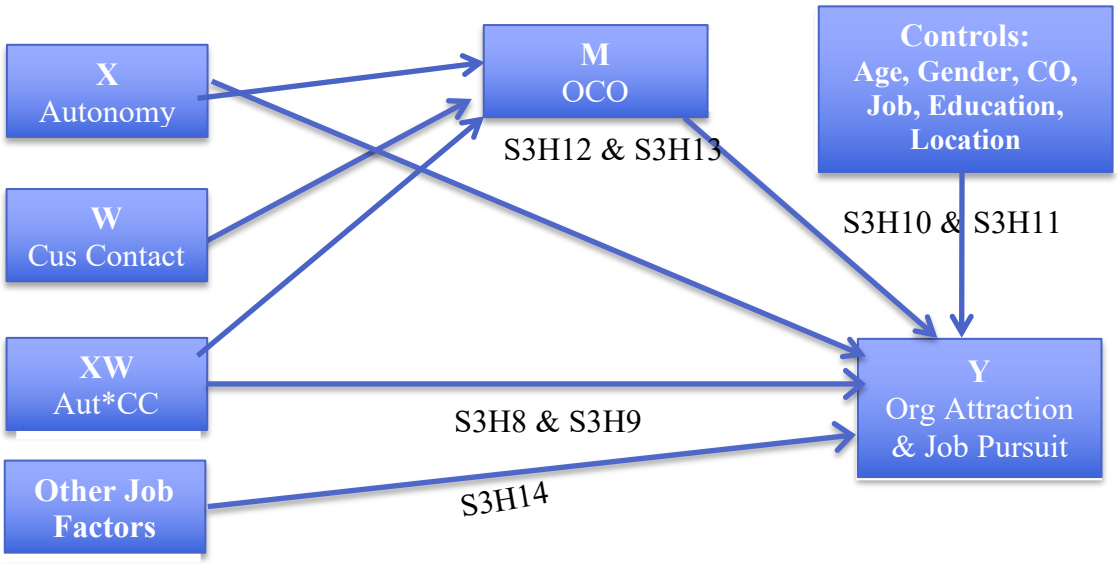
S3H11 *There will be a three-way interaction between autonomy, customer contact time and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards service organisations.*

S3H12 *This hypothesis makes two predictions (i) organisational customer orientation climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with customer contact playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and the relationship is weaker when customer contact is lower.*

S3H13 *This hypothesis makes two predictions (i) Organisational customer orientation climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions with (ii) customer contact playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and the relationship is weaker when customer contact is lower.*

S3H14 *There will be a positive relationship between high levels of (individual) customer orientation and factors such as company reputation with organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.*

FIGURE 5 EFFECT OF CO ON ORGANISATION ATTRACTION & JOB PURSUIT



4.7.3 Link between Hypotheses and Research Objectives

Table 5 presents each of the research objectives and the hypotheses which address each of the objectives.

TABLE 5 OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

Objective & Hypothesis (Testing Objectives)
OBJECTIVE 1
Investigate & identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted and (ii) are most likely to pursue a role in a service organisation.
S2H1 (Study 2): high levels of CO among job seekers positively related to attitudinal job outcomes for FLE roles in service organisations. **S2H2** (Study 2): high levels of CO among job seekers positively related to behavioural job outcomes for FLE roles in service organisations. **S2H7** (Study 2): there will be a positive relationship between high levels of CO and (i) customer contact time, (ii) decision making authority, (iii) company reputation, (iv) organisational customer orientation with organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. **S3H14** (Study 3): there will be a positive relationship between high levels of CO and factors such as organisational reputation with organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.
OBJECTIVE 2
Establish if when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more (or less) attracted to a service organisation and are more (or less) likely to pursue a role than low customer oriented job seekers.
S2H3 (Study 2): there will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction to a service organisation. **S2H4** (Study 2): there will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation. **S3H8** (Study 3): Autonomy and customer contact time will predict customer oriented workers' attraction towards FLE roles in a service organisation. **S3H9** (Study 3): Autonomy and customer contact time will predict customer oriented workers' job pursuit intentions towards FLE roles in a service organisation.
OBJECTIVE 3
Probe the combined influence of autonomy and other job and organisational attributes including customer contact level, job complexity and OCO on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions).
S2H5 (Study 2): CO will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower. **S2H6** (Study 2): CO will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower.

Objective & Hypothesis (Testing Objectives)
S3H10 (Study 3): there will be a three way effect of role autonomy, customer contact time and CO in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction towards a service organisation. **S3H11** (Study 3): there will be a three way effect of role autonomy, customer contact time and CO in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation. **S3H12** (Study 3): Organisational customer orientation climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction with customer contact playing a moderating role, such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and weaker when customer contact is lower. **S3H13** (Study 3): Organisational customer orientation climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions with customer contact playing a moderating role, such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and weaker when customer contact is lower.

4.8 STUDY 1 - DESIGN

The primary research commences with an exploratory investigation into the research subject, the aim is to provide insight into what it is that attracts customer oriented job seekers to service organisations through a thorough analysis of the literature. This is followed by a tranche of in-depth interviews with customer service champions and managers involved with recruitment and management of customer facing employees. The objective being to probe the problem further and explore some of the key insights emerging from the review of the literature.

4.8.1 In-depth Interviews

The first stage of the primary research involved conducting a series of in-depth interviews with two distinct groups of participants; customer service champions (i.e., customer oriented workers identified by their employer as excelling in their customer facing role) and managers within the organisations. Conducting in-depth interviews is a method of collecting primary data whereby the selected participants are asked questions to establish what they do, feel or think. There are three types of interview techniques possible; structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Boyce and Neale, 2006). In a structured interview only questions that appear on the questionnaire guideline are addressed and the questions are more likely to be closed questions with a set of pre-determined answers. This approach allows for greater ease of comparability across the interviews but its inflexibility does not facilitate yielding

a high quantity of rich data (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Boyce and Neale (2006) reason that in-depth interviews provide valuable information when supplementing other methods of data collection and the acceptable rule on sample size is that when the same stories, themes and issues emerge during the interviews, then the sample size is sufficient.

Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher greater flexibility, similar to structured interviews, the questions are pre-determined but if necessary, the interviewer can ask additional questions to gather more detailed information or explore a different (but relevant) topic that arises in the course of the interview. In this scenario, researchers may not have prepared questions and instead use a topic guide. Unstructured interviews are more closely associated with interpretivism and unlike the other interview methods, they are more free-flowing and organic in nature. This method can yield rich information but makes comparison of questionnaires more difficult. While a positivist approach would suggest a structured interview based on a strictly pre-defined questionnaire, for this study a semi-structured approach was chosen. The value in this method is that while the researcher gathers information according to a carefully pre-defined set of relevant questions, it also provides scope for exploring tangential or peripheral but relevant topics that may arise during the conversation but were not on the original interview guideline. A protocol and two interview guides were developed to guide the implementation of the interview process, these are presented in Appendix A. In designing questionnaires, it is imperative that the target audience is kept in mind (Boyce and Neale, 2006).

For the present research, the sample of participants comprised experienced people with a high degree of knowledge about the topic allowing for a high level of complexity. During the initial contact phase (initiated by phone and email) the potential participants were advised of the purpose, scope and duration of the interview and the arrangements for maintaining the confidentiality of the data. Each face-to-face interview took place at the participants' place of work. At this stage, the purpose for the research was again outlined and any questions about the research were addressed. Written permission was obtained from each interviewee allowing their interview to be recorded using a digital voice recorder with their agreement that the data was to be

used for research purposes. As the overall research is positivist, all interview artefacts were replicated for each interview and the interviews were conducted in the same way to avoid the possibility of researcher bias (Gummer and Blumenstiel, 2018; Pickett, Cullen, Bushway, Chiricos, and Alpert, 2018; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff, 2012; Tourangeau, 2018). The same questions were posed in the same manner and it was established that each question was understood by each respondent uniformly thereby avoiding ambiguity or stimulus equivalence, the approach used is outlined in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6 REDUCING INTERVIEWER BIAS (adapted from Podsakoff et al., 2003)

- Interviewer to read each question as worded in the interview guide using the same intonation and emphasis.
- Read questions in identical order.
- Ask every question that applies.
- Transcribe exactly what the respondent says.
- Do not answer on the respondent's behalf.
- Show interest, but not approval or disapproval.
- Ensure the answer is adequate.

4.8.2 Sample

A mix of service organisations which demonstrate a clear customer oriented focus were invited to participate in the research study. It was important for the study design that the firms chosen had a strong customer focus, therefore firms which had won industry awards for customer service were approached. Industry bodies awarding excellent service in Ireland include 'Customer Service Excellence Ireland'; 'AIM Awards' (Marketing Institute All Ireland Marketing Awards); 'Irish Customer Contact and Shared Services Awards'; 'Wexford Business Awards'. An assessment of the previous nominees and winners of these awards was carried out and a number of these were subsequently invited to take part in the research. A wide variety of service firms participated in this research, these included SME organisations and corporate firms across a range of service industry sectors including retail, financial services, hospitality, recruitment, training, on-line retailer/reseller, software engineering, design consultancy, management consultancy and telecommunications. The objective being to gain insight into the organisational attractors motivating customer oriented

individuals and to gain an understanding of the importance of customer oriented workers for customer focused organisations.

4.8.3 Interviews- Implementation and Procedure

As outlined, interviews were conducted with managers tasked with recruiting and managing customer-facing employees and separately with customer service champions from within the same organisations. The interviews commenced on 13th April 2015 and most concluded on 21st May 2015, with an additional manager interview conducted on 22nd January 2016. Interviews took place in the respondents' place of work, interviewees gave their written consent to the recording of the interview and its use in the research. Interview artefacts (e.g., interview questions, written consent, interviewer interaction)were constant in each interview.

Managers and customer service champions were interviewed to provide an understanding that considered both parties' perspectives. The purpose of the interviews was two-fold, firstly, to establish the company perspective on attracting customer oriented candidates and secondly, to determine what customer service champions look for in an employer organisation and what it is that they enjoy about their job. Ultimately, the objective of these in-depth interviews was to identify the conditions for empirical examination in the experimental research phase.

Two separate sets of questions were developed, one version for the managers and one for the FLEs (Appendix A). In brief, the objective of the 'manager' interviews is to establish to what extent and in what circumstances customer orientation and customer oriented workers are important to the organisation and how the organisation seeks to identify and recruit customer oriented workers. While the objective of the 'customer service champion' interviews was to ascertain what it was these workers loved about their job and what attracted them to the organisation. A range of service organisations, diverse in size and in industry service sector was targeted to help ensure generalizability of the results and extrapolation of the findings. Nine organisations ranging from large corporate entities with international presence to smaller SME firms agreed to take part in the project, these organisations are presented in Figure 7 Further details of the participating organisations are presented in Appendix D.

FIGURE 7 PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

Corporate Organisations		
Bank of Ireland (Financial Services)	**Bearing Point** (Professional Services – Consultancy)	**DoneDeal** (Professional Services)
Eir (Telecommunications)	**Ericsson** (Electronic Engineering)	**Meteor** (Mobile Comms.)
SME Organisations		
Chevron Training (Online Training and Recruitment Firm)	**Monart Destination Spa** (Hospitality/Tourism)	**Sam McCauley Chemists** (Retail: Pharmacy)

4.8.4 Qualitative Data Analysis Method

Speziale, Streubert, and Carpenter (2011) discuss how qualitative research approaches can be placed on a continuum indicating the degree of transformation of data during the data analysis process from description to interpretation. Thematic content analysis is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data (Guest, Namey, Taylor, Eley, and McKenna, 2017) and is a commonly used approach although it employs a relatively lower level of interpretation than methods such as grounded theory or hermeneutic phenomenology (Anderson, 2007). Thematic content analysis analytically examines narrative materials from interviews or life stories by compartmentalising the text into smaller units of content and submitting them to descriptive treatment (Parker et al., 2018). The method requires a deep familiarity with the data and coding the entire text. This level of coding facilitates undercovering recurring themes and broader patterns of meaning.

Before interpretation, the process involves further reviewing the themes to ensure the themes fit the data. For this study, the qualitative data was analysed using thematic content analysis (Anderson, 2007; Guest et al., 2017). Data management was facilitated by NVivo 10 for Mac, this is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package designed to analyse and manage rich text-based information, where multi-layered levels of analysis are required. 16 interviews were conducted (separately) with (i) managers, and (ii) customer service champions in nine organisations. In keeping with thematic content analysis, each interview was transcribed and re-read a number of times before coding to identify important and

recurring themes. Most of the interviews lasted approximately 35 minutes, and most took place in April and May 2015, (one interview took place in January 2016 due to time-pressures for the particular interviewee). Table 6 provides further details of the manager interviews (e.g., location, date, duration). Table 7 presents the same information for the customer service champions. The customer service champion respondents are coded 'A-I' and the manager respondents are coded 'J-R').

TABLE 6 MANAGER INTERVIEWS (DATE, DURATION AND LOCATION)

Company	Interviewee Title	Interviewee Pseudonym	Location	Interview Duration	Date
Bank of Ireland	Head of HR Retail Banking	Q	Mayor Street Lower, Dublin 1	35 mins	06/05/2015
BearingPoint	HR Director UK & Ireland	L	Montague House, Adelaide Rd, Saint Kevin's, Dublin 2	40 mins	07/05/2015
Chevron Training	MD Chevron Training	J	3 Anne St, Ferrybank South, Wexford	65 mins	21/04/2015
DoneDeal	Customer Experience Manager	M	DoneDeal, HQ, Wexford	95 mins	17/04/2015
Eir	Talent Acquisition Business Partner	R	Eir, Huston Gate, Dublin	35 mins	13/04/2015
Ericsson	Key Account Manager	K	Ericsson HQ, Beech Hill, Clonskeagh. Dublin	30 mins	15/05/2015
Meteror	Head of Digital Operations	P	Eir, Huston Gate, Dublin	30 mins	13/04/2015
Monart	HR Director	N	Monart, Forgelands, The Still, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford	35 mins	20/05/2015
Sam McCauley Chemists	Commercial Director	O	Sam McCauley, HQ, Ferrybank, Wexford	30 mins	16/04/2015

TABLE 7 CUSTOMER SERVICE CHAMPIONS INTERVIEWS: DATE, DURATION, LOCATION

Company	Interviewee Title	Interviewee Pseudonym	Location	Interview Duration	Date
BearingPoint	Business Development Manager	I	Montague House, Adelaide Rd, Saint Kevin's, Dublin 2	40 mins	07/05/2015
Bank of Ireland	Head of Customer Experience	C	Mayor Street Lower, Dublin 1	35 mins	06/05/2015
Chevron*	MD Chevron Training	F	3 Anne St, Ferrybank South, Wexford	65 mins	21/04/2015
DoneDeal	Customer Experience Team	E	DoneDeal, HQ, Wexford	60 mins	17/04/2015
Eir	Head Customer Communications	H	Eir, Huston Gate, Dublin	35 mins	13/04/2015
Ericsson	Director Customer Operations, Ireland	B	Ericsson HQ, Beech Hill, Clonskeagh. Dublin 4.	30 mins	15/05/2015
Monart	Waitress	D	Monart, Forgelands, The Still, Enniscorthy, Wexford	30 mins	20/05/2015
Meteor*	Head of Digital Operations	A	Eir, Huston Gate, Dublin	30 mins	13/04/2015
Sam McCauley Chemists	Customer Service Assistant	G	Sam McCauley, HQ, Ferrybank, Wexford	30 mins	16/04/2015

*the manger and customer service champion interviewees for Chevron and Meteor were the same person, both interviewees had extensive experience in customer service and management.

4.9 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PROCESS

Following a review of the literature and an exploratory study (Study focused service organisations, variables identified as being central in attracting customer oriented job seekers to service organisations were empirically tested. The second and third phases of the research study employ experimental methods to empirically investigate the research objectives. The study design is factorial, Study 2 has one treatment condition (autonomy); Study 3 has two treatment conditions: (autonomy; customer contact). There are two levels (high: low) within each condition (and random assignment across

treatments). The experimental studies are informed by the exploratory research, the review of marketing and attraction literature and are underpinned by the job demand-resources model (JD-R) (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007).

4.9.1 Experimental Design

Design refers to the conceptual framework within which the experiment is conducted. Experimental design is a procedure that enables the researcher to test hypotheses by reaching valid conclusions about relationships between independent and dependent variables. This methodology facilitates the investigation of relationships between variables, where the research requires the independent variable to be manipulated to observe the effect on the dependent variable (Collis and Hussey, 2010). In selecting the most appropriate design for the research, Kervin (1995) argues that three issues need to be considered when considering the experiment's design:

- Number of groups.
- Nature of the groups, this refers to the formation of the group and will indicate whether random allocation or matched cases is necessary.
- Timing of experiments for repeated measures design.

Taking these factors into consideration, the design adopted for the two experimental studies is factorial as this facilitates testing for relationships between the variables and identifies whether an interaction is present whereby the effect of one independent variable changes across the levels of another independent variable.

4.9.2 Factorial Study Design

The theory base for the current research is that the person interacts with the work situation thereby producing an effect which influences organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. An experimental design such as factorial design is concerned with the analysis of data generated from an experiment. In particular, factorial design facilitates assessing the interaction between two factors and is widely used in different fields of research (Jan et al., 2016). The specific questions that the experiment is intended to answer must be clearly identified before carrying out the experiment. It is

expected this approach will allow a more accurate description and investigation of the influencing factors.

4.9.3 Model Structure

The two experimental studies use a mediated moderation model approach. A mediator variable explains the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. Moderated mediation occurs when the effect of the treatment 'A' on the mediator and or partial effect 'B' on the dependent variable depend in turn on levels of a moderator variable (Baron and Kenny, 1986). In Studies 2 and 3 the independent variable is 'role autonomy'; and the dependent variables are 'job pursuit intentions' and 'organisational attraction'. The moderator variable in Study 2 is 'job skill', the mediator is 'individual customer orientation' (ICO). In Study 3, the moderator variable is 'customer contact'; the mediator is 'organisational customer orientation' (OCO). In a moderated mediation model, mediation is first established, followed by an investigation of whether the mediation effect that describes the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables is moderated by different levels of the moderator variable (Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes, 2007).

4.9.3.1 Demonstrating Mediation

In order for mediation to be established, the reduction in variance explained by the independent variable (i.e., role autonomy) must be significant (Hayes and Preacher, 2010). It is imperative to demonstrate a significant reduction in variance which is explained by the independent variable before establishing mediation (Hayes and Preacher, 2010; Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt, 2005; Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes, 2007). Significance can be determined by one of a number of statistical tests, the tests employed in this study are Baron and Kenny (1986) and Hayes and Preacher (2010); Hayes (2013). Hayes (2013) uses bootstrapping (a resampling method) to construct a confidence interval for the indirect effect of the mediator, using an analytical tool (i.e., PROCESS macro) to calculate bootstrapping within SPSS. The 'PROCESS' macro produces point estimates and confidence intervals which facilitates the assessment of the significance (or non-significance) of a specific mediation effect. Point estimates

identify the mean over the number of bootstrapped samples, and if zero does not fall between the resulting confidence intervals of the bootstrapping method, the conclusion can be drawn that is there is a significant mediation effect to report (Hayes, 2013). The model components are detailed in the following sections.

4.9.3.2 Independent Variable

The independent variable is the variable manipulated to determine the value of the study's dependent variables. The independent variable in this research is role autonomy, which is accepted in the literature as being important for customer facing workers. The job demands-control model (Karasek, 1979) identifies autonomy as an important resource for customer facing workers and describes how it affects the relationship between job demands and behavioural outcomes (Miao and Evans, 2013). Stock (2016) argues that autonomy, induced by the firm or customers, weakens the detrimental effects of a loss of resources owing to employee boredom due to a lack of job challenge. Stock (2016), building on studies including Hennig-Thurau (2004), Karasek and Theorell (1990) and Zablah et al. (2016) uses JD-R theory to ground her study and posits that autonomy induced by either the firm or customers increases both command and control over work goals, as it affords FLEs the freedom to act and achieve their customer service related goals at the service encounter.

As the detrimental effects of lack of challenge can be buffered by role autonomy (Smulders and Nijhuis, 1999), the well-being of a person in a job with low challenges should improve when he has higher rather than lower autonomy. Furthermore, the job demands-control model predicts that jobs lacking challenges but offering high job autonomy draw less energy from a person than those for which challenges and autonomy are low (Karasek and Theorell, 1990).

4.9.3.3 Dependent Variable(s)

A dependent variable is the variable being tested in an experiment, in effect, the dependent variable is 'dependent' on the independent variable. As the experiment changes the independent variable, the change in the dependent variable is observed

and recorded. This present research concentrates on establishing factors which influence perceptions of customer oriented workers of the study's two dependent variables, i.e., organisational attraction and intentions to pursue a role. Significantly, Aiman-Smith et al. (2001) contend that being attracted to an organisation and job pursuit intentions are distinct and separate concepts. This research follows the approach of Aiman-Smith et al. (2001) and operationalises organisational attraction as an attitudinal concept and job pursuit intention as a behavioural concept.

4.9.3.4 Mediator Variable

For both studies, the mediating effect of customer orientation is examined, in Study 2 individual CO is predicted to be a mediating variable. As outlined in chapter 2, customer orientation is defined as an employee's tendency or predisposition to meet customer needs in an on-the-job context (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata, 2002, p. 111). As a surface-level personality trait, it resides within a hierarchical personality structure and results from a combination of elemental, compound and situational traits, as well as the specific work environment. A precedent for employing customer orientation as a mediator exists in the research, for example, Karatepe and Aga (2012) investigate CO's role as a mediator in influencing important job outcomes. Their research establishes that customer orientation has a full mediating role in the relationship between job resourcefulness and role-prescribed customer service.

Study 3 investigates whether organisational customer orientation (OCO) mediates the relationship between role autonomy and job pursuit and organisational attraction. For service organisations, a critical element of the environment is the unit's service climate (Schneider, Ehrhart, Mayer, Saltz, and Niles-Jolly, 2005; Schneider et al., 2002). The importance of unit customer orientation climate and its relationship with customer oriented behaviours of service employees has been widely discussed in marketing literature (Jiang and Iles, 2011; Paul et al., 2015). The influence of unit service climate on customer oriented workers' performance and altruistic behaviours was examined by Grizzle et al. (2009). The study evaluated the moderating effects of OCO conceptualised as organisational climate and climate strength on the relationship between service workers' level of CO and their performance of customer-oriented

behaviours (COBs) and found that customer oriented workers' performance effects are inhibited in work climates that do not support customer orientation

The influence of unit CO climate has been previously explored by Martin (2016) using person–situation theory to investigate unit CO climate from the perspective of new recruits. Significantly, the findings of the study suggest an important moderating role for CO climate with higher degrees of unit CO climate appearing to offer customer-oriented employees the opportunity to act on their inclinations toward satisfying customer needs resulting in the increased performance of customer oriented behaviours. This idea is consistent with Pervin's (1983, 1989) goals model, which proposes that workers are compelled to accomplish goals and their specific environment offers either reinforcement or barriers to the successful accomplishment of their goals. Building on this, Stock (2016) argues that there is a positive cross-level interaction between workers' levels of customer orientation and organisational climate level which can be legitimately described as synergistic since the environment supports and increases the effect of customer orientation.

In her recent study into front line employee burnout, Stock (2016) describes how an employee's work situation signals whether customer oriented behaviours are encouraged (i.e., the unit CO climate is high) or discouraged (i.e., the unit CO climate is low). If for example the unit climate is low, then, individual levels of CO will have a reduced effect on the performance of customer oriented behaviours as the environment deters the performance of customer oriented behaviours. In other words, the climate mediates the relationship between individual CO and the performance of customer oriented behaviours. The third study's use of OCO as a mediator conforms to the body of research (i.e., in particular, Stock, 2016) that employs organisational climate as a mediator of individual and organisational resources (Stock, 2016).

4.9.3.5 Moderator Variable

A moderator variable is generally considered to be a third variable that affects the strength of the relationship between a dependent and independent variable. A moderator may be a qualitative (e.g., gender) or a quantitative (e.g., level of customer

contact) variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relationship between an independent variable (or predictor variable) and a dependent variable (or criterion variable). Specifically, within a correlational analysis framework, a moderator is a third variable (e.g., customer contact) that affects the zero-order correlation between two other variables such as autonomy and job pursuit/organisational attraction - this refers to the fact that Pearson's r is symmetric: correlation between x and y equals correlation between y and x; also referred to as the bivariate correlation coefficient.

In the analysis of variance (ANOVA), a basic moderator effect can be represented as an interaction between a focal independent variable and a factor that specifies the appropriate conditions for its operation (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Preacher and Hayes, 2004). Study 2 investigates the effects of job skill (high; low) as a moderator variable. Harold and Ployhart (2008) explain how an employee's skill level influences the value they place on themselves as job candidates and their marketability. Extant research demonstrates that workers with higher abilities are attracted by different organisational factors than lower skilled workers (Harold and Ployhart, 2008; Trank, Rynes, and Bretz, 2002). Study 3 investigates the contingency effects of customer contact (high; low) on the influence of role autonomy, (mediated by OCO) on job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction. In particular, this research builds on complementary views in the literature to propose and test whether the relationship between role autonomy and pursuit and attraction is strengthened (weakened) when customer contact time is high (as opposed to low). Customer contact has been identified as an important attractor for customer oriented workers in previous research (Brown et al., 2002; Donavan, Brown, and Mowen, 2004; Zablah et al., 2012). Liao and Subramony (2008) assert that customer oriented individuals are more likely to be attracted to roles offering higher levels of contact with customers.

This is supported by Donavan et al. (2004, p. 128) who build on fit theory to argue that customer orientation (a personal characteristic) will be more influential on worker satisfaction and performance as workers spend more time in contact with customers. Furthermore, Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition model predicts that workers whose personality attributes and interests predispose them to be customer oriented are more likely to be attracted to, selected for, and remain in roles that require

more contact with customers. Given the satisfaction that customer oriented workers derive from customer contact, COR theory suggests that for such workers customer contact may be considered an external resource. However, JD-R theory suggests that customer contact is a job demand, similarly, while role autonomy may be considered a resource (i.e., subjective autonomy), role autonomy may also be considered a job demand (i.e., objective autonomy) (Hennig-Thurau, 2004).

4.9.3.6 Control Variables

A control variable is a variable which is held constant in order to assess or clarify the relationship between the other variables in the study. During experiments, it is important to ensure that control variables are isolated, as inadequate monitoring of these variables may lead to serious errors including confounding variables potentially affecting the integrity of the study. Shadish (2002) argues that when designing an experiment, carefully considered controls may be more crucial than determining the independent variable, as lack of awareness of control variables can lead to inaccurate results or alternatively 'confounding variables' (Stock et al., 2016). While control variables are not part of an experiment per se, they are nevertheless important because they can have a significant effect on the outcome of an experiment (Grizzle et al., 2009). Noting control variables makes it easier to reproduce an experiment and to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Relevant control variables depend on a number of issues, including for example, the demographic, social, educational make-up of the particular sample (Carlson and Wu, 2012). Study 2 and Study 3 used distinctly different samples, the sample in Study 2 was drawn primarily from final year undergraduate students and postgraduate students at Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland, who had yet to embark on their careers. Conversely, Study 3 used a sample comprised of workers and job seekers based in the US (who had already entered the jobs market). Therefore, both studies require the consideration of specific control variables, with different controls relevant to each study. As argued by Bernerth and Aguinis (2016), the rationale for including a specific control variable relates to a potential relationship between the control and a focal variable.

4.9.3.6.1 CONTROLS – STUDY 2

With respect to Study 2, demographic control variables (i.e., age and gender) were included to control their potential effect on the statistical analyses. Previous empirical research (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Stock, 2016) demonstrates that these factors have an effect on individuals' perceptions of a potential job role. For example gender and age have been shown to influence outcomes such as performance and attraction and job pursuit. Furthermore, social role theory (Eagly, 1987) as cited in Catanzaro, Moore, and Marshall (2010) suggests that males and females adapt their behaviours to their perceptions of the social requirements for successful role performance. As this cohort were yet to enter the employment market, control variables often used in recruitment research such as tenure, job and education (i.e., the sample was drawn entirely from a third level institution) were not applicable. The analyses were performed for Study 2 with and without the control variables, the results revealed that the control variables (i.e., gender and age) were found to have minimal effect on the outcomes overall.

4.9.3.6.2 CONTROLS – STUDY 3

There was less uniformity among the sample in Study 3 with a wider level of diversity in education and/or skill, job level, location and tenure. Consequently, careful consideration was required for use of relevant control factors. The sample was recruited using an online panel (see Section 4.14.4) with a focus on service industries (e.g., entertainment, finance, hospitality, advertising/marketing, telecommunications , business support). The roles chosen for the respondents were roles offering a potentially high degree of customer contact (e.g., accountancy, administration, advertising/marketing, business development, consulting, customer service, finance, IT, health care, sales). This was necessary to ensure a sufficiently large number of customer oriented individuals were included.

Karasek (1979) notes the importance of controlling for individual background factors such as gender, age education, job, social class, and location as they precipitate significant variations in results. Human capital theory (Becker, 1964) supports this perspective, it proposes certain characteristics such as education, and work experience positively affect attitudes and behaviours accordingly, consideration needs to be given

to controlling the variables. Furthermore, Bernerth and Aguinis (2016) discuss how deeper and more sophisticated tests are more sensitive to data variability and differences between subjects. Therefore, to minimise model misspecification and to rule out alternative explanations resulting from the wide variability of job types, education levels and location, it was decided to control for these factors. Accordingly, in Study 3, three individual level control variables were included (i.e., location, education level, job level) along with age and gender. When measuring the two-way relationship between role autonomy and customer contact on organisational attraction and job pursuit (i.e., S3H8 and S3H9) individual customer orientation is included as a control to rule out for competing explanations. This is done to ensure rigour in the tests and modelling and follows the approach used by Stock (2016). Essentially, Stock (2016) argues that customer oriented workers' attitudes toward their work and their customers affect their attitudes and behaviours.

4.10 MANIPULATION PROCESS

Study 2 manipulates one variable (role autonomy), accordingly, two fictional job descriptions were developed for this study and randomly assigned to the subjects. One description depicted a high autonomy role and the second depicted a low autonomy role., these are outlined in detail in section 4.13.6 and presented in Appendix B. Study 3 is a 2 x 2 between subjects factorial design whereby respondents were allocated randomly across the four treatments. Accordingly, four fictional job descriptions were developed (autonomy: high, low; customer contact: high; low) these are discussed in 4.14.6 and presented in Appendix C.

4.11 MEASURES - OVERVIEW

The likert type scale measures are presented and discussed in Table 8 and all measures used in the experimental studies are presented in Appendix D, In accordance with the tenets of experimental research, the measurement scales used in this study were previously validated and tested, Gersten et al. (2005) asserts that an ideal mix of measures includes psychometrically sound measures with a long record of accomplishment. One advantage of adopting a previously validated scale is that this links the new study to all other research that have used the same instrument (Ramos-

Álvarez, Moreno-Fernández, and Catena, 2008). When adopting a scale, Gersten and colleagues (2005) argue that researchers must have a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the original scale was used and how each item in the scale is linked and affected by other questions in the instrument.

4.11.1 Measures of Customer Orientation

All measures used in the research were chosen on the basis of a strict protocol; all measures must have been previously validated and tested. One of the key measures in the research instrument is the customer orientation measure which establishes the level of customer orientation of the subjects. Other measures have also been developed by scholars to measure customer orientation. Most of these measures are derived from two influential measures scales; 'The SOCO Scale' (Saxe and Weitz, 1982) and 'The Customer Orientation Scale' (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata, 2002). The measure employed in this research is Brown et al.'s (2002) scale, this is one of the most widely used measures in contemporary research to establish ICO. Brown and colleagues' (2002) important work on customer orientation has informed this current research and numerous studies into CO (e.g., Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2016; 2017; Stock, 2016, 2017; Zablah et al., 2012).

4.11.2 Measure Modification

The importance of using validated scale items in their original format is emphasised by Podsakoff et al. (2003) they argue that one of the most common problems in the comprehension of response processes is ambiguity of items which is more prevalent in untested scales. While all scales used in the study were previously measured and tested, for four of the scales (i.e., job attributes: Powell and Goulet, 1996; autonomy: Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006; organisational customer orientation: Grizzle et al., 2009; job pursuit intentions: Aiman-Smith et al., 2001; organisational customer orientation: Grizzle et al., 2009) some items were modified, added or omitted for the purpose of improving relevance, these modifications are detailed and discussed in Table 8. Adaption, omission and modification of existing scales and items is acceptable and a frequently utilised mechanism in scale development (Brislin, 1986). Ramos-Álvarez et al. (2008) and Biemer and Lyberg (2003) however, provide an

important caveat: once amended in any way, comprehensive checks for validity and reliability are required as the original checks and assessments will no longer be valid.

Clearly, the prevailing view is that it is recommended to use (unaltered) pre-tested constructs from past empirical studies to ensure validity and reliability. However, for the current research some revisions to items were necessary. When revisions were made to existing items, the changes were made to better measure the underlying construct or otherwise clarify the item. In some instances, items were not included as they were not required or relevant (i.e., Grizzle et al. (2009), OCO scale; Aiman-Smith et al. (2001), job pursuit scale; Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), role autonomy scale). Three new items were created and added to one scale (i.e., Powell and Goulet (1996), job attributes and values scale – Study 2 only), these were designed to reflect the construct definition and were distinct from other identified items measured in the scale. When adding new items Biemer and Lyberg (2003) advise caution and argue that new or amended items must convey the meaning of the enquiry as the research originally intended. Furthermore, when an instrument has been adapted, then it has changed in some way, consequently, the reliability and validity evidence will no longer apply. All measures were subject to tests including Cronbach, Principal Components Analysis and factor analysis to re-check validity and reliability, these results are presented in section 4.17, 4.18 and 4.19.

The original anchors and number of points were preserved in Studies 2 and 3 with the result that the survey instrument featured measurement scales of varying intervals and varying scale endpoints. This is in keeping with Podsakoff et al. (2003, p. 888) who contend that another approach to diminish method biases is to use different scale endpoints and formats for the predictor and criterion measures. Accordingly, the instruments used in Studies 2 and 3 adhere to this principal and scales with (unmodified) end-points of five, seven and nine were used. Finally, to address issues of internal consistency reliability, a minimum of four items were used to assess each construct with the exception of the Person-Job Fit scale (used in Study 2) developed by Donavan et al. (2004) which has three items. This instrument was however deemed appropriate as it was proven effective in the original study (i.e., this measure of 'fit' produced a pattern of results consistent with a mediational role for job fit) and is widely

cited and employed in prior research (e.g., Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Stock and Hoyer, 2005; Zablah et al., 2016; Zablah et al., 2012). Additionally, in accordance with accepted wisdom, for each scale, the measurement scores were calculated by averaging the ratings for the items (Grizzle et al, 2009; Zablah et al., 2012).

Finally, multiple measures were used in both experimental studies (2 and 3), Gersten et al. (2005) recommends this approach on the basis that no single measure can adequately assess all of the aspects of performance that an intervention may affect. When completing the scale questions, respondents were required to choose the rating which in their opinion best described the object being measured (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). In each instance, the scales used were monadic or non-comparative. Monadic scales were deemed most appropriate for this research as they are most often used when attitudes or perceptions are being measured. In addition, as the majority of scale items used in the studies were drawn from pre-existing validated scales this reduces the risk of common method bias including upward bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff, 2003).

TABLE 8 MEASUREMENT SCALES (STUDIES 2 & 3)

Customer Orientation - derived from literature and quantitative findings (Studies 2 & 3)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"The CO of Service Workers: Personality Trait Effects on Self and Supervisor Performance Rating"	Brown et al., (2002)	Journal of Marketing Research (2002), Vol. XXXIX. 110-119	Test meditational role of CO in a hierarchical model of impact of traits on self & supervisor rated performance.	12 item scale, bi-dimensional. Construct validity confirmed with strong inter-factor correlation. Widely cited.

Description: One of the most important constructs required to address the research is ICO. The scale indicates where respondents lie on a continuum of CO. It was primarily based on work by Saxe and Weitz (1982) and presents a two-dimensional construct of CO with a needs dimension (i.e., employee's belief he can meet customers' needs) and enjoyment dimension representing the extent to which the employee enjoys dealing with customers.

Each dimension has six items measured on a nine-point scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). It is widely used in contemporary research as an appropriate measure of ICO (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Gazzoli et al., 2013; Grizzle et al., 2009; Korschun et al., 2014; Zablah et al., 2012).

Job Attributes & Organisational Values - derived from literature and quantitative findings (Studies 2 & 3)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"Recruiters and applicants' reactions to campus interviews and employment decisions"	Powell & Goulet (1996)	Academy of Mgt Journal (1996), Vol. 39. No. 6, 1619-1640	Argues job perceptions different from choices as real job choices precipitate opportunity costs - accepting one job precludes others.	Factor analysis conducted on the items followed by Varimax rotation; eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Extensively cited.

Description: 12 item scale. In Study 2 (only) three new items were added, their validity and reliability assessments were measured in the pilot study stage. The items were designed to address the specific research aims and arose from a review of the literature and exploratory research and measured (i) customer contact; (ii) autonomy; (iii) OCO.

PJ Fit - derived from literature and quantitative findings (Study 2)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"Internal benefits service worker CO Job satisfaction, commitment, OCBs"	Brown et al. (2004)	Journal of Applied Psychology (2004), Vol. 92., 5, 1446-1455	Argues workers disposed to meeting customer needs fit better in a service context.	3 item scale. Measurement good for all indicators. Extensively cited.

Description: PJ Fit is recognised as being a match of employees' knowledge, skills/abilities (KSAs) and job demands (Kristof-brown, 2000; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). It is a three-item measure of job fit assessed on a nine-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). With three items, it has one less than recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003). Confirmed as good with all indicators exhibiting acceptable measurement properties.

Role Autonomy Scale (Study 2)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"Work Design Questionnaire: Developing & Validating a Comprehensive Measure Assessing Job Design and the Nature of Work"	Morgeson and Humphrey (2006)	Journal of Applied Psycholog y (2006), Vol. 91., 6, 1321-1339	Authors reviewed work design literature, identifying job attributes and built new measures assessing work characteristics.	Autonomy scale validated with 540 workers showed excellent reliability, convergent discriminant validity. Extensively cited.

Description: Not all items in the original nine item scale were used, two were omitted as it was decided they were addressed by other items and gave rise to possible duplication. Items excluded were 'the job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work'; 'the job allows me to decide on my own how to go about doing my job'.

Job Skill Complexity Scale (Study 2)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
Job Skill and Complexity subscale – Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ)	Morgeson and Humphrey (2006)	Journal of Applied Psychology (2006), Vol. 91., 6, 1321-1339	Job attributes in prior studies reviewed; authors built new work characteristic measures.	Scale validated with 540 workers showed excellent reliability, convergent discriminant validity. Extensively cited.

Description: Sub-scale of 'Work Design Questionnaire'. Nine-item measure, five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Borrowed items e.g., from Campion, (1991); Idaszak and Drasgow (1987); Karasek et al. (1998); Oldham and Hackman (1980); Sims et al. (1976). Validated with 540 employees demonstrating strong reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. Items refer to jobs vs. individuals' reaction to the job. This is significant, as it is job properties not idiosyncratic reactions that are important.

Organisational Attraction and Job Pursuit Intention (Studies 2 & 3)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"Are you attracted? Do you intend to pursue? Recruiting policy capturing study"	Aiman-Smith, Bauer, Cable (2001)	Journal of Business and Psychology (2001), Vol.16., 2, 219-237	Attraction considered attitudinal measure. Intention to pursue considered behavioural	Attraction (5 items), Pursuit (6 items). PFA extracted one component and strong coefficient alpha in both cases. Extensively cited.

Description: Both scales measure the research outcomes (i.e., attraction, job pursuit intentions). Organisational attraction is conceptualised as an attitude expressed towards an organisation, and measured using five items on a seven-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Job pursuit is considered behaviourally driven, the scale consists of six items measured on a seven-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). One item was omitted in Study 3 as it was deemed specific to college students and so not relevant (i.e., "if this company visited campus I would want to speak with a representative").

Organisational Customer Orientation (Study 3)

Study	Author	Journal	Application	Measures
"Employee customer orientation in context: how environment moderates the influence of CO on performance outcomes"	Grizzle, Zablah, Browne, Mowen, and Lee (2009)	Journal of Applied Psychology 2009, Vol. 94, No. 5, 1227–1242	Evaluated effects of unit CO climate on the relationship between workers' level of CO and performance of COBs. And any influence on unit profitability.	10 item scale. Construct validity confirmed with strong inter-factor correlation. Extensively cited.

Description: OCO measured in two ways in Study 3. It was measured using an extensively used scale adapted from Narver and Slater (1990). The original measure consisted of 10 items, two items were omitted as they were not applicable; 'pay close attention to our customers after their orders have been delivered', and 'really care about customers, even after their orders have been delivered'. The amended 8 item scale was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

4.12 SAMPLE - EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES (2 & 3)

When conducting experimental research Rossi, Wright, and Anderson (2013) recommend random sampling, whereby the researcher can sample with known probability from within the population. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) assume that the items used to measure a construct will have been randomly sampled from a domain of all possible subjects. However, Shadish et al. (2002) argue that in experimental practice pure random sampling (from a domain of all possible items) is difficult to implement. They assert that while always desirable, random sampling is not always contingently feasible (e.g., due to the high degree of resources and logistical control required). This is further supported by Gersten et al. (2005) who while agreeing that the optimal method for assigning participants to a study is through random assignment

which will invariably improve the quality of the research design, they accept that in some circumstances this is not possible.

Frequently used alternative approaches which overcome some of the problems inherent in pure random sampling include purposive or judgment sampling and convenience sampling (Shadish et al., 2002). Judgement sampling is a non-probability sampling method also referred to as purposive or authoritative sampling and is sometimes considered an extension of convenience sampling (Shadish and Campbell, 2005). Purposive sampling is used where the researcher can select a more representative sample that can produce more accurate results than by using other probability sampling techniques. In other words, the researcher selects subjects based on her knowledge and professional judgement. Critically, the success of this method depends on the judgment of the researcher and their ability to ensure that the sample selected will be typical of the population with regard to the attributes or characteristics. Failure to select appropriate subjects (due to poor choice, personal prejudice or bias) will result in skewed results. Gersten et al. (2005) advises such approaches are legitimate strategies if appropriate statistical analyses are used. For this research, a purposive or judgement sampling technique was adopted. Given that the research is specifically investigating customer orientation of job seekers and employees likely to work in service industries it was necessary to derive the sample from individuals fitting these criteria (i.e., individuals seeking employment or working in service industries).

4.12.1 Sample – Study2

In Study 2, a sample of mostly final year students across several relevant disciplines including hospitality, tourism and marketing were invited to take part in the survey and complete the questionnaires. By choosing a sample of individuals expected to be attracted to the service sector this adheres to a nomothetic perspective, whereby the individual subject is seen as an exemplar of a population (Allport, 1937). As outlined, a judgment sampling approach was used whereby the researcher chooses the sample based on her judgement, taking into consideration any constraints or problems with sourcing an appropriate sample. The judgement sample (N = 120) of subjects were (largely) final year students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) at Waterford

Institute of Technology. As the objective of the research is to establish when and why customer oriented employees are attracted to service organisations and given that final year students are preparing to enter the employment market, this sample was deemed suitable for testing the conditions necessary to address the research hypotheses. For Study 2, during implementation the researcher was present, it is generally accepted that the presence of the researcher is shown to help mitigate against non-response problems. This would not have been feasible in any other context other than bringing the sample together in one place to implement the survey, thereby ruling out the option of running an on-line survey.

4.12.2 Sample – Study 3

The sample (*N* = 104) comprised of subjects seeking work or already employed in the service sector, as for Study 2, this also adheres to a nomothetic perspective. Furthermore, given that service sector issues are a world-wide concern, a study comprised of subjects from two separate markets (Ireland and the U.S.) is expected to add further insight. The sample is smaller than Study 2, this was due to difficulties in recruiting subjects. Accordingly, an agency (Survey Monkey) was recruited a sample from an online panel. In literature, there exist several methods for determining the sample size, Hair et al. (2010) regards five respondents per variable as the lower limit. Similarly, Schreiber et al. (2006) suggested each parameter should have at least 10 participants, while Roscoe (1975) proposed some important considerations as discussed in Sekaran and Bougie (2010, pp. 296-297) including sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate. Study 3 consisted of subjects engaged in employment (or seeking employment) after a number of attempts it did not prove possible to recruit a sample of sufficient size to complete the survey. Consequently this study was implemented online using an online panel by a market research agency (Survey Monkey), use of online panels is discussed in Section 7.3. Finally, such approaches of using samples consisting of students preparing to enter the jobs market, or workers already employed in the relevant sector have been widely used previously and are accepted as an appropriate source for gathering data in a recruitment context (e.g., Harold and Ployhart, 2008; Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006; Powell and Goulet, 1996; Van Hoye and Saks, 2011).

4.13 STUDY 2 DESIGN

This study explores the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers and its effect on important attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). It uses a simple single factor design with one experimental condition (between subjects design) with two levels; (high autonomy; low autonomy) generating two treatment conditions. Other key variables measured are (i) individual customer orientation and (ii) job complexity as perceived by the respondents. This phase centres on testing the assumption that role autonomy (high; low) influences organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions of customer oriented job seekers. Table 9 outlines the experimental designs for the study. The research instrument used (in both experimental studies) is a survey questionnaire, this is a set of considered and carefully constructed questions chosen after rigorous testing (Boyce and Neale, 2006). The objective being to obtain valid and reliable data from a relevant sample of individuals. This information will investigate what these individuals do, think or feel about the issue under investigation. Consequently, the information obtained should provide knowledge and understanding about the particular problem it was designed to address (Saunders et al., 2009). This method offers several benefits, once the researcher has access to a sample of appropriate individuals, the process can be completed relatively seamlessly. As the questionnaire is standardised, the data obtained is considered reliable and accurate (Tull and Hawkins, 1987). This method also offers anonymity to the respondents, thereby helping to ensure the data obtained provides an accurate and a true reflection of the opinions of the respondents.

The study was implemented in November 2016 by administering self-completion questionnaires (and manipulated fictional job advertisements x 2) to a sample drawn from undergraduate final year students (N = 120) studying hospitality studies, restaurant management, international hotel management, business tourism, tourism marketing and culinary arts studying at Waterford Institute of Technology (37 males and 83 females, age M_{age} = 80%: 16-24 category, SD = .710). As this is a between subjects design, participants were randomly assigned across the two treatments. The manipulated variable (autonomy) was presented in the manipulated fictional job advertisements (i.e., high role autonomy vs. low role autonomy advertisement).

TABLE 9 EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN - (STUDY 2)

2 (autonomy: high; low) between subjects factorial design (2 cells; 2 experimental treatment conditions)	
Dependent variables	Organisational attractiveness, organisational intention
Independent variable	Role autonomy
Mediator	Individual customer orientation
Moderator	Job Skill
Control variables	Gender, age
Analyses	ANOVA – SPSS. PROCESS Macro Procedure for SPSS (24)

As outlined, the study employs an experimental design, clearly, despite its merits, experimentation is complex, accordingly, Gersten et al. (2005) argue that it should adhere to a strict set of quality indicators, guidelines proffered by Gersten and colleagues (2005) are outlined in Table 10 which also presents details of the Study 2.

TABLE 10 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN QUALITY INDICATORS (STUDY 2)

CONCEPTUALISATION: Compelling case for importance of the research based on well-designed studies? Widely accepted that CO has a particular relevance for services. Due to services intangibility, customers' evaluation of service largely based on attitudes/behaviours of FLEs. Accordingly, this research focuses on a means to influence long-term sustainable services growth: attracting customer oriented workers. Much of the secondary research gleaned from ABS 4*journals Journal of Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Applied Psychology.
SUBJECT DESCRIPTION: Sufficient data to confirm if participants met requirements? To generalise results participants must represent the general population. Study 2: niche sample - graduates/job seekers studying in service related fields relevant.
DESIGN: Appropriate procedures used to increase probability that participants are comparable across conditions? Random assignment of treatments employed. Gersten et al. (2005) argue the quality of research design is higher with random assignment.
PARTICIPATION: Differential attrition among intervention groups or severe overall attrition is documented? Some respondents skipped questions in Study 2 (detailed in Table 13).
INTERVENTION: Implementation of the IV and description of comparison conditions Detailed implementation of IV outlined including conceptual underpinnings, detailed instructional procedures, use of instructional materials are presented in the present chapter.
FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION: Describe and assess surface and quality features. Also known as treatment fidelity or treatment integrity, refers to the extent to which a goal is implemented as intended. stablished in the successful manipulation checks for the IVs used in the treatment conditions.
OUTCOME MEASURES: Multiple measures used to provide balance between measures closely aligned with the intervention and generalised performance? Significant efforts should be devoted to selection of measures. Measures were aligned with the substance and intervention multiple studies were used as recommended and measures employed met recommended standards (previously tested meeting reliability and validity requirements).

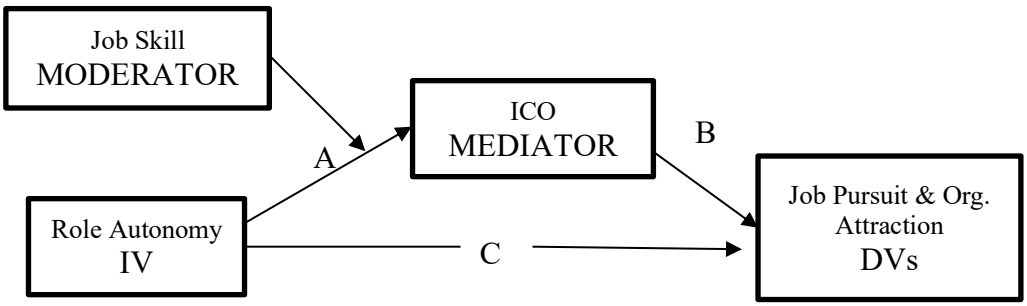
4.13.1 Conceptual Model – Study 2

Underpinned by JD-R theory, the conceptual model presented in Figure 8 underscores the effect that FLE seeker customer orientation has on important behavioural and attitudinal outcomes. JD-R assumes that job demand and any job resources specific to a job affect employee well-being. Job demands include challenging customer interactions, while job resources are aspects of the job and person that enable front line employees to achieve work goals and also enables these workers to cope with job demands. The tenets of the model imply a causal structure in which job seekers' level of customer orientation effects important outcomes such as job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction through the interaction of role autonomy and job skill level. In this case, it is expected that the resource that particularly influences the job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction of customer oriented workers is autonomy.

4.13.2 Model Components – Study 2

The independent variable in this study is role autonomy, the dependent variables are job seekers' attitudinal and behaviour outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). The model predicts that customer orientation of job seekers (high; low) plays a mediating role on the effect of role autonomy on job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction. Given the significance of job skill, as identified in the qualitative study and secondary research, it is expected that it plays a moderating role heightening attraction and job pursuit intentions of customer oriented job seekers and workers when role autonomy is high.

FIGURE 8 STUDY 2 MODEL (UNDERPINNED BY JD-R THEORY)



4.13.3 Procedure and Materials

For Study 2, materials consisted of a letter providing an overview of the research study and researcher's credentials, research questionnaire, fictitious job advertisement (one of two versions) and envelope for completed questionnaire, these materials are detailed in Appendix B. The study was conducted in the presence of the researcher, it was considered necessary for the researcher to be present, given the length of the questionnaire, its complexity and the inclusion of measurement scales of differing lengths and measurement intervals. Furthermore, research has shown that the presence of the researcher can help reduce questionnaire fatigue and non-response error (Bampton and Compton, 2002). The researcher first introduced herself as a Ph.D. student in the Management and Organisational Department in The School of Business, Waterford Institute of Technology. The reason for the research was briefly outlined as 'continued growth in the service industry makes it difficult to attract suitable job seekers and this study seeks to establish what attracts such individuals to service companies'. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anyone who wished to opt out of participating in the study was invited to do so at this point (no one chose to withdraw from the process). The respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire fully and as honestly as possible and to raise any questions at any point in the process. The questionnaire included measures of individual customer orientation, demographic details, perceptions of organisational and job attributes, attitude and behaviour intent. In total, the questionnaire contained twenty separate questions. All materials used in Study 2 are presented in Appendix B. Next, the respondents were verbally given the following instructions:

'Please complete the survey as honestly as possible and complete all sections. On page four of the questionnaire you will see a fictional job advertisement for a service organisation. Please read this job advertisement carefully as all the questions that follow the job advertisement relate specifically to it. If you need to refer to the advertisement at any time, please do so. Please complete the survey on your own without conferring with anyone else'. At this stage, the surveys were randomly distributed to the respondents, the respondents were aware the job advertisement was fictional but were unaware that the job advertisement they read was manipulated.

4.13.4 Survey Debrief

Once all the respondents completed the questionnaires (which took an average of 11 minutes), they were debriefed and questions were addressed. The respondents were again advised that all the information collected in the study remains confidential, with no possibility of identifying individual responses in the data archive. The respondents were advised that the researcher is not interested in any one individual's responses; rather the phenomenon of interest to the study are the general patterns that emerge when the data are aggregated. The respondents were thanked for their participation and advised that this will help researchers to understand more about the factors attracting individuals to organisations. Respondents were requested not to discuss the nature of the study with others who may later participate in it, as this could adversely affect the validity of the research conclusions.

4.13.5 Measures – Study 2

The questionnaire commenced with demographic data (later used in the research analysis as control and covariate factors). Five aspects of demographic information were gathered (i.e., gender, age, highest level of education completed, details of course being studied). Individual customer orientation was measured using Brown et al.'s (2002) scale which presents a two-dimensional construct of customer orientation (i.e., needs dimension and enjoyment dimension 2 x 6 items). A median split and a four-dimensional split of customer orientation (very high; high; moderate; low) were used in the analyses ($\alpha = .95$). Perceptions of organisational and job attributes was assessed using the 12-item scale developed by Posner et al. (1981) with the inclusion of three new items identified in the exploratory phase (outlined in section 6.16), anchored at 1 (very unimportant) and 5 (very important) ($\alpha = .81$). Job-Person fit was evaluated using a three-item measure developed by Donavan et al. (2004) on a 9-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), the three items were averaged to produce a mean score for the purposes of analysis ($\alpha = .79$). Although assessed separately in manipulation questions, autonomy was also assessed using Morgeson and Humphrey's (2006) seven item, 9-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) and 9 (strongly agree), a mean score was generated by averaging the seven items ($\alpha = .94$). Job complexity was evaluated on a nine item, 5-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree)

developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), the items were averaged to produce a mean score for analysis purposes (α = .90). The final two scales were developed by Aiman-Smith, Bauer, and Cable (2001) to measure (i) attitude, conceptualised as organisational attraction and to measure (ii) behavioural intent, conceptualised as job pursuit intentions. Organisational attraction was calculated using a five item, 7-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree); (α = .94). The job pursuit scale, also developed by Aiman-Smith (2001) is a six item, 7-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree); (α = .97). For both the organisational attraction and job pursuit scales, the items were averaged to produce a mean score for use in the data analysis.

The remaining questions were dichotomous or categorical attitudinal and behavioural measures (these are detailed in Appendix D). Subjects' 'interest in the job' and 'interest in a career' were assessed by single item dichotomous questions. Acceptable salary level was measured on an interval scale. A global assessment of organisational customer orientation was captured on a single item, 5-point scale: 1 (not very customer oriented) to 5 (very customer oriented). Subjects' assessment of the opportunity to use their skills in the job was assessed on a single item, 5-point scale: 1 (low opportunity to use skills) and 5 (high opportunity to use skills). Next, subjects were asked if the level of autonomy in the role would influence their acceptance decision, this was addressed by a single dichotomous question. Finally, the subjects were asked to rate the importance of decision-making authority in a customer facing role. This was appraised using a single-item, 5-point scale: 1 (very unimportant) - 5 (very important).

4.13.6 Manipulations – Study 2

Two fictional job advertisements were developed for this study. One job advertisement depicted a high autonomy role through terms and phrases such as: 'you will be responsible for managing, organising and leading one of our customer service teams,'; 'you will enjoy independence and autonomy in your role'; 'you will interact with customers and lead your team in delivering a personal and excellent customer experience,'; 'you must be self-motivated, willing to work hard and autonomously'. Finally, the following statement was highlighted at the bottom of the (one-page) job advertisement: 'your work will be varied and wide-ranging and you will enjoy

independence and autonomy in your role'. The second job advertisement depicted a low autonomy role through terms and phrases such as: 'you will join our customer service team,'; 'you will work in a supporting role,'; 'you must be enthusiastic and a team player,'; 'you will assist senior team members as you learn and adapt to your new role in the customer service team'. Finally, in keeping with the 'high autonomy' job advertisement, the following statement appeared at the bottom of the manipulated job advertisement: 'you will work in a supporting role and your work will be varied and wide-ranging'. Other than the manipulations described, the job advertisements contained the same information, order of information, the same colours, fonts and layout with the only difference the manipulation of the treatments. The manipulation measure for Study 2 are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11 MANIPULATION CHECKS (STUDY 2)

Q	Autonomy Manipulation Check
19	Main manipulation check; measured on a 5-point scale. "Do you think this job offers the successful applicant a lot of control and autonomy over their day-to-day tasks?"

4.14 STUDY 3 DESIGN

The tenets of the JD-R model imply a causal structure where depending on the situation context (e.g., unit climate) role autonomy affects important outcomes such as job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction through the interaction of autonomy (high; low) and customer contact (high; low). This study therefore extends Study 2 by introducing a new treatment condition (i.e., customer contact level) generating four treatment conditions. One significant difference is that Study 2 was a single factor design with one experimental factor and two treatment conditions. The study design (2 x 2 factorial design with two treatment conditions: autonomy; customer contact and two levels in each treatment: high; low and random assignment across treatments) is informed by a review of the literature in the marketing and attraction research stream and is underpinned by the job demand-resources model (JD-R). Table 12 outlines the experimental research design for Study 3, this study is more complex than Study 2 as it manipulates two variables (i.e., role autonomy and customer contact) producing four experimental treatment conditions.

TABLE 12 EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN - (STUDY 3)

2 (autonomy: high; low) x 2 (contact: high; low) between subjects factorial design (4 cells; 4 experimental treatment conditions)	
Dependent variables:	Organisational attractiveness, organisational intention
Independent variables	Role autonomy; customer contact
Mediator	Organisational customer orientation
Moderator	Customer contact
Control variables	Education, job, location
Analyses	ANOVA: SPSS (version 24 for Mac.) PROCESS Macro Procedure for SPSS (24)

Given the complexity of experimental research, the design parameters are checked against the quality indicators for experimental research as discussed by Gersten et al. (2005), this is outlined for Study 3 in Table 13.

TABLE 13 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN QUALITY INDICATORS (STUDY 3)

CONCEPTUALISATION: Is a compelling case for the importance of the research made and based on well-designed studies? Widely accepted that CO has a particular relevance for services. Due to services intangibility customers' evaluation of performance is largely based on attitudes and behaviours of FLEs. Accordingly, this research focuses on a basic means to influence long-term sustainable services growth: attracting customer oriented workers. Much of the secondary research gleaned from ABS 4*journals e.g., Journal of Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Applied Psychology.
SUBJECT DESCRIPTION: Sufficient data to confirm if participants met requirements? To generalise results participants must represent the general population. Study 3: uses a more general population sample; subjects employed/seeking employment in service industries.
DESIGN: Appropriate procedures used to increase probability that participants are comparable across conditions? Random assignment of treatments employed. Gersten et al. (2005) argue the quality of research design is higher with random assignment.
PARTICIPATION: Differential attrition among intervention groups or severe overall attrition is documented? Study had built-in logic to prevent skipping questions, there was some attrition, but within acceptable norms.
INTERVENTION: Implementation of the IV and description of comparison conditions Detailed implementation of IV outlined including conceptual underpinnings, detailed instructional procedures, use of instructional materials are presented in the present chapter.
FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION: Describe and assess surface and quality features. This is also known as treatment fidelity or treatment integrity, it refers to the extent to which a goal is implemented as intended. This is established in the successful manipulation checks for the IVs used in the treatment conditions.
OUTCOME MEASURES: Multiple measures used to provide balance between measures closely aligned with the intervention and generalised performance? Significant efforts should be devoted to selection of measures. Measures were aligned with the substance and intervention multiple studies were used as recommended and measures employed met recommended standards (previously tested meeting reliability and validity requirements).

4.14.1 Conceptual Model – Study 3

Study 3 extends Study 2 as it introduces a new treatment variable (customer contact) in a 2 x 2 experiment. As for Study 2, this study also employs JD-R theory to investigate the effect that role autonomy (job resource) and customer contact levels (job demand) have on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. JD-R assumes that job demand (in this case customer contact) and any job resource (in this case role autonomy) affect employee well-being. The conceptual model investigates whether the interaction between role autonomy and customer contact will influence organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for job seekers. The tenets of the JD-R model imply a causal structure in which job seekers' level of customer orientation effects important outcomes such as job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction through the interaction of autonomy and customer contact.

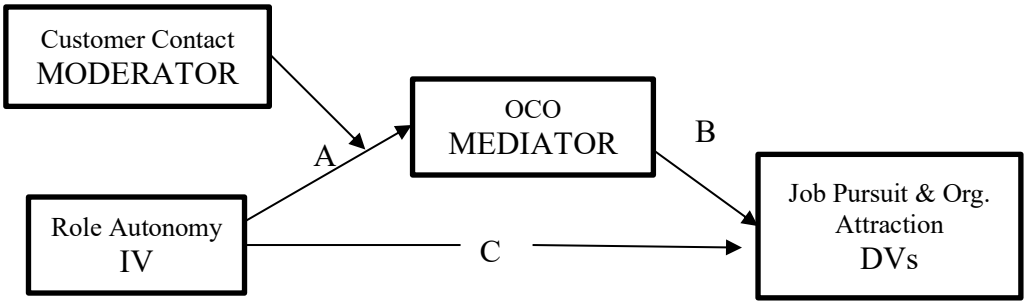
4.14.2 Model Components – Study 3

As outlined, Study 3 is a 2 x 2 experimental study, the independent variables are role autonomy and customer contact level (outlined in Figure 9). The dependent variables are job seekers'/workers' attitudinal and behaviour outcomes (organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). The model predicts that perceptions of organisational customer orientation plays a mediating role on the effect of autonomy on job pursuit intentions and organisational attraction. It is expected that customer contact plays a moderating role to heighten attraction and job pursuit intentions of customer oriented job seekers and workers. The research hypotheses follow from JD-R model's assertion which observes that job demands and job resources define all job roles.

To understand the relationship between role autonomy, customer contact time, and the situational factor of organisational climate and their effect on the dependent variables (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions), the study uses a mediated moderation model. Accordingly, the study investigates the cross-level effects of role autonomy on customer contact (i.e., second predictor and moderating variable). Specifically, the model considers the influence of perceived organisational customer orientation (OCO) climate, its mediating influence on role autonomy and effect on job pursuit and organisational attraction and explores the moderating role that customer

contact plays in the process. In this way, the study explores how elements of a work situation can either strengthen or weaken the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.

FIGURE 9 STUDY 3 MODEL (UNDERPINNED BY JD-R THEORY)



4.14.3 Procedure and Materials - Study 3

The materials for Study 3 (n = 104) consisted of the online survey instrument and one of four fictional organisation and job descriptions, these materials are presented in Appendix C. The 12-question questionnaire design was self-completion and logic was added to the instrument to prevent respondents skipping questions. The questionnaire took seven minutes to finish and was completed in July 2017. The questionnaire included measures of individual customer orientation, demographic details (i.e., age, education, job, tenure, location), perceptions of organisational and job attributes, attitude and behaviour intent. The survey was implemented by a market research company; Survey Monkey who administered the (online) questionnaire to a panel of people working or seeking work in the customer service area in the U.S., subjects received a nominal fee for their participation (43 males and 59 females, age M_{age} = 39%: 34-40 age category, *SD* = .96). As this is a between subjects design, subjects were randomly assigned across the four treatments.

Study 3 is an exploration of how specific job demands (customer contact) and resources (role autonomy) and situational context (organisational climate customer orientation) interact to influence organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions of

customer oriented job seekers. For customer facing workers, challenging customer interactions constitutes an important job demand, while job resources are aspects of the job and person that enable such employees to achieve work goals and also enables them to cope with job demands. Consequently, this study considers the influence of unit customer orientation climate, role autonomy and customer contact level on job pursuit and organisational attraction. As previously indicated, the study's emphasis is on key job demands and resources (i.e., organisation's climate, role autonomy) and extends Study 1 and Study 2.

4.14.4 Use of Panels in Research

An online panel is a form of access panel, described by Craig et al. (2013) as:

> "a sample database of potential respondents who agree to cooperate in data collection if selected"

Callegaro et al. (2014) contend that online panels are essentially access panels in an online context, although an important caveat is that not all individuals have online access. This view mirrors Delmas and Levy (1999) who consider online panels the evolution of consumer panels used in more traditional data gathering methods. According to Hays, Liu, and Kapteyn (2015) using Internet panels to collect survey data is increasing; it is cost-effective, it facilitates access to significant and diverse samples quickly, it takes less time than more traditional methods and standardisation of data collection makes it easier to replicate studies occasions. Such panels generally include very large numbers of individuals who are sampled on a number of occasions, the frequency with which each participant is called upon depends on several criteria (e.g., sample size, specialism, individual research company procedures) (Hays, Liu, and Kapteyn, 2015).

There are a number of different types of online panels, the most important distinction is between probability and nonprobability panels. Although it is possible to use online probability panels if a complete list of the particular target is available, nonprobability panels are invariably used. It is accepted that the composition of nonprobability panels differs from that of the underlying population (Callegaro et al., 2014). Panel members tend to be more educated and to have higher socioeconomic status than non-panel

members and response rates tend to be lower (Craig et al., 2013). The recruitment methods for nonprobability panels are numerous and varied, however, in most cases, individuals select themselves into the panel, rather than being selected from a sampling frame containing all members of a target population (Craig et al., 2013). Apart from recruitment differences, there is also considerable variation in how members are sampled, interviewed, the types of people on the panel, and the kinds of data typically collected (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). As outlined, response rates in nonprobability panels have been shown to be low in some instances (Callegaro et al., 2014). In an effort to improve response levels, panel members are incentivised in different ways for their participation in surveys, there are variations in incentivisation principles and models (including remuneration, charity donations, potential to win prizes etc.). A meta-analysis conducted by Church (1999) found that prepaid incentives improved the response rate more than the promise of an incentive. Additionally, Church (1999) found that studies employing prepaid monetary incentives yielded response rates up to 65 per cent higher than those without monetary incentives. Furthermore, the evidence is that using incentives does not compromise the quality of responses, researchers including Singer et al. (2013) found that incentivised respondents give better quality answers, with less missing data and more comprehensive responses to open ended questions.

While online panels are an increasingly common method of collecting data for market research, research into panel use has noted shortcomings, for example, studies have noted the non-representativeness of panel entry data (Postoaca, 2006). This may be due to the process of self-selection, demographic and other unmeasured differences between panels and the general population. Such observable differences could possibly affect generalisability and may compromise external validity. Because individuals select themselves onto panels in the nonprobability method, it is impossible to know in advance which individuals will see the invitation to participate or how many times an individual may see it. As a result, it is impossible for the panel recruiter to know the probability of selection of each member of the panel, this can result in difficulties in calculating statistics such as confidence intervals (Callegaro et al., 2014). To overcome some of the problems with nonprobability panels, a quota sampling approach is utilised by targeting respondents with particular demographic

and other characteristics, and post-stratification adjustments (i.e., weights) are used to compensate for non-coverage and non-response. Therefore, statistical techniques and strategies to overcome the problems with nonprobability panels are addressing concerns (Callegaro et al., 2014). Significantly, Craig et al. (2013) argues that for experimental designs such as those used in the current research (Study 3) which test theory-driven hypotheses within a defined sample can justifiably test those hypotheses, even when the sample is not representative of a larger population. This, in conjunction with the quality control procedures used by the research company and its expedient and cost-efficient nature made it an appropriate choice for Study 3.

4.14.5 Measures – Study 3

As previously outlined, all measures were previously tested and validated, with items amended or removed only when considered necessary (Biemer and Lyberg, 2003). The questionnaire commenced with demographic data (later used in the analysis as control factors). Demographic information gathered included: highest level of education completed, job description, tenure, age, location, gender. Full details on the measures employed in the study are presented in Appendix D. As for Study 2, individual customer orientation was measured using Brown et al.'s (2002) scale (α = .95). Perceptions of organisational and job attributes was assessed using the original 12 item scale developed by Posner et al. (1981) (α = .87).

Organisational customer orientation was measured using Grizzle's scale (2009), the original measure consisted of 10 items, however, two items were dropped from the scale as they were not applicable to the sample. These items are 'pay close attention to our customers after their orders have been delivered', and 'really care about customers, even after their orders have been delivered'. The amended 8 item scale was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale; (α = .94). The final two scales (Aiman-Smith, Bauer, and Cable, 2001) measuring organisational attraction (α = .95) and pursuit intentions (α = .94) were used in Study 2 (one item was omitted from the pursuit scale, this is outlined in 4.11). As for Study 2, for each scale the mean was computed for analysis purposes. In addition, for the customer orientation scale the median (i.e., dichotomisation split) and a four-level (quartile) split were generated (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, and Rucker, 2002). Question 10 was a categorical

attitudinal measure of organisational customer orientation captured on a single item, 5-point scale: 1 = 'not very customer oriented' to 5 'very customer oriented'. A global assessment of organisational customer orientation was captured on a single item, 5-point scale: 1 = 'not very customer oriented' and 5 'very customer oriented'.

4.14.6 Manipulations – Study 3

Role autonomy was manipulated by changing the level of personal control and decision-making authority available to the successful job candidate. In the high role autonomy scenario, it was stipulated that employees would have a high degree of control and 'take responsibility and make decisions'. While in the low role autonomy treatment, the employee would need to 'take and follow instructions' and 'work in a supporting role'. Similarly, customer contact time was manipulated through the degree of customer contact in a role. In the high customer contact treatments, the treatment was manipulated so that successful candidate would spend '80% of their time working with customers'; in the low customer contact condition, it was 20%. The manipulated job advertisements were randomly distributed to the subjects.

4.15 PILOT STUDIES

The objective of the pilot studies is to test the validity, feasibility and strength of the questionnaire by administering it to a smaller percentage of the total sample population. Such a preliminary study can improve the study design through establishing construct validity and ensuring that:

- Questions are of appropriate length;
- Questionnaire flows smoothly;
- Wording is clear, unambiguous and not loaded or leading;
- Interpretation of questions by participants is uniform;
- Layout is engaging and easily followed;
- Measures and scales work effectively.

Three pilot studies (n = 9; n = 16; n =13) were conducted in September and October 2016 for Study 2 and one pilot study for Study 3 (n = 51) in June 2017 to determine

the effectiveness of the instruments and measures and to establish whether the manipulations produced the intended effects.

Prior research differs on the appropriate sample size for a pilot study, Julious (2005) suggests a 12 participants per group rule, other researchers suggest 10-30 participants is appropriate. However, in keeping with Treece (1982), Studies 2 and 3 comply with their proposition that a robust pilot should comprise 10% - 20% of the sample for the overall study, (i.e., Study 2 pilot: n = 38: Study 2: n = 120; Study 3 pilot: n = 51: Study 3: n = 104). The pilot studies for Study 2 were conducted with undergraduate students studying in the fields of hospitality, hotel management, culinary arts, business and tourism and tourism and marketing at Waterford Institute of Technology. A thorough explanation of the survey instrument and guidelines for completion was given to the respondents and they were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the study. The pilot study for Study 3 was conducted in June 2017 with a sample of 51 subjects, the pilot study was implemented by online research company Survey Monkey. The subjects were chosen under the same conditions and from the same panel as used for the actual study conducted in July 2017.

4.16 DATA PREPARATION AND ANALYSIS – STUDIES 2 & 3

The following sections outline the data preparation and analysis elements for the experimental studies (i.e., Studies 2 and 3).

4.16.1 Data Preparation

Preparation of the data included coding, treatment of missing values (applicable to Study 2 only) screening and running initial frequency and descriptive tests to ensure the data was input into SPSS correctly. As the instruments used in both studies were complex with a high number of scales, consistency in responses was important. Ensuring consistency was subjectively completed by checking answers across different sections. In Study 2, which was a pen and paper survey, a small number of questionnaires had missing data giving rise to the possibility of partial non-response problem. Each questionnaire with a missing value was examined to establish if there was an explanation for the missing data (e.g., unclear question or sensitive data

requested) or if it could be considered a random occurrence. Examination of the questionnaires did not identify a pattern to missing data, given the length of the questionnaire (i.e., seven pages), the number of questions (20) and the number of multiple item Likert-type scale measures (seven) it can be assumed that in most cases omissions were accidental and were a random occurrence due to the large number of items in the instrument.

In cases where a significant portion of a questionnaire is incomplete, the solutions proposed by Brick and Kaltron (1996) include weighting adjustments, or imputation methods that assign values for missing responses to compensate for item non-responses. However, there is dispute in the academic community over whether or not to impute missing responses. Given that a small amount of data is missing in the majority of cases, it was decided to include the questionnaires and code the missing data in SPSS with a value of '999'. Little and Rubin (2002) also caution about deleting partially incomplete questionnaires and propose a more pragmatic view of not excluding them (i.e., where practical and where small amounts of data is missing). Little and Rubin's perspective is that even with missing answers, incomplete questionnaires have a value and can inform the research findings, details on the missing data is outlined in Table 14.

Missing data was not an issue with Study 3, as this was an online survey with inbuilt logic preventing subjects skipping questions. Prior to analysis, the questionnaires were coded to create a value for every response to each question. Pre-coding questions for statistical analysis makes subsequent data entry easier and less prone to error. In the case of Study 2, the completed questionnaire data was input into SPSS and data was analysed using SPSS, version 24 (for Mac) and the PROCESS macro procedure (for SPSS 2.16.3) developed by Hayes (2013). For Study 3, the completed data was downloaded from Survey Monkey directly into SPSS. After it was successfully input, the data was screened and counted to ascertain the number of responses to each question. This involved running analysis of modes, averages, percentages and frequencies, such tabulation processes make it easier to derive meaning and significance from the data.

TABLE 14 QUESTIONNAIRES MISSING DATA - (STUDY 2 ONLY)

Respondent Number	Question/Item Omitted	Items Unanswered
2	Q9: Job Skill and complexity, item 8	1
3	Q9: Job Skill and complexity, item 1	1
5	Q1: CO, item 5	1
	Q10: Estimation of 'amount of customer contact time you would expect in the role as advertised'	1
6	Q6: Job Attributes Values, item 7	1
7	Q1: CO, item 9	1
	Q6: Item 3; item 5; item 10.	3
	Q8: "The job provides me with significant autonomy in decision making"	1
	Q10: Estimation of 'amount of customer contact time you would expect in the role as advertised'	1
8	Q6: Job Attributes and Values, item 3	1
9	Q9: Job Skill and complexity, item 8	1
	Q6: Job Attributes, item 3	1
11	Q3: Person Job Fit (all three items)	3
16	Q6: Job Attributes, item 3	1
	Q1: All 12 items	12
20	Q 1: Item 8; item 11	2

4.17 VALIDITY ANALYSES

Validity is the extent to which the findings accurately reflect the object under investigation. Validity is established by examining three criterion: content, concurrent, and construct validity (Hair et al., 2014). However, Gersten et al. (2005) argues that validity assessments are particularly important in experimental research and building on Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie, and Reiser (2000) asserts that four new types of validity should be considered in experimental research, these are outlined in Table 15.

TABLE 15 VALIDITY ASSESSMENTS (EISENBERG ET AL., 2000)

Validity	Definition	Current Research Studies (2 & 3)
Incidence	Degree to which a particular piece of research addresses a topic that significantly affects large numbers of people.	This research concerns many people (workers, customers) and firms and organisations in the service sector.
Impact	Degree to which the research question is perceived to have serious and enduring consequences.	This condition is met as attracting customer oriented workers is demonstrated to be a key concern to the service sector as a whole.
Sympathetic	Reflects the tendency to judge the significance of the research based on the degree to which it generates feelings of sympathy for individuals affected by the problem.	The research highlights the importance for service firms in attracting customer oriented workers. Identifies challenges FLEs face and reinforces importance of PJ (person job) and PO (person organisation) fit for workers' wellbeing and performance.
Salience	Degree to which people i.e., generally referring to the public are aware of the problem or topic.	The issue is pertinent to service organisations, the exploratory research highlights the awareness of the problem for such firms.

4.17.1 Content Validity

This involves subjective assessment of how well a scale measures the variable or construct being investigated. To meet the requirements of construct validity, a scale must comprehensively address all dimensions of the construct. Malhotra (2009) contends that face validity is a basic method of assessing measurement scale validity as it is centred on a superficial review of the items to establish if the scale is fit for purpose. However, while it is generally accepted that content validity is a more elementary method of establishing validity despite its lack of sophistication, Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) argue that it is an important step in establishing validity although used alone it is not a sufficient measure of a scale's validity.

4.17.2 Construct Validity

This is understood to be the extent to which a scale measures what it claims to measure. Malhorta (2009) explains that construct validity addresses the question of what construct the scale is measuring in actuality. Construct validity is constructed from

convergent, discriminant and nomological validity. Convergent validity is the extent to which the scale correlates positively with other measures of the same construct. Discriminant validity is the extent to which a measure does not correlate with other constructs from which it is assumed to differ. Finally, nomological validity is concerned with the extent to which the scale correlates at a theoretical level with measures of different but distinct constructs (i.e., how well its components can be described by the appropriate laws or rules pertaining to the construct).

4.17.3 Criterion Validity

Criterion validity is sometimes referred to as concrete validity, it is the extent to which a measure is related to an outcome. Criterion validity is often sub-divided into two separate constructs: concurrent and predictive validity. Concurrent validity refers to a comparison between the measure in question and an outcome assessed simultaneously. Whereas predictive validity is concerned with assessing the ability of a measured construct's ability to predict another dependent variable in the future (Hair et al., 2014).

4.18 VALIDITY TESTS FOR SCALES USED IN THE RESEARCH (STUDIES 2 & 3)

The following sections present an assessment of validity for the Likert-type scales employed in Studies 2 and 3.

4.18.1 Customer Orientation – Validity Assessment (Studies 2 & 3)

Brown et al.'s (2002) scale is conceptualised as having two dimensions (i.e., 'needs' and 'enjoyment') with a total of 12 items. The instrument uses six items with the highest factor loadings from Saxe and Weitz's (1982) scale for the 'needs' dimension. The 'enjoyment' dimension was measured with a six item Likert-type instrument specifically adapted for the original study. These new items were developed by the authors from in-depth interviews they conducted with experts in the banking and hospitality sectors to determine characteristics of high and low performing front line employees (FLEs). The scale was extensively tested for validity, the authors conducted a principal components factor analysis with oblique rotation of the 12 items which indicated a two-factor solution, all items loaded on the appropriate factor with

no significant cross-loadings, and a strong inter-factor correlation of .57. This scale has been used extensively in other studies into customer orientation (e.g., Gazzoli et al., 2013; Grizzle et al., 2009; Zablah et al., 2012).

For the present research, content validity of the scale was assessed by a panel of business people. This panel consisted of four people known to the researcher who work in mid-management and senior management in four separate organisations (i.e., CRH, Eir Northern Ireland, Office of Public Works and Paraxel). The panel's job roles include sales manager, marketing manager, executive officer, general counsel). All the statements in the measure were deemed relevant and met the requirements of content validity. Construct validity was confirmed in the original study, for the present research, principal components factor analysis with oblique rotation was run to assess construct validity. Mirroring Brown et al.'s (2002) results, this produced a two-factor solution, all items loaded on the correct factor with no significant cross-loadings. Concurrent validity has been established for the scale, given its extensive use by other scholars. Predictive validity was not possible for the present research as each study (2 and 3) was conducted once. However, as scale validity has been established by content validity and previous validity measures the assessment of criterion validity is not essential for this research.

4.18.2 Job Attributes & Org Values – Validity Assessment (Studies 2 & 3)

The job attributes scale was originally developed by Posner et al. (1981) and re-checked for validity by Powell and Goulet (1996). The original study contained 12 items, however, for the present study (i.e., Study 2) an additional three items found to be relevant in the exploratory research phase (in-depth interviews) were added to the scale. Because a modified scale's psychometric properties and consequently its quality may differ from the original scale, Brislin (1986) argues that the modified scale is transformed into an ad hoc scale. Consequently, the modified scale requires a careful examination of the scale's dimensionality, reliability and validity. Although some practitioners caution against modifying a priori validated scales, Brislin (1986) examines the possibilities offered by modification, one of which is that it can be tailored to specific groups of individuals or phenomenon which could be missed if the

scale was not modified. This informed the decision to add three job attributes of particular relevance to customer oriented workers to the existing scale (i.e., items on (i) decision-making authority, (ii) customer orientation, (iii) organisational customer orientation). These additional factors emerged during the in-depth interviews with customer service champions on what attracted them to their job. The addition of new items means that it is particularly important to establish construct validity.

In its original format, the measure has been widely cited and used in other studies (e.g., Carless, 2005; Cable and Graham, 2000; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Content validity was confirmed for the original study, for the present study each of the items were assessed during the exploratory research phase for relevancy. The three new items were derived from the exploratory research phase which guided the question development. As per the original study, principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was run. Significantly, the three new items loaded on the first factor. This factor accounts for 33% of the variance with factor number two accounting for 10%, factor three = 9%, factor four = 8%. Criterion validity was not possible to establish as this amended scale was used on only one occasion. The original 12 item scale was used in Study 3 on the basis that the addition of the three extra items made the scale very long, which can serve to discourage subjects from completing the question and because criterion validity could not be adequately established.

4.18.3 Person Job Fit – Validity Assessment (Study 2)

Although a number of iterations of person-job fit (PJ fit) scales exist, this scale was developed by Donavan et al. (2004) to specifically measure customer oriented workers' job satisfaction, commitment and organisational citizenship behaviours. Consequently, this scale was deemed the most appropriate PJ fit measure to use in the context of the present research study. Evidence of validity for the instrument as a measure of fit was found by correlating the instrument with the overall model. Measurement for the augmented model was found to be good and all indicators loaded on the appropriate latent variables and exhibited acceptable measurement properties. The PJ fit instrument has been used successfully in other studies (e.g., Grizzle et al., 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Stock and Hoyer 2005; Zablah et al.,

2016). For the present study, each of the three items were assessed by a group of business people for relevancy. Construct validity was tested and as per Brown et al. (2002), the items loaded correctly on the single factor. As the measures were taken from a previously validated and successfully measured scale, content and construct validity were sufficiently supportive without testing for criterion validity.

4.18.4 Role Autonomy – Validity Assessment (Study 2)

The five-point instrument was developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), however, not all the items in the original scale were used. The original scale has nine items, two were omitted as it was decided they were addressed by other items in the instrument. The items excluded were: 'the job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work'; 'the job allows me to decide on my own how to go about doing my job'. Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) developed the autonomy instrument and the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) following a comprehensive review of the literature and used existing measures where possible and modified or created new items as required.

Overall, the WDQ scales demonstrate good variability with little evidence of floor or ceiling effects, the scales demonstrate strong internal consistency reliability. Average reliability was 0.87, this is accepted as a good level of reliability required for psychometric adequacy (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The WDQ instrument has been cited and used extensively in other studies (e.g., Nahrgang et al., 2011; Paul et al., 2015; Brach et al., 2013; Bakker et al., 2007). Content validity was established by a group of business people, two items were deemed to overlap and were omitted. Construct validity was confirmed in the original study. This was replicated in the present study by running principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. This produced a one factor solution with all the items loading on the one factor. As the study was run only once, establishing criterion validity was not possible, however, the scale met the requirements for content validity and mirrored the original principal components factor analysis results with all items loading on one factor.

4.18.5 Job Skill and Complexity – Validity Assessment (Study 2)

The scale was developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) with acceptable validity and reliability thresholds were established in the original study. Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) found that the scales used in the Work Development Questionnaire (WDQ) demonstrate good variability and the scales demonstrate strong internal consistency reliability (i.e., 0.87). The instrument has been widely cited and employed in subsequent research. Content validity was completed by a group of business people who assessed each item for relevancy. Construct validity was assessed for Study 2 by running principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation producing a two-factor solution with items loading appropriately. Criterion validity was not possible to establish as the measure was used once however, all items were taken from a previously validated, successfully tested scale.

4.18.6 Organisational Attraction – Validity Assessment (Studies 2 & 3)

As this research is concerned with establishing when and why customer oriented service employees are attracted to service organisations, the scales examining organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions are particularly pertinent as they focus on establishing respondents' attitude and behavioural intention towards organisations. Organisational attraction effect was assessed using the instrument developed by Aiman–Smith et al. (2001) consisting of five items. Aiman-Smith and colleagues report coefficient alpha as 0.98 and their results indicated one factor for organisational attraction with all items loading on one factor. The instrument has been used extensively to assess effect in subsequent studies (e.g., Jaidi et al., 2011; Jiang and Iles, 2011). Content validity for the present study was assessed by a group of business people for relevancy and was informed by the exploratory research. Construct validity was confirmed in Aiman-Smith's (2001) original study, using principle factor analysis, the original study found one factor with all items loading on the single factor. This was replicated for the current studies.

4.18.7 Job Pursuit – Validity Assessment (Studies 2 & 3)

Respondents' intended behaviour was established by utilising a job pursuit (five item) scale designed by Aiman-Smith et al. (2001). Aiman-Smith and colleagues report coefficient alpha as 0.91 and their results indicated one factor for job pursuit with all items loading on one factor. Similarly, to the organisational attraction instrument developed by Aiman-Smith and colleagues, the job pursuit scale has been widely employed in other studies. As per the other scales in the instruments, the scale items were evaluated by a group of business people for content validity. For Study 3, one item was deemed unsuitable for the audience as it was aimed at a student sample (i.e., 'if this company visited campus I would want to speak with a representative'). Construct validity was confirmed in the original study by Aiman-Smith et al. (2001), using principal factor analysis one factor emerged and all items loaded on this factor, this was replicated for Studies 2 and 3. Given that the amended measure was only run once (i.e., in Study 3), it was not possible to test for criterion validity, however content and construct validity were supportive.

4.18.8 OCO Validity Assessment (Study 3)

Respondents' perception of organisational customer orientation was established using Grizzle et al.'s (2009) scale. This scale was designed to evaluate the effects of unit CO climate on the relationship between workers' level of CO and performance of COBs and influence on unit profitability. This is a 10-item scale and is extensively cited. Content validity was established with the assistance of a group of business people and two items were dropped due to lack of relevance (i.e., 'pay close attention to our customers after their orders have been delivered'; 'really care about customers even after their orders have been delivered'). Construct validity was confirmed in the original study using principal factor analysis, this was replicated in the amended scale with all items loading successfully on the single factor. It was not possible to test for criterion validity, as the study was only run once (i.e., in Study 3) however, content and construct validity were sufficiently supportive to omit testing for criterion validity.

4.18.9 Validity Analysis of Other Measures in the Instrument

Additional (non-Likert-type) measures were also used in the research instruments to assess attitude and behavioural intention of high (and low) customer oriented respondents and were either categorical or dichotomous in design. Behavioural measures in Study 2 included acceptable salary, interest in a job role and interest in a career. A measure of customer contact time and a global measure of organisational customer orientation was used to inform organisational attraction effect on high (low) customer oriented respondent (Study 2). Study 3 also included a global measure of individual customer orientation (informed by the work completed by Grizzle et al., 2009). Again, these measures were evaluated by a group of business people to assess face validity, particular emphasis was placed on the wording of each item with all items successful in meeting the requirements of content validity.

4.19 RELIABILITY

Malhotra and Peterson (2009) describe reliability as the extent to which a scale will produce consistent results when it is repeated. The higher the degree of association between the scores derived through a process of repeating the measurement then the more reliable the scale may be considered. Common tests for assessing reliability are test-retest, alternative-forms, and internal consistency methods, these are described in Table 16.

TABLE 16 RELIABILITY TESTS

Reliability Tests	Method/Procedure	Use
Test-Retest	Obtained by applying the same scale at different times to the same respondents and employing the same test artefacts (e.g., setting, instrument, instructions).	Often used in longitudinal studies.
Alternative/Parallel Forms Reliability	Achieved through applying two scales, similar in content with a different structure to the same respondents at different times.	Often used in cross-sectional studies.
Internal Consistency Reliability	Measure of reliability to evaluate degree to which different test items that probe the same construct produce similar results.	Often used to assess summated scales.

4.19.1 Reliability Testing in the Present Study

As a direct result of this research's reliance on scales, the most appropriate test to establish the study's reliability is the internal consistency reliability method, most specifically, the coefficient alpha (α) (Hair et al., 1998). In studies using summated scores of items to produce a combined total for a construct, the most widely accepted measure of internal reliability is Cronbach's alpha. This is a statistical calculation establishing the extent to which a given measurement is a consistent measure of a concept. Cronbach's alpha is determined through correlating the score for each scale item with the total score for each observation and then comparing this score to the variance for all individual item scores. For a scale to be considered reliable. Nunnally's (1978) seminal paper advises an alpha score (α) no less than .070. Table 17 details the Cronbach Alpha scores for each of the measurement scales used in Studies 2 and 3 established using SPSS (V. 24). Tests for skewness and kurtosis were acceptable in all cases: skewness (+1 to -1) and kurtosis (+3 to -3).

TABLE 17 RELIABILITY TESTS (STUDY 2 & 3)

Scale	Items	Study 2 Cronbach Alpha	Study 3 Cronbach Alpha
Customer Orientation (overall)	12	.924	.953
- CO (Needs Dimension)	6	.854	.933
- CO (Enjoyment Dimension)	6	.881	.934
Job Attributes (Study 2)	15	.809	n/a
Job Attributes (Study 3)	12	n/a	.862
Person Job Fit	3	.785	n/a
Role Autonomy	7	.938	n/a
Job Complexity	9	.899	n/a
Organisational Customer Orientation	8	n/a	.945
Job Pursuit (Study 2)	6	.965	n/a
Job Pursuit (Study 3)	5	n/a	.940
Organisational Attraction	5	.935	.950

4.20 DATA TRANSFORMATION

This is a key element in the data preparation process and involves converting data from one format to another (Malhotra, 2009). It involves altering the original detail into a new more meaningful format. Specifically, the summation of variables facilitates

more sensitive and advanced statistical analysis to be conducted both for individual variables and across constructs (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel, and Page, 2014). Summated variables are created when individual items of multi-item scales are combined and averaged using SPSS to produce a summated figure or score for each item. This process creates a new variable for each construct in the SPSS data file. The next section of this chapter examines the extent to which the research instruments used in the quantitative phase of the study are accurate and dependable. This is established by assessment of a measure's reliability and validity (Malhorta, 2009).

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results if repeated (Hair et al., 2014). It is established by repeatedly measuring the construct. Depending on the parameters of the study, there are a number of tests which can establish the reliability of a measurement tool, these include test-retest, alternative forms or internal consistency (Hair et al., 2014). Validity may be defined as the extent to which the findings accurately reflect the phenomena being investigated and reflect true differences in what is being measured rather than systematic or random error. According to Malhorta (2009), a lack of reliability presents negative evidence for validity, of itself reliability does not imply validity.

4.20.1 Dummy Variables

A dummy variable is a numerical variable used to represent sub-groups of the sample and is often used to distinguish different treatment groups or groups with different characteristics. An advantage that dummy variables offer is that despite being a nominal level variable, they can be treated statistically as an interval-level variable. For the data preparation and analysis for Study 2, four separate dummy variables were created. A dummy variable (Autonomy) was created to represent the two autonomy manipulation treatments; the high autonomy treatment was dummy coded as 1, the low autonomy treatment was dummy coded as 2. A dummy variable of job skill and complexity (JobHL) was created by performing a median split on the continuous fixed factor of job skill and complexity with cases above the 50th percentile coded (1) and those below coded as (2) representing high and low perceptions of job skill/complexity.

Another fixed factor of customer orientation was created by performing a median split on the continuous factor of customer orientation for each of the 120 respondents. This created a new dummy variable (CO_split), with cases above the 50th percentile coded (1) and cases below this coded as (2) to represent high and low CO respectively (MacCallum et al., 2002). In addition, another separate and distinct dummy categorisation of customer orientation was implemented, whereby customer orientation was split into quartiles using the quartiles option in the frequencies demand (i.e., Quartiles). This created a continuum of customer orientation levels and so takes consideration of nuances and subtle differences between levels of customer orientation, thereby giving more granular detail. This categorisation into four levels of customer orientation was also necessary to facilitate analyses with factors requiring more than two categories (e.g., PROCESS Macro for SPSS analyses cannot be performed using a dichotomous variable as a mediator). This process of creating dummy variables was replicated for Study 3, however instead of job skill, a dummy variable was created for customer contact, the high contact treatment was dummy coded as 1, the low contact treatment was dummy coded as 2.

4.21 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistics refer to theories and methods applied to quantitative data, i.e., a statistic is a number describing a sample (Moore et al., 2008). The data collected from the survey questionnaires were analysed and quantified with various statistical tests including analysis of variance, analysis of covariance and contrast analysis in SPSS and the PROCESS Macro Procedure for SPSS (24). Initially, descriptive statistics were performed, this allowed data to be summarised in a more compact form with findings presented in tables or graphically in charts allowing patterns to be discerned (Lovie, 1986). Next, more complex statistical tests using inferential statistics are conducted to facilitate hypothesis confirmation. According to Collis and Hussey (2010), statisticians draw a distinction between descriptive statistics and inferential statistics; while descriptive statistics are used to summarise the data and present the output on tables or charts, inferential statistics lead to conclusions about a target population (Kervin, 1995).

4.21.1 Univariate of Analysis; Univariate of Covariance

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) require specific assumptions to be met prior to use (all of which were met for the present research) including an assumption of homogeneity of groups, normal distribution of data, independence of observations and sufficient sample size. ANOVA is used to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of three or more independent (unrelated) groups (Cuevas, Febrero, and Fraiman, 2004). The test compares the means between the groups and determines whether any of those means are statistically significantly different (Hair et al., 2014). Specifically, it tests the null hypothesis. As discussed by Cuevas, Febrero, and Fraiman (2004) ANCOVA is used to test the main and interaction effects of categorical variables on a continuous dependent variable while controlling for the effects other (selected) continuous variables, which co-vary with the dependent variable, these control variables are referred to as 'covariates' (Cronk, 2017). Therefore an ANCOVA interrogates the effects of the categorical and independent variables on an interval dependent variable, after effects of interval covariates are controlled.

4.21.2 Contrast Analysis

In Study 3, after running ANCOVA analysis, for hypotheses S3H8, S3H9, S3H10, S3H11 which examine 2 way and 3 way interactions (i.e., between role autonomy, customer contact and customer orientation), the data is tested to further interrogate the results using the contrast analysis function in SPSS for each of these hypotheses. Contrast analysis provides further clarity as to where exactly the differences between the groups occurs. While ANCOVA determines statistically significant differences between the means of the groups (Cuevas, Febrero, and Fraiman, 2004), contrasts are used to test for differences among the levels of a factor providing a comparison between the mean of each level. Accordingly, the contrast test in SPSS removes ambiguity in the results revealing where the differences are between the groups.

4.22 MEDIATION ANALYSIS: BARON & KENNY (1986); HAYES, (2013)

According to Baron and Kenny (1986) to establish mediation, three steps must be followed:

- regress the mediator (i.e., CO) on the independent variable (i.e. role autonomy) this should result in the independent variable affecting the mediator;
- regress the dependent variable (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions) on the independent variable (i.e., role autonomy), in this instance, the independent variable must affect the dependent variable;
- regressing the dependent variable (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions) on the independent variable (i.e., role autonomy) and the mediator (i.e., customer orientation), this should result in the mediator affecting the dependent variable. The effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable must be less in the third equation than the second.

Since its publication, Baron and Kenny's (1986) seminal paper on testing mediation became the failsafe primary option for researchers in mediation analysis. However, dissenting views exist in the literature questioning aspects of Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach. Critics include Zhao, Lynch, and Chen, (2010) who argue that while Baron and Kenny champion full mediation as the optimal result, in reality most studies report partial mediation, while the direct path is seldom predicted and the unexplained direct path can in fact denote an overlooked mediator. In addition, Zhao et al. (2010) argue that when testing the significance of an indirect effect, the more rigorous and powerful bootstrap test developed by Hayes (2013) is a more effective, simpler tool.

Hayes' PROCESS macro is a computational tool for path analysis-based moderation and mediation analysis (Hayes, 2013). The bootstrapping method is a non-parametric, re-sampling test, it does not violate assumptions of normality and is recommended for small sample sizes. Bootstrapping involves assigning measures of accuracy (defined in terms of bias, variance, confidence intervals, prediction error or some other such measure) to sample estimates. Significance of the indirect effect produced in PROCESS is tested using 5,000 bootstraps, if the confidence interval result produced does not include zero, then the indirect effect is considered to be significant. Both Baron and Kenny (1986) and Hayes (2013) are used to test the mediation effect in this

research. Accordingly, the mediation tests were conducted using the traditional hypothesised method using SPSS regression analysis (Baron and Kenny, 1986), then, the analysis was conducted with bootstrap resampling using Hayes (2013) PROCESS macro plug-in for SPSS.

4.23 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 18 (Study 2) and Table 19 (Study 3) detail the descriptive statistics; means, standard deviation, correlations, reliabilities for the dependent variables (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit) and the dependent variables (for Likert-type scale measures) included in the analyses. Correlations were as expected and reliabilities of all measures met psychometric norms and standards (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

TABLE 18 MEANS, SDS, INTER-CORRELATIONS, RELIABILITES, IVS & DVS

	Variables	**M**	**SD**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
1	Individual CO	7.76	1.15	(.92)	.38**	.24**	-.02	-.01	.31**	.29**
2	Job Attributes	4.23	.424	.38**	(.81)	.29**	.34**	.40**	.29**	.26**
3	PJ Fit	7.18	1.16	.24**	.29**	(.79)	.24**	.28**	.50**	.48**
4	Role Autonomy	3.64	.949	-.02	.34**	.24**	(.93)	.74**	.55**	.60**
5	Job Skill;	3.91	.731	-.01	.40**	.28**	.74**	(.90)	.57**	.64**
6	Attraction	5.50	1.14	.31**	.28**	.50**	.55**	.74**	(.93)	.88**
7	Job Pursuit	5.37	1.37	.28**	.26**	.48**	.60**	.64**	.88**	(.97)

Note: Coefficient alpha included in parentheses on diagonal.
**$p < 01$

TABLE 19 MEANS, SDS, INTER-CORRELATIONS, RELIABILITES, IVS & DVS

	Variables	**M**	**SD**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Individual CO	7.59	1.37	(.95)	.10	.74**	.08	.24**
2	Job Attributes	4.22	.58	.10	(.87)	.006	.059	.12
3	OCO	3.84	.68	.74**	.006	(.94)	.53**	.56**
4	Org. Attraction	4.71	1.28	.08	.059	.53**	(.95)	.71**
5	Job Pursuit	4.79	1.49	.24**	.12	.56**	.71**	(.94)

Note: Coefficient alpha included in parentheses on diagonal.
**$p < 01$

4.24 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the empirical aims of the research and discusses the research rationale and examines the methodology used in the study. The research paradigm (i.e., pragmatic with a strongly positivist bias) is discussed, the methodological foundations delineated and the research design is presented. Given the study's experimental underpinning, the central tenets of experimental research are outlined and applied to the current research. The research designs are presented along with the measures employed. In keeping with the principles of experimental research, justification for the measures chosen is presented, where applicable modifications to measurement scales and items are explained. Sample generation and sampling are fundamentally important in experimental research and are discussed in detail. Next, details of the pilot studies are outlined and implications for the experimental studies is discussed. Of central importance to experimental research are validity and reliability outcomes for each of the measures employed, accordingly, these are presented and explained comprehensively. Finally, the primary data collection process, implementation, data preparation including creation of dummy variables and statistical tests used in the analyses are presented.

As outlined, the exploratory research study (i.e., Study 1) plays a central role in informing the experimental research process, the findings from this study are presented in full in the next chapter.

~ CHAPTER ~

5

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

CHAPTER FIVE
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

While primarily positivist, this exploratory study – Study 1 (as outlined in the methodology chapter) uses a mixed method approach. This chapter presents the findings from the first phase of the study, the preliminary exploratory research. The research findings from the two sets of in-depth interviews conducted (i.e., with customer service champions and managers tasked with the recruitment and management of customer facing employees) are presented with the results analysed using thematic content analysis and NVivo 10 for Mac.

Study 1 is an exploratory study, the objective of which is to inform the experimental research studies (2 and 3). Study 1 specifically addresses the first research objective by investigating what it is that customer oriented workers love about their job and what attracted them to their employing organisation. The study also provides input from the organisation through the manger interviews. The first research objective is:

> **investigate and identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted to a service organisation and (ii) are most likely to pursue a front line employee (FLE) role in a service organisation.**

5.1.2 Structure of the Chapter

Initially, the customer service champion results are presented in section 5.2, this is followed by the findings from the manager interviews in section 5.3. Finally, the results of both sets of interviews are discussed with respect to the research objectives and the literature in section 5.4.

5.2 RESULTS - CUSTOMER SERVICE CHAMPIONS

Attracting customer-oriented employees is largely examined from the organisations' perspective in the literature. Much less information is available examining attraction (of customer oriented job seekers) from the individual candidates' viewpoint, and there is a dearth of information examining what customer oriented individuals seek from a service organisation employer. Exploratory research in the form of in-depth interviews was designed to help address this imbalance and identify what organisational attributes and personal needs influence customer oriented candidates' decision-making processes. Each question is designed to address specific variables identified in the literature as being important in influencing, moderating or mediating customer orientation. To remove any ambiguity in the presentation of the findings, respondents are coded 'A'-'I'. Customer service champions were interviewed from Eir, Ericsson, Bank of Ireland, Bearing Point, DoneDeal, Monart Destination Spa, Sam McCauley Chemists, Meteor and Chevron Training. Questions addressing major themes which emerged from the literature were asked of the customer service champions, the findings are presented thematically to address the three broad areas of investigation and include a respondent vignette for illustration purposes.

1. Customer oriented behaviours (what makes a customer service champion)
2. Factors influencing job satisfaction and happiness at work
3. Attraction and job pursuit factors

5.2.1 Defining Customer Focused Behaviours

The interviewees were recognised by their employer as being highly customer oriented. In most cases, dealing with customers daily is a central element of their job. Although the specific role of each customer champion and their skill level varied greatly (for example, the occupations of the interviewees included Director of Customer Operations, Head of Customer Experience, Retail assistant, Waitress, Business Development Manager, Customer Experience Manager, Head of Customer Communications) customer contact was a defining factor in each role. As this group of individuals have been identified as customer service champions, it was an appropriate opportunity to investigate what they understand as good customer service.

Exceeding expectations and 'going above and beyond for the customer' emerged as a recurrent theme. Building trust, being credible, honest and transparent and 'actually getting the job done' were cited by participants as being integral to good customer service. The interviewees were asked what they see as the factors e.g., attributes and attitudes that make a good customer service employee. This gave rise to some recurrent themes, participants identified many of the same or similar attributes as important in for a FLE, these included exceeding customer expectations, willingness to help and listening to customers, examples of these are shown in Figure 10.

FIGURE 10 CUSTOMER FOCUSED BEHAVIOUR

Employee Vignettes: Customer focused behaviour

[It's about] *"exceeding expectations and going above and beyond for the customer and looking to find a solution to their problem no matter how complex it is. Working as a team and the team influence is very important, good customer service people will work together in a team environment and motivate and inspire each other in finding solutions for customers". (Participant C).*

"Personality and willingness to help, there are so many – however, these two are key to being an excellent customer service employee. It is also important to enjoy your job" (Participant E).

"Listening is important also being able to understand what it is they are looking for [i.e.,] *what is the 'pain point'. Sometimes it can be ambiguous, the customer may think the problem is one thing, but you need to be able to look at it analytically, break it down and determine what it is – and it may be different to what the customer thought. To do this you have got to be credible, customers will stop ringing you if nothing actually happens, so delivery is crucial". (Participant B).*

"Good customer service to me is to exceed expectations. It is about doing something for the customer where they didn't see it coming". (Participant H).

Each of the customer service champions believed they excelled at customer service because of how well they relate to customers and address their needs and provide solutions. This theme of being 'interested in customers' and 'caring' about the customer's experience with the organisation was highlighted in all the customer service champions' interviews. In addition, each participant had examples of how they regularly use their initiative to exceed customer expectations and 'go above and beyond' in finding solutions for customers. Many of the participants saw this type of behaviour as inherent in their role and found it extremely rewarding to exceed their customers' expectations. Most described how the effort that they took in dealing with customers' issues was not necessarily very great, but it went beyond what the customer

expected and in many cases 'delighted' the customer. A feeling of satisfaction in delighting customers was discussed by some interviewees who mentioned the 'buzz' of turning a customer around (from a negative to a positive viewpoint) through working with them and using their initiative to find solutions in sometimes difficult circumstances. While 'empathy' and 'caring' about customers emerged as important, another theme was by the majority of the participants (and in some instances multiple times) was the importance of an employee's ability to deliver (i.e., to get the job done) as a key element of being a customer service champion. Examples of the customer service champions' views on the importance of ability are provided in Figure 11.

FIGURE 11 CUSTOMER FOCUSED BEHAVIOUR (ABILITY)

Employee Vignettes: Customer focused behaviour

"I think they need to be a problem-solver and that may be fixing the problem on the customer side and/or fixing the problem internally in the service organisation side". (Participant A).

"To me, I see [good customer service] *as trust, transparency, credibility but you still need to be able to deliver. There's no point being transparent if you can't deliver, so it is a combination of factors with delivery being crucial. They go hand-in-hand; you build trust and credibility by delivering". (Participant I).*

Every participant stated their employer has a strong focus on customer service, which was not unexpected as the firms had won customer service awards, or voiced publicly their commitment to customer service. Most interviewees contended that customer service is their employers' strongest focus, an example is detailed in Figure 12

FIGURE 12 CUSTOMER FOCUSED BEHAVIOUR (ABILITY)

Employee Vignettes: Customer focused behaviour

"This [customer service] *is key to our success. Our culture embraces the importance of our customers, customers are like air to us". (Participant D).*

Two contributors discussed how customer feedback and surveys are important barometers indicating performance in this area. Three participants referred to on-going staff training and building specialist skills as being indicative of the value the organisation places on meeting customer needs.

5.2.2 Job Satisfaction Factors

In almost every instance, the participants considered customer interaction a key element central to enjoying their job. Participants referenced many different factors that influenced their job satisfaction, common themes were making the customer happy, variety and being trusted and empowered to do the job. Another common factor was the satisfaction from being recognised to have done a good job. Of central importance and mentioned by all participants was being trusted by the organisation to do the job and having the authority to make customer related decisions. This was also recognised as central to building customer relationships. Variety and being busy were also identified by most participants, as was the satisfaction of finding a solution to customer problems and receiving positive customer feedback. Being trusted to make decisions was a common theme and seemed to significantly influence employee satisfaction and is echoed in the literation (Stock, 2016). Participants discussed building relationships with customers and the importance of having the authority to make decisions without referring to 'head office'. Examples of respondents' views on job satisfaction specifically related to autonomy and trust are detailed in Figure 13.

FIGURE 13 JOB SATISFACTION

Employee Vignette: Job Satisfaction

[Our MD says] *"I'd prefer you make the wrong decision than no decision at all". This gives us permission to use our initiative, so try, don't leave it. It's a culture of trust and that means so much. It is all about giving responsibility to employees. We have the choice of working from home, but we genuinely prefer to be in the office. (Participant E).*

"There are two things I enjoy most, firstly it is recognition - to be seen to have done a good job and having come from an engineering background it is probably when you fix something you get a buzz out of it and it's the same buzz when you fix something for the customer". (Participant A).

"I am very happy here, mostly I think probably because I have a level of responsibility and accountability and [the company] recognises your skills and appreciate them". (Participant D).

"It's not always going to be successful, but the collaboration and interaction and fixing a problem for a customer or fixing the relationship is very satisfying" (Respondent I).

"For me job satisfaction it goes back to the virtual circle of doing a good job and having this reinforced by the customer which further motivates me as an employee. It is important that you enjoy your job particularly in a customer facing role, when people enjoy their job this is apparent (as Nicola Hodson, General Manager Marketing & Operations Microsoft UK) said 'do what you love, come as you are". (Participant C).

In discussing what they loved about their jobs, participants mentioned meeting people, being trusted to do their job, variety, their team, solving customer problems, recognition for a job well-done and a strong positive worker-customer dyad (particularly in the case of long term customer relationships).

5.2.3 Organisational Attraction

The interviewees were asked to discuss what appealed to them most about the organisation (before they joined the company). Again, a number of recurrent themes emerged, some of the participants had dealt with the firm before they joined or knew people who worked there and this strongly influenced their decisions to seek to work for the firm. The attraction factors that were mentioned most frequently were the job itself, pride in working for the organisation, the job challenge, the brand and fit with the organisation itself. For example, one participant in discussing the importance of the firm's reputation stated that as they themselves have high personal standards, it was important to them to work for a company with similar high standards. Similarly, the idea of being proud to work for the organisation emerged as a powerful attribute for most of the interviewees. Other attraction factors included on-going training, respect shown to staff and location. The brand was referenced as an important attraction factor by many of the participants. Figure 14 provides examples of what attracted the participants to the organisation.

FIGURE 14 ORGANISATION ATTRACTION

Employee Vignettes: Organisation Attraction

"The main attraction for me was the challenge, the type of organisation it is and the culture". (Participant D).

"The brand was important to me - I was attracted by what [the company] *stood for, it was purpose built, and it has an excellent reputation and I have always worked in high end establishments, so it is important to me because I have high standards that these are reflected in where I work and how I approach my job. An added bonus is that it is close to my home (about 5mins away)". (Participant F).*

5.3 RESULTS - MANAGER INTERVIEWS

The 'manager' questions covered a range of topics, which were identified from the literature review as being important from the organisation's perspective in developing a customer oriented culture, improving organisational performance outcomes and identifying, recruiting and retaining customer oriented employees. Managers were interviewed from Eir, Ericsson, Bearing Point, DoneDeal, Monart Destination Spa, Sam McCauley Chemists, Meteor, Bank of Ireland, Chevron Training. Eleven questions (addressing the over-arching themes which emerged from the literature) were asked of the manager cohorts. As per the customer service champion interviews, to remove ambiguity from the presentation of the findings, respondents are coded J-R. The findings are presented thematically and address the overall areas of investigation.

1. Importance of organisational customer orientation (OCO)
2. Importance of CO
3. Employee job satisfaction and altruistic behaviour
4. Attracting customer oriented workers

5.3.1 Importance of Organisational Customer Orientation

The organisations included in the study have all a strong commitment to customer service; the managers were asked what it is that has helped them to achieve high customer service standards. The companies involved in retail and hospitality articulated the strongest benefits accruing from worker customer orientation. All participants related how a customer service focus is crucial to their organisation's success and the calibre of the customer service employees was highlighted as being an integral element. Staff training and matching the employee to the culture of the organisation (person-organisation fit) was also referenced for its influence in most cases (Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011). All participants discussed how their firms' commitment to customer service is maintained and improved through on-going training and improving standards through using mystery shoppers and regular customer surveys. Trust was mentioned in all cases, in addition, duration in the market, expertise, culture and respecting employees and staff, tailored solutions, exceeding customer expectations and strong customer relationships were also cited as

instrumental in achieving high levels of customer service. Figure 15 provides examples of the managers' perspectives on organisational customer orientation.

FIGURE 15 ORGANISATIONAL CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Manager Vignettes: Organisation Attraction

"A lot of times when we are recruiting staff, we don't necessarily look for the best previous experience for the role, but we look for the best personality and the best customer service skills, a person with less experience may have that WOW' personality and dedication to customer service; this person, despite having less experience than other candidates will get the job" (Respondent N).

"Our focus as an organisation on customer service overall is the key to our success. We consistently focus on our service standards, we focus on auditing our own customer service delivery and we focus on our training and we have invested significantly in training". (Respondent R).

"It's ensuring that our staff have the right levels of knowledge and can impart this knowledge to the customer. An interest in and knowledge of the industry in which they are working is also important, so that they can put alternative options and solutions to the customer rather than just doing the specific task (going above and beyond). Another factor in achieving high customer service standards is that we offer tailored solutions for our customers as opposed to a 'one size fits all' approach". (Respondent K).

5.3.2 Customer Orientation

The importance of a customer service focus was investigated, with each participant specifying how critical this is for their organisation. Given the depth of research into the benefits of customer orientation, this was not unexpected (e.g., Gaur, Sharma, Herjanto, and Kingshott, 2017; Grizzle et al., 2009; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Moon, Hur, and Hyun, 2017). A number of participants discussed how an increasingly competitive environment intensified the importance of a customer-oriented focus and allowed their organisation to differentiate themselves on the basis of customer orientation or customer focus. Customer orientation and strong customer service was identified by a number of participants as vital for sustained success with increased resources being allocated to maintain and improve standards. A top-down approach to championing a customer service focus and adopting a culture of customer orientation was also referenced by a majority of the participants. One firm implemented a policy whereby Net Promoter Score (NPS) accounts for 35% of all retail staffs' goals. All the participants confirm that customer

expectations of customer service are growing. One participant discussed how speed of response is now as important for customers as price. The level of competition in the market was also raised, one participant asserted that increased competition means customers have opportunities to 'work the market' and achieve the optimum price. In this scenario, some customers prioritise price and customer service, others will put more emphasis on customer service. Two participants discussed how the most challenging customers are often those who have experienced poor customer service previously (perhaps from the company or elsewhere) and in these instances in particular management of customer expectations is crucial to prevent customer dissatisfaction. The managers were questioned whether they believe customer orientation has a behavioural or psychological underpinning. There were mixed views on this topic, some participants felt that customer orientation can be taught 'to a certain extent' as there are vital rules and processes that need to be followed to ensure that correct procedures are followed. However, all the participants believed that the personality element was crucial to facilitate engagement with customers and needed to be inherent in the employee and supported by organisational processes. There was a consensus that engaging with customers encapsulated by the notion of personality is not something that can be taught and is a necessary ingredient to precipitate positive employee-customer engagement, examples are detailed in Figure 16. Table 20 details factors identified by managers as important in influencing CO.

FIGURE 16 IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Manager Vignettes: Importance of Customer Orientation

"From a service perspective, I believe I really know we are successful if the frontline staff tell me, not even the customer. The frontline staff are the ones dealing with service issues, so if they feel that service issues are getting better (because they deal with it constantly) that's more relevant. So, for me it's great if the frontline staff believe that efforts are being made to improve and that they can see improvements this can almost mean more than stats saying the same thing". "The key differentiator between our competitors and us is the actual customer service, it's the person behind the till, we are a strong brand, but the customer is more likely to connect and identify with the person than the brand". (Respondent Q).

"I think that it is personality driven more than something that is learned. It needs to be clear to the customer that the agent cares". (Respondent P).

TABLE 20 ATTRIBUTES IMPACTING CO (NO. REFERENCES IN BRACKETS)

Communication Skills (4)	Delivers Results (4)	Confidence & Self-esteem (3)
Dependable (3)	Empathetic (3)	Expertise (3)
Good Listeners (3)	Happy (3)	Obliging & Helpful (3)
People-Person (3)	Resilience (3)	Team Player, Multi-tasker (3)
Good Personality (2)	Loves the Job (2)	Professional (2)
Respectful (2)	Customer Connection (2)	Willing to Learn (2)
Emotionally Intelligent (1)	Enthusiasm (1)	Perceptive (1)

5.3.3 Job Satisfaction and Altruistic Behaviour

The managers were questioned about whether their best customer service employees enjoy their jobs and enjoy dealing with customers. A general consensus among participants is that employees who enjoy their job more will have stronger people skills coupled with a strong ability to perform their role. One participant (respondent O) stated that in their experience some workers are people-focused while others are task-focussed, and when task focused people are placed in customer facing roles this results in a "complete disconnect". Other participants echoed this view, one of whom said that there is a certain type of person (a positive, enthusiastic person) who excels at customer service, but the caveat is that such staff must be nurtured and encouraged by their employer. A number of the participants' state that enjoying their job is very important for customer service staff as it becomes evident to customers whether or not the employee is happy in their role, which in turn impacts customer satisfaction. However, this question did produce a significant divergence in answers depending on where on the spectrum of complexity and skill level the specific customer-facing role sits. In the organisations with more technical (highly skilled) customer service roles (e.g., communications solutions consultant) the notion of helping out with tasks was

not relevant and did not seem to be fostered. In lower skilled sectors, a willingness to help colleagues and step into another role to assist the team was valued by managers. Teamwork and altruistic behaviours are accepted as being indicative of high customer orientation level, outlined in Figure 17. Accordingly, participants were asked whether their best customer service employees are more likely to be team players. In general, most of the participants agreed that teamwork and going 'above and beyond' is a requirement of the job and is expected by employers.

FIGURE 17 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOURS

Manager Vignettes: Employee Satisfaction and Altruistic Behaviours

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"People who are good at customer service enjoy it more and tend to stay longer at it. You know straight away when someone doesn't enjoy it and those sorts of people don't last long in customer facing roles". (Respondent J).

"We want people new to the company to have the ability to work well in a team and integrate themselves into the organisation and enjoy working in the team and bring some positive energy". (Respondent L).

"We don't have a 'roll up the sleeves' mentality. There are formalised structures in roles and the more efficient and dependable people know how to allocate resources effectively to get the best result". (Respondent K).

"Certainly, team playing and stepping into other areas (on a pan-store basis) and dealing with customer queries (including customers you didn't deal with initially) is vital for customer service employees". (Respondent O).

"Sometimes during an interview, [customer focus] *it can be a feeling you get from a person, you just know that they will fit in". (Respondent M).*

5.3.4 Attracting Customer Oriented Candidates

This question seeks to establish what it is that managers believes attracts customer-oriented candidates. A key attractor mentioned in almost all responses was the power of the brand and leveraging the brand to attract strong candidates. The consensus was that the brand and brand image play an important role in attracting the right people by offering an opportunity to work with a respected, innovative organisation offering autonomous roles along with development and training opportunities being a very powerful recruitment instrument. Fit between the person and the organisation and the job was recognised as important, the managers view synergy between the personality

of the job candidate and the organisation as a key attractor. Many of the organisations have worker profiles on their website recruitment pages, where existing employees outline their roles, employment opportunities and their (positive) experiences with their employer. This approach is a strategy used by many of the organisations and is designed to provide living evidence of the organisation's culture and values and to appeal directly to like-minded job seekers and is a key recruitment strategy, whereby the employer attempts to connect directly with desired employees.

5.4 DISCUSSION EXPLORATORY RESEARCH FINDINGS - STUDY 1

The objective of the exploratory research is to gain insight into what attractors influence customer oriented workers' perspectives on organisational attraction and their job pursuit intentions prior to commencing the experimental research phase. The exploratory study specifically identifies role autonomy as being important to all the participants, irrespective of their level of job satisfaction. Other factors that attracted the customer service champions included organisational values, prestige and fit with the job. However, role autonomy or some adaptation was identified as important by all participants. Table 21 outlines a synopsis of the findings in the exploratory research, the main findings are discussed in the following sections, they centre on:

- importance of role autonomy;
- importance of co and job skill/complexity (from employers' perspective);
- organisational attractors for customer oriented workers.

TABLE 21 FACTORS INFLUENCING OCBS, JOB SATISFACTION, ATTRACTION

Issue investigated	Factors Identified	Perspective from Literature
Customer focused Behaviours	Enjoying meeting customer needs	Supported in the CO research stream, it forms the basis for Brown et al.'s (2002) CO scale. Identified as central to the CO of service employees (Hennig-Thurau, 2004).
	Openness to perform OCBs	The relevance of OCBs is explored by Liu et al. (2017) who finds their absence precipitates negative outcomes including reduced job satisfaction and poor performance.
	Satisfaction felt when efforts appreciated by customers	Demonstrates the enjoyment (Brown al., 2002) customer oriented workers take from seeing their efforts are appreciated by customers. This supports the mirror effect (Zablah et al., 2016), i.e., the outside-in and inside-out effect of satisfaction, whereby FLE satisfaction positively influences customer satisfaction and vice-versa.
Job Satisfaction	Task variety, trust	Supports Stock (2016) who argues that task variety is important FLEs, its absence leads to boreout and

Issue investigated	Factors Identified	Perspective from Literature
		increased turnover. Trust/autonomy both discussed in the literature (e.g., Liu et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2015). Autonomy in FLE roles increasingly seen as important.
	Freedom to make decisions without consulting HQ	Self-efficacy and autonomy are increasingly common themes in CO literature and have empirically been shown to positively influence FLE and customer satisfaction (Stock et al, 2016; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al. 2016). Homburg et al. (2011) argue that FLE-customer relationship are unequal, Matthews et al (2017) and Sekiguchi et al., (2017) posit that autonomy helps restore equilibrium between both parties.
	Role autonomy	While autonomy is considered a universal resource (Babakus et al., 2017; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014) it appeared important to all parties irrespective of their level of job skill. It manifested as empowerment, being trusted to do the job and decision-making authority.
Attraction & Pursuit	Suitability of the job.	The emergence of P-J fit as important was anticipated. Research demonstrates FLE roles are often stressful (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018) and CO buffers negative effects.
	Prestige, and the values of the company	The influence of congruence between candidates and companies' values/image on job seekers' attitudes/ intentions is well supported. Infers that attraction/pursuit are strongly associated (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017; Marstand et al., 2018).

5.4.1 Attractors for Customer Oriented Workers

When asked what attracted them to their employing organisation, all the workers in the higher skill category referred to the reputation of the organisation (Bagozzi, 2018; Boukis, Gounaris, & Lings, 2017), being a leader in the market was important to these workers (Menguc et al., 2017), as were the opportunities offered by the organisation including training, and working with skilled colleagues (Babakus et al., 2017). Self-value is discussed in the literature, Harold and Ployhart (2008) posit that applicants who perceive themselves as offering more value or having higher self-worth may use attribute information more discriminately, and may attach greater weighting to some job and organisational attributes above others (Trank et al., 2002). This is evident in the exploratory findings, where only the lower skilled participants referred to more basic job attributes such as the location of the organisation (i.e., close to their home) as important in their decision to pursue the role. Both of these low skilled workers were female, this is discussed in the literature; prior research supports the perspective

that gender plays a role in job seeker attraction with some job attributes more attractive to women vs. men (Stock, 2016).

The customer service champions appeared to value their marketability and actively sought to work in an organisation which espoused values that matched their own (Jaworski & Kohli, 2017; Kashif et al., 2017). As well as the reputation of the organisation, pride was referenced by both high and low skilled customer oriented workers as being important (HoKim, 2017). The respondents were clear that it was important they worked for an organisation they felt proud of. Research studies (Bagozzi, 2018; Boukis et al., 2017; HoKim, 2017; Jaworski and Kohli, 2017; Kashif et al., 2017) suggest that pride effectively communicates success to an individual's peers and therefore enhances the individual's social standing with subjective experiences of pride reinforcing behaviours that produce such feelings. The exploratory findings provide empirical support to Weiner (1985) who used the assumptions of social identity theory and attribution theory to conceptualise the relationship between organisational pride and strong organisational identification. Significantly, the exploratory findings substantiate Cable and Turban's (2003) findings which indicate that pride in their employing organisation is particularly important for high performing workers with strong feelings of self-value displayed by the customer service champions in the exploratory study.

As anticipated, the concept of fit emerged as important for the participants who referenced how the job matched their skills (i.e., person-job fit) and how the organisation reflected their values (i.e., person-organisation fit) as being important in their decision-making process. Fit is a fundamental aspect influencing attraction; person-job fit relates directly to the degree to which there is congruence between a worker's skill-set, knowledge and abilities and the particular demands of the job. Within the wider field of fit, the construct of person-job fit (PJ) has been shown to be positively related to job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviours, performance (Avery et al., 2015; Anaza, 2012; Farrell and Oczkowski, 2012; Gazzoli et al., 2013; Grizzle et al., 2009; Priyadarshi, 2011) and negatively related to turnover and customer oriented deviance (Babakus et al., 2009; Jiang and Iles, 2011; Priyadarshi, 2011). This is supported within the JD-R model, a good fit between the

worker and the job and organisation indicates that job demands and resources are balanced (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014).

Nolan (2013) suggests that job candidates use employer brand images to form assertions or beliefs about how well they fit or match an organisation (person-organisation; PO fit), this forms a perception of the person-job fit (Harold and Nolan, 2009; Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011). This is reinforced by Catanzaro et al. (2010) who describes how individuals are attracted to organisations that they perceive are similar to themselves and portray values the job seeker admires (Schneider, 1987; Schneider and Bowen, 1985). This is undoubtedly evidenced in the exploratory findings, the influence of 'similar others' was broached by several participants who admired the quality of people already working in the organisation and this increased their interest in the company. This influence of similar others is outlined in Heider's balanced state theory (Heider Fritz et al., 1958) and Byrne's similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971) which suggest that people have a fundamental need for validation of their perspectives, which can be met by interacting with and working with similar others (i.e., like-minded people).

5.4.2 Role Autonomy

The findings strongly support the hypothesis that role autonomy is a key attractor for workers in FLE role (irrespective of their level of job complexity). Participants discussed the value of building relationships with customers and the importance of having the authority to make decisions without referring to 'head office'. Autonomy or a variation of the term was referenced by each participant, thereby indicating its significance. The JD-R model identifies autonomy as a factor with universal importance for all workers (Bakker et al., 2007; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). However, the literature does indicate that autonomy may have a particular significance for customer facing workers given their propensity to work in FLE roles (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Menguc et al., 2015). This particular importance of autonomy for FLEs may in part be due to the fact that customer facing roles are inherently unequal (Homburg et al., 2011). The idea of 'the customer is king' as

debated by Homburg et al. (2011) considers the unequal relationship that exists between FLEs and customers, with FLEs often playing a deferential role.

However, role autonomy appears to help equalise the relationship, Hennig-Thurau (2004) posited that autonomy provides the worker with more dignity in their encounters. This is echoed by Wheatley, (2017) who posits that role autonomy has a positive influence for employee well-being, which is not role-specific. Furthermore, Hena and Manzurul (2018) assert that the benefits of autonomy go beyond individual well-being, extending to a positive correlation with organisational innovation.

There are specific examples of this in the exploratory research in both high and low skilled contexts. For example, one participant, software consultant said his relationships with customers are built on mutual respect and he is trusted by his employer to 'get on with the job' without interference. The customer service champion discussed how this fosters a solutions driven environment and can lead to solutions with wider implications being uncovered. This notion of being trusted to meet customers' needs was also replicated in the lower skilled environment. For example, one of the customer service champions in a waitressing role said that she regularly 'goes above and beyond' to ensure guests enjoy their stay. She gave the example of overhearing two guests say they forgot their sun protection, she got the guests some complimentary sunscreen to their surprise and delight. The FLE said she was then delighted when she read the customers' review on Facebook outlining their happiness with how the staff member looked after them. In these two instances the FLE-customer dyads (one high skilled FLE and lower skilled FLE) are autonomous, the importance of this is discussed by Zablah et al. (2016) who found that such autonomous dyads are more effective and attain higher levels of performance with positive outcomes for the FLE, the organisation and the customer. These illustrations of altruistic behaviours by high and low skilled customer oriented FLEs in the exploratory research are examples of how co-creation between FLEs and customers can lead to differentiation adding customer value in individual ways. The importance of this type of co-creation which gives rise to differentiation through adding value is discussed by Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) and is implicit of a customer centred focus and customer dominant logic (CDL) whereby the customer is foremost.

Although its function in attracting customer oriented workers has not been established in prior research, the specific importance of role autonomy to customer oriented workers in FLE roles as demonstrated in the exploratory research is discussed widely in the research (Babakus et al., 2017; Bruno, 2018; Herhausen, De Luca, and Weibel, 2017; Menguc, Auh, Yeniaras, and Katsikeas, 2017). For example, Zablah (2016) and Matthews (2017) find that role autonomy protects workers from the challenges and demands inherent in their role. In a recent study, Babakus, Yavas, and Karatepe (2017) demonstrate that role autonomy fosters work engagement among customer oriented workers and that a lack of autonomy is linked to both challenge and hindrance stressors which heighten turnover intentions. This is echoed in the exploratory research, the participants discussed how being trusted to make customer related decisions without referring to a manager is important for them in doing their job. Autonomy is also shown to preserve self-efficacy, Stock (2016) revealed that autonomy protects FLEs from boreout which is prevalent in some lower skilled customer service roles such as call centre agent positions.

The participants in the exploratory research recognised the importance of autonomy in their role; responsibility to make decisions was discussed as something the respondents valued in their job and was identified as a condition that influenced their attraction to the role in the first place. However, it can be legitimately argued that role autonomy is important for all workers in all contexts (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Indeed, as outlined, this is recognised in the JD-R model, where autonomy is considered both a personal and job resource, this echoes Hennig-Thurau (2004) who posits that autonomy is both objective (i.e., extrinsic, coming from the organisation) and subjective (i.e., intrinsic, emanating from the individual). Notwithstanding the importance of autonomy as a universal resource for all workers, the evidence from the research findings indicate that for customer oriented workers autonomy appears to be more important than for low customer oriented workers. Further, the exploratory findings indicate that in an environment where the worker is interacting directly with the customer, being recognised by customers as having the authority to make decisions without checking with their manager is particularly important and may link in to a 'face-saving' component, principally in instances where the customer and employee have a long-standing relationship. In other words, autonomy garners respect and can

help create a more equal or partnership type relationship between the worker and the customer, this is illustrated by Zablah et al. (2016) who argue that worker-customer dyads are more productive and successful when the worker has a level of autonomy in their dealings with the customer. Another issue related raised by the customer service champions was the role of organisational support which was observed as being important in the context of job satisfaction. The importance of the organisation 'having their back' was reiterated by the participants and this is evidenced in the literature where role autonomy and organisational support are identified as synergetic processes, essentially role autonomy is unlikely to occur without organisational support (Menguc et al., 2015; Stock, 2016).

The exploratory findings illustrate the intensity and pressures inherent in working in roles with frequent customer interaction. This is discussed in the literature, customer facing workers are understood to be different to other workers, studies such as Babakus and Yavas (2012); Karatepe and Aga (2012); Zablah et al. (2016) suggest that frequent customer interaction means that they have different requirements and face different pressures to other employees. These differences may result in some resources or factors being more important to them than others and some demands being more (or less) challenging. Reinforcing this idea of difference, Van der Doef and Maes (1999) posited that personality characteristics may moderate the relationships between job demands and resources, with autonomy beneficial for certain personality types and not for others. The exploratory research indicates in the case of individuals with the surface personality trait of customer orientation, it may be more likely that such individuals (given their propensity to enjoy and value customer interactions) are likely to highly value role autonomy. Overall, the exploratory research indicates strongly that role autonomy is particularly important to customer oriented workers.

The exploratory findings suggest that autonomy provides support to these workers in a number of explicitways, these are outlined in Table 22, which also references support in the literature for each of these factors. A potentially pertinent point in the discussion of role autonomy, customer service and customer orientation is that these states are not mutually exclusive. In the exploratory research, the customer service champions interviewed were customer oriented individuals (as determined by themselves and as

identified by their organisation), they were also in FLE roles and had autonomy in their job. This potentially creates an ideal formula for service success: autonomous customer oriented individuals working in FLE roles. Therefore the distinction must be made between being in an FLE role and being customer oriented. While extant research demonstrates that customer oriented workers are more suited to customer facing roles, not all workers in FLE roles are customer oriented and not all customer oriented workers are in FLE roles (Donavan et al., 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009; Matthews et al., 2017).

Existing research points to autonomy being of particular importance to customer oriented workers in FLE roles and this is supported by the exploratory research Firstly, this is because by virtue of being in an FLE role, the customer service champions *need* autonomy to do their job (i.e., to meet customer needs), Johnson, Barksdale, and Boles (2001) discussed how interactions between FLEs and customers happen 'in the moment,' so employees have to make decisions without conferring with a manager. In other words, an FLE needs a level of autonomy irrespective of whether they are customer oriented or not. As well as needing autonomy to do their job, customer oriented workers also want autonomy to help them meet customer needs. This is reflected in the research, customer service champions *want* autonomy, as this allows them to meet customer needs and by virtue of being customer oriented, meeting customer needs is something they enjoy (Brown et al., 2002).

TABLE 22 STUDY 1: AUTONOMY FOR CUSTOMER ORIENTED WORKERS

Factor	Outcome	Reference
Self-efficacy	Empowers workers to get the job done, as decisions may have to be made instantly. Allows workers decide how to approach and serve customers and improves customer relationship.	Johnson et al., 2001; Stock and Hoyer, 2005; Zablah et al., 2016
Job Satisfaction	Being trusted to get the job done empowers workers. Being trusted with autonomy (i.e., objective autonomy) builds employee confidence. Autonomy helps employees to feel supported by their manager and the organisation. Customer relationships are stronger if employees have autonomy, it improves outcomes for all parties (i.e., mirror effect of satisfaction).	Stock and Hoyer, 2005; Zablah et al., 2012; Xanthopoulou et al, 2012; Zablah et al., 2016; Hennig-Thurau, 2003; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Hsieh et Chen, 2011
Customer Satisfaction	FLE-customer dyads more harmonious, efficient when worker empowered with autonomy. Lack of autonomy causes consternation and frustrates customers.	Zablah et al., 2016; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Menguc et al., 2015
Employee Well-being & Resilience	Autonomy moderates effects of conservation and self-enhancement helping build confidence allowing workers to 'push back' to customers when necessary.	Sousa and Coelho 2013; Menguc et al., 2015; Stock, 2016.

5.4.3 The Managers' Perspective

In the literature, customer oriented workers are sometimes considered a largely homogeneous group (Franke and Park, 2006; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2012). However, the exploratory findings illustrate that customer orientation is just one factor or attribute workers possess and while important, it may not be their defining characteristic or attribute. Important also, is the individual's skill level which further differentiates customer oriented FLEs from one another (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). In other words, while customer oriented workers share certain similarities, they are heterogeneous and perform a variety of customer facing roles depending on, and defined by the actual job and individual skill levels. Accordingly, skill level and job complexity invariably have a bearing on the extent to which an employee is afforded autonomy. Specifically, the exploratory research implies that worker customer orientation is recognised by all the participants (i.e., the manager cohort) as an important attribute for customer facing employees. This is congruent with extant research which demonstrates the importance of customer orientation as it improves organisational performance across a number of key matrices including organisational

citizenship behaviours (Farrell and Oczkowski, 2012; Rupp, Shao, Thornton, and Skarlicki, 2013), job satisfaction (Zablah et al., 2012), and financial performance (Grizzle et al., 2009). However, it emerged in the manager interviews that customer orientation is not considered equally important by service organisations for all customer facing roles. Unequivocally, while customer orientation is considered important (to some extent) by all the managers interviewed, the findings indicate that job complexity and workers' skill sets specifically play a part in how important customer orientation is considered for a given role. Undoubtedly, in some industries, customer orientation is valued above many other skills (Zablah et al., 2012).

The exploratory findings indicate that while customer orientation is generally recognised by managers as important for customer facing roles, individual customer orientation is valued more than many other attributes in the hospitality and retail industries. Whereas in higher skilled environments such as IT consultancy, the ability to perform (e.g., to do the job) is valued higher than the consultant's level of customer orientation. To illustrate, one of the managers (discussing a technical, complex role) confirmed that technical skill will always out-weigh customer orientation, even in a customer facing role; if two candidates presented for an interview and one had higher customer orientation but was marginally less skilled, the candidate with the higher skill would invariably be chosen. In this context, the ability to perform or deliver may be considered the 'uno acto' [essential skill/attribute] characteristic of the service encounter and is consequently a fundamental requirement on the part of the employee (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). This perspective indicates that the wider or more complex a worker's skill set, the less important customer orientation is considered by their employer, as is evident in the exploratory findings. Differences in employee skill-sets also appear to impact relationships of employee-customer dyads. Workers in the higher skilled roles appear to have more equal relationships with their customers typified by a partnership type rapport. Conversely, in the lower skilled category, the employees appear to adopt a more passive and deferential position when dealing with customers, with customer relationships overall being more short-term and transactional.

However, while skill level is clearly important to employers, disregarding the customer orientation level of customer facing workers may be a serious oversight; for example, (accepting a personality conceptualisation of customer orientation), Zablah et al. (2012) using the JD-R model as a theoretical framework, explains that customer orientation (a personal resource) is likely to reduce perceptions of role ambiguity because it offers front-line employees strong guidance regarding the purpose of their roles. This is demonstrated in the exploratory findings, the customer service champions viewed their personal customer orientation as fundamental to doing their job and interacting successfully with customers. In other words, while other skills may be considered more relevant than customer orientation, once an employee is in a customer facing role, their level of individual customer orientation is an important personal resource for the reasons outlined by Zablah et al. (2012) and as evidenced in the exploratory findings.

Furthermore, Matthews et al. (2017) argues that individual customer orientation serves to reduce the likelihood that customer facing workers will judge customer interactions and requests as threatening due to the fact that they are intrinsically motivated to help customers meet their needs (Zablah et al., 2012). Accordingly, the influence of customer orientation as a personal resource appears far-reaching for high and low skilled FLEs; the JD-R model posits that personal resources directly impact well-being, they moderate the relationship between job characteristics and how such characteristics are perceived by the worker (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014).

Research indicates that even in the absence of explicit role expectations, customer facing workers will perceive less role ambiguity because their belief in the importance of customer satisfaction will help define their role irrespective of the complexity of their job. Similarly, customer orientation is likely to reduce role conflict since it brings customer–worker and manager–worker role expectations into greater alignment (Babakus et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2015; Stock, 2016 Zablah et al., 2012). Clearly, the importance of person-job and person-organisation fit were also relevant to the managers and were referenced by each as crucial, with poor PJ and PO fit associated with negative outcomes This is reflected in the JD-R model, the tenets of the model

imply that PO and PJ fit help provide equilibrium between job demands and job resources (including personal resources).

As outlined, there is strong evidence both in the literature and the exploratory research supporting the importance of individual customer orientation for customer facing workers, irrespective of job complexity (Hennig-Thurau, 2004, Sousa and Coelho, 2013). This is contrary to the widely-held assumption that customer orientation offers the most benefits to workers who have opportunities to interact in a meaningful way with customers and learn about their needs (e.g., relational settings exemplified by front line employee positions in the pharmaceutical industry or software/IT consultancy) (Zablah et al., 2012). Zablah and colleagues discuss how customer orientation serves as an important resource FLEs can draw on when faced with challenging job demands (e.g., demanding customer interactions).

However, notwithstanding the universal benefits of customer orientation for customer facing workers as evidenced in the findings, the exploratory findings also suggest that because lower skilled service workers have less personal resources and fewer skills to draw on, this manifests in their own customer orientation increasing in importance. This is illustrated by the manager in the hospitality sector, her view is that (in a service environment) workers' customer orientation outweighs all other attributes; as other skills can be taught, but customer orientation is intrinsic. Significantly, this indicates that while it is important to all customer facing workers, customer orientation is more beneficial to lower skilled workers and workers with fewer skills. This offers support to Zablah et al.'s (2012) thesis that customer orientation may be even more beneficial in low skilled jobs where the relationship may be one-off or short-term. The exploratory findings clearly infer that customer orientation is not valued to the same extent in all customer facing roles across different service industries with skill level and ability to do the job considered more important in some contexts. However, as outlined, this may be a serious oversight by organisations as evidence suggests that irrespective of skill level for specific customer facing roles, customer orientation should be considered a necessary personal resource rather than merely optional. Finally, this is echoed by Schaufeli and Taris (2014) who also strike a cautionary note and argue that job resources are instrumental in achieving work goals; they play an

extrinsic motivational role in spending compensatory effort to achieve work objectives and by satisfying basic human needs (e.g. for relatedness), they play an intrinsic motivational role, thereby creating a cumulative effect and drive towards achieving work and personal objectives and goals. Table 23 presents a synopsis of the main findings from the customer service champion and manager interviews.

5.5 STUDY 1 – CONTRIBUTION TO CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Study 1 indicates the importance of role autonomy as a resource for the customer service champions, this is supported by extant literature which indicates a particular importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Stock et al., 2016). Study 1 also suggests the importance of the influence of job complexity (a job demand) on attitudes and behaviours of customer oriented workers. The results indicate that differences in workers' skill-sets impact relationships of employee-customer dyads. For lower skilled workers, their relationships with customers are more likely to be short-term, while for higher skilled workers their customer relationships are more likely to be a partnership-type understanding. The manager interview findings also indicate that job complexity influences the extent to which customer orientation is valued by the organisation. The findings suggest that in more high skilled settings, the organisation places less value on worker CO in FLE roles. The identification of job complexity (i.e., job demand) and role autonomy (i.e., job resource) as having a particular importance to customer oriented job seekers informs the conceptual model. Accordingly, the conceptual model, underpinned by JD-R theory examines the interaction effect on customer oriented job seekers between job demands (i.e., in this case job complexity) and job resources (i.e., in this case role autonomy).

TABLE 23 SYNOPSIS OF MAIN FINDINGS

Customer Service Champions – Key Findings	Managers – Key Findings
Going 'above and beyond' for customers emerged as a common theme.	Job complexity dictates the importance of employee individual customer orientation to organisations – the more complex the job, the less important ICO is considered.
Importance of 'getting the job done' identified as a defining characteristic for FLEs.	
'Ability to do the job' emerged as a central tenet to customer oriented behaviours.	For more skilled roles altruism was not seen as very relevant and not fostered. In lower skilled roles, helping colleagues and stepping into another role was valued by the organisation.
Most of the customer service champions consider CO to be psychological construct.	
Being trusted to do the job emerged as important for both high and low skilled workers. In unison with autonomy, organisational support and boss support were identified as important.	Managers consider it important that customer service staff enjoy their role as it becomes evident to customers when employees are happy in their role, which in turn impacts customer satisfaction.
Customer interaction, recognition for a job well done seen as key to job enjoyment.	Key factors perceived as key to attracting customer oriented workers included: the strength of the brand, the organisational being seen as innovative, a respected and prestigious brand (being market leader important in attracting the best people) and learning/development opportunities is seen as very powerful in attracting the best people.
Attraction factors included pride, the brand and autonomy to do the job.	
Different attractors emerged as important for high skilled vs. low skilled workers. Low skilled workers were more attracted to functional aspects (e.g., location). High skilled workers attracted by working with market leaders, talented people and opportunities for personal growth.	

5.6 TYPOLOGY – STUDY 1

The most frequently referenced attraction factor discussed by the customer service workers was role autonomy. Another factor which appears in the literature and was referenced by the manager cohort as being important with respect to CO is job skill/complexity. While these factors are demonstrated as being important in recruitment in general (e.g., Catanzaro et al., 2014; Slaughter et al., 2014; Van Hoye et al., 2009), the findings indicate a degree of co-dependence between the factors, with for example the level of objective autonomy afforded by the organisation to the worker dependent to an extent on the complexity of the job and/or the level of skill or experience of the worker, this interplay is presented in a typology in Figure 18.

Typologies are useful tools for hypothesizing relationships between constructs and are falsifiable, Collier et al. (2012) explain that they are diagnostic devices frequently used to form concepts, explore variable dimensionality and create categories for classification and measurement. Evaluation of the value of a typology is based largely on meaningful label-categorisation; typologies should not be hierarchical, rather, categories should be related to one another rather than being subsidiaries (Ayres and Knafl, 2008). Consequently, conceptual typologies make an important contribution to concept formation in clarifying meaning, forming pertinent connection between meanings, grounding concepts in their specific area of study and identifying refining and visually representing relationships between dimensions or concepts.

The typology is represented in a matrix (2 x 2 array) which delineates the relationship between the two components (autonomy and skill) and their dimensions (high; low) drawing together two separate lines of investigation (Collier et al., 2012). Van der Doef and Maes (1999) posits that personality characteristics may moderate the relationships between stressors and strains and that high autonomy is beneficial for certain personality types and not for others, this is significant given a psychological understanding of customer orientation as favoured by this research study. Therefore, in the case of individuals with the personality trait of customer orientation it may be more likely that such individuals (given their propensity to enjoy and value customer interactions) are likely to highly value role autonomy. In other words, for customer facing workers who score highly on customer orientation autonomy appears to act as a stress buffer (Stock, 2016).

FIGURE 18 TYPOLOGY STUDY 1: AUTONOMY & SKILL HIGH CUSTOMER ORIENTED FLEs

		Role Autonomy	
		High autonomy	**Low autonomy**
Role Skill	**High job skill**	**Affiliate** High Skill/High Autonomy	**Novice** High Skill/Low Autonomy
	Low job skill	**Crowd Pleaser** Lower Skill/High Autonomy	**Foot Soldier** Lower Skill/Low Autonomy

5.6.1 Typology Archetypes (Study 1)

Bakker et al. (2007) posits that all jobs are categorised by job demands and job resources, Schaufeli and Taris (2014) argue that the most beneficial scenario for a worker is lower demands and higher resources. However, Karasek (1979) posits that demands and resources are mercurial and depending on circumstances and specific context a demand may be considered a resource and vice versa. The typology very broadly illustrates the type of roles occupied by customer oriented workers in service organisations and helps to conceptualise the importance of role autonomy in a customer facing role context. Job skill levels were informed by the Office for National Statistics UK presented in Figure 19.

In this typology autonomy (high; low) is juxta-positioned with job complexity/skill (high; low) and apportioned to the archetypes used in the typology. Autonomy is considered a resource, as in an FLE context, autonomy has been shown to protect workers' self-efficacy and generally improve job outcomes (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Stock, 2016; Zablah et al., 2016) and job complexity a demand (e.g., Babakus et al., 2009; Rapp et al., 2014). The typology provides a platform to demonstrate the interplay between high and low demands (i.e., job skill) and high and low resources (i.e., autonomy) for customer oriented workers and informs Study 2 and the conceptual model underpinned by JD-R. model.

- **Affiliate**: employees have a high degree of autonomy and likely to possess a high skill level in a complex job (e.g., IT consultant). Such roles are likely to be non-routine and may be unstructured requiring employees to be flexible and innovative in dealing with customers. However, employees can only be innovative to the extent to which they perceive their organisation is receptive to new ideas. Consequently, as the qualitative findings indicate, organisational innovation is a value recognised by employees in the 'affiliate' quadrant.

- **Crowd Pleaser:** workers characterised by lower skills and relatively high autonomy. Jobs include roles in the hospitality sector or personal services sector e.g., jobs using motor skills (i.e., hairdressing) where typically workers have a degree of autonomy to make service decisions without consulting a supervisor.

- **Novice:** this may be a complex role (e.g., medical professional), but the employee may be at the start of their career (when autonomy may precipitate stress) or in a highly regulated environment that restricts autonomy for workers. In such environments, Siguaw et al. (1994) contend that employees with low role autonomy may perceive conflict between the interests of the customer and the organisation. The extent to which individuals in these roles are satisfied with their job (and low levels of autonomy) will be influenced by their personality and specifically their individual levels of customer orientation. This is discussed by Katz and Kahn (1978) who argue that while normally beneficial for workers in some cases role autonomy can be stressful and viewed as a job demand.

- **Foot Soldier:** this is a relatively low skilled, low autonomy role (e.g., some hotel, retail roles). Customer oriented workers in this quadrant may feel dissatisfied over time, however, it is also possible some are more willing to accept positions with low autonomy due to their lack of specific skills or stage in their career.

FIGURE 19 SKILL CLASSIFICATION (OFFICE NATIONAL STATISTICS, UK, 2016)

HIGH	UPPER MIDDLE
Normally acquired through a university degree or equivalent period of experience. Occupations termed professional/managerial (corporate firms or government). Examples: teachers, doctors, accountants, scientists, engineers, finance managers senior government officials.	Competence acquired via post-compulsory education (not degree level). Includes technical/trade occupations, owners of small businesses. Examples: catering managers, building inspectors, nurses, police officers (sergeant and below), electricians, plumbers.
LOW	**LOWER MIDDLE**
Competence acquired through compulsory education. Requires knowledge of relevant health/safety regulations. Acquired through short periods of training. Examples: postal workers, hotel porters, cleaners, catering assistants.	Occupations requiring competence acquired through compulsory education, involves longer period of work-related training, experience. Examples: caring roles, driving, retail, clerical and secretarial occupations.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the findings from the exploratory research, i.e., the interviews with (i) the customer service champions and (ii) the managers. The objective of the customer service champion interviews study is to establish what attracted these customer service champions to their job and the organisation. The results indicate the importance of role autonomy to the customer service champions, irrespective of their skill level. The aim here is to determine the attributes that managers (as proxies for the organisation) look for in customer facing workers. The findings from this phase inform the conceptual model and the research hypotheses presented and discussed in chapter 6.

~ CHAPTER ~

6

DATA ANALYSIS – STUDY 2 QUANTITATIVE DATA

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS - STUDY 2

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presents the results from the first phase of the research, the exploratory research conducted in Study 1. The findings are comprised of the results of both sets of interviews (i.e., interviews with customer service champions and managers).

Study 1 explored what attracted the customer service champions to their job and the organisation and to establish what managers look for in customer facing workers. The study makes a number of observations; firstly it indicates the importance of autonomy to customer oriented workers in an attraction context, autonomy as an attractor has not been previously explored (to the author's knowledge). While recognised as a universal resource in the JD-R model, role autonomy appears to have a particular importance to customer oriented workers as demonstrated in Study 1. The particular importance of role autonomy for customer oriented FLEs appears to be driven by a need to meet customer needs (i.e., as a requirement for their job) and a want to meet customer needs (i.e., customer oriented individuals enjoy meeting customer needs). Secondly, Study 1 indicated some differences between high and low skilled workers e.g., the factors that attracted them to the organisation and how job complexity influences how important CO is considered by the organisation. Both these factors (i.e., autonomy and job complexity) are explored in Study 2 from the perspective of whether they play a central role attracting customer oriented job seekers. Drawing on the findings of Study 1 and Study 2, Study 3 further investigates the interactive effects of autonomy. Accordingly the findings of Study 1 play a role in developing the research design parameters and the research hypotheses.

6.2 STUDY 2

The research hypotheses were developed based on the qualitative findings and on a review of the literature. The central objective of Study 2 is to establish if (i) separately and (ii) together autonomy and customer orientation influence job seekers' attitudes and behaviours. In this way, the research hypotheses address the particular importance of specific factors (i.e., individual customer orientation and role autonomy) to predict job seekers' attraction and intention to pursue a job in an organisation. The study also investigates whether customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions with perceived job skill (high; low) playing a moderating role. The statistical model (Figure 20) indicates the paths and the hypotheses tested. S2H1and S2H2 are not within the model, they measure the effect of customer orientation on the two dependent variables (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions: Figure 21).

FIGURE 20 STATISTICAL MODEL – DV: ORG. ATTRACTION & JOB PURSUIT

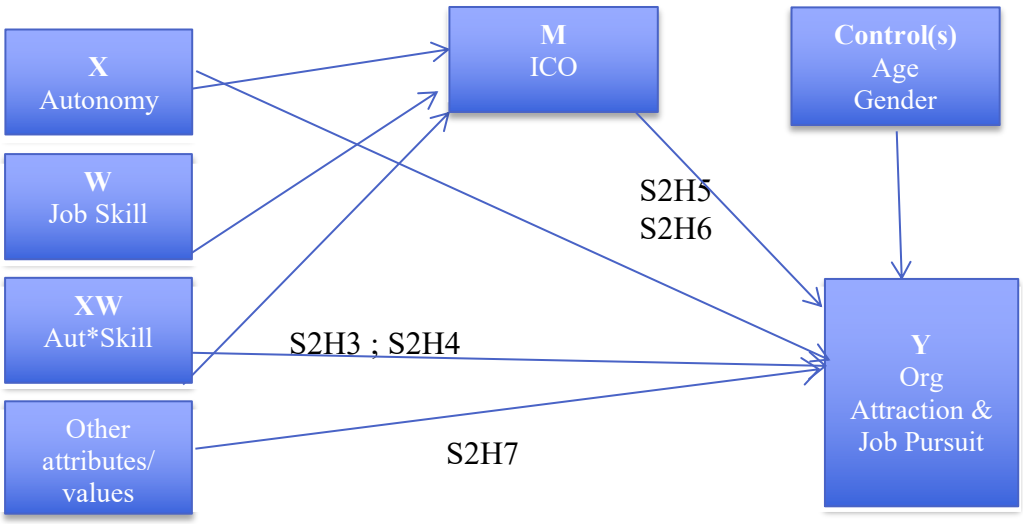
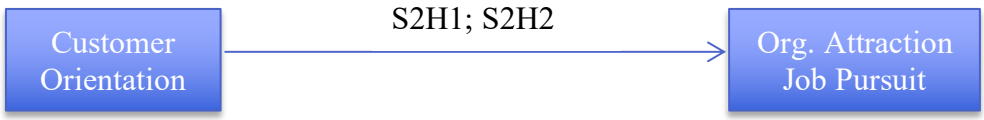


FIGURE 21 EFFECT OF CO ON ATTRACTION & JOB PURSUIT



6.2.1 Research Hypotheses – Study 2

Table 24 presents the research hypotheses for Study 2.

TABLE 24 RESEARCH HYOTHESES (STUDY 2)

Hypothesis	Insight from literature	Source
S2H1: High levels of customer orientation among jobseekers is positively related to attitudinal job outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction) for FLE roles in service organisations.	FIT theory and image congruence theories hold that individuals with certain characteristics (e.g. customer oriented individuals) are more likely to be attracted to specific roles and particular types of organisations i.e., customer oriented organisations.	Dineen et al. (2018); Donavan et al. (2004); Liao and Subramony (2009); Rampl (2013)
S2H2: High levels of customer orientation among job seekers is positively related to behavioural job outcomes (i.e. job pursuit intentions) for FLE roles in service organisations.		
S2H3: There will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and CO in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction to a service organisation.	Extant research supports a synergistic relationship of CO and autonomy. This indicates that roles offering high autonomy will be more attractive to customer oriented workers. This is supported by the exploratory research findings which indicates particular importance of autonomy for customer oriented workers. JD-R model explores how balance between demands and resources impact employee well-being.	Matthews et al. (2017); Menguc et al. (2015); Stock (2016)
S2H4: There will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and CO in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation.		
S2H5: This hypothesis makes two predictions (i) CO will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower.	Higher skilled workers have a higher level of self-value and are attracted by different job attributes than lower skilled workers. Research also shows workers with higher abilities are attracted by different factors than lower skilled workers	Harold and Ployhart (2008); Trank, Rynes, and Bretz (2002)
S2H6: This hypothesis makes two predictions (i) CO will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions (ii) with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship is weaker when job complexity is lower.		
S2H7: There will be a positive relationship between CO & (i) customer contact, (ii) decision making authority, (iii) reputation (iv) OCO with attraction and job pursuit intentions.	Extant research indicates that customer oriented vs. low customer oriented workers are attracted to different organisational factors and values.	Donavan et al. (2004);Kristof-Brown (2005); Vanderstukken et al. (2018)

6.2.2 Pilot Study

The objective of the research is to establish factors that influence the organisational attraction of customer oriented workers. The exploratory study, Study 1 indicated the importance of role autonomy to the customer service champions and that job complexity influences objective autonomy. The exploratory findings also indicate that job complexity influences the degree to which an organisation values workers' autonomy. The influence of role autonomy and job complexity with respect to CO is investigated in extant research.

6.2.2.1 Rationale for Assessing Feasibility

The research design is to employ experimental research, using a factorial design with one manipulated variable (i.e., role autonomy) with randomised assignment to one of the two treatments. The pilot study therefore is of fundamental importance to assess feasibility for the main study.

6.2.2.2 Participants and Setting

The eligibility criteria for participants including the inclusion-exclusion conditions are the same as the main study, students studying in the hospitality, tourism and marketing fields were the specific target for the study. This was to ensure that a sufficient number of subjects would be customer oriented, as the objective of the research is to establish what attracts customer oriented workers to service organisations. Research such as Donavan et al., 2004 also demonstrates that customer oriented workers gravitate toward FLE roles common in these industries. The protocol and materials (e.g., survey instrument) used in the study which was implemented in a classroom setting, with the researcher present was the protocol planned for the main study.

Three pilot studies which were identical in all aspects were implemented in September and October 2015 (pilot 1: n = 9; pilot 2; n = 16; pilot 3: n = 13) this produced a pooled sample of n = 38. This adheres to Treece (1982), who posits that a robust pilot should

comprise 10% - 20% of the sample for the overall study. The data from the three pilots was pooled to increase the power of the analyses (Thabane, Ma, and Chu, 2010).

6.2.2.3 Manipulations

Each subject received a pen and paper survey and a either a high or low fictional autonomy job advertisement was randomly distributed to the subjects. The subjects were unaware that there were two versions of the manipulated advertisement, one version contained a low autonomy fictional job advertisement and the other a high autonomy fictional job advertisement.

6.2.2.4 Objectives

Primary feasibility objectives of the study included establishing whether role autonomy influences attitudes and behavioural intent of customer oriented subjects and verifying whether the autonomy manipulation is successful. The pilot process was also used to identify variables of interest (e.g., factors such as organisational customer orientation and person-job fit) and to investigate how they may be operationalised and tested. Finally, the pilot process helped to estimate statistical parameters for analysis, as certain statistical analyses require the sample size is sufficiently large with appropriate variability to detect differences between groups, and establish if there are any real differences to be detected.

6.2.2.5 Statistical Analysis

The data was analysed using SPSS, analysis of variance (ANOVA and ANCOVA) and PROCESS macro.

6.2.2.6 Outcomes and Feasibility Criteria.

There was a 100% completion rate of the surveys, subjects were given the option to opt-out during the briefing stage before completion, but all chose to participate in the process. The majority of surveys were fully completed with the average completion

time was 11 minutes. The pooled analysis demonstrate that the manipulation for autonomy was successful with the result significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 13) = 6.53$, $p = .024$). The analyses endorse the two way effect of CO and autonomy on organisational attraction as significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(2,32) = 3.68$, $p = .036$). Customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy group reported higher levels of attraction vs. customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy group as demonstrated in the means results (i.e., 6.31 vs. 5.85). The analyses endorse the two way effect of CO and autonomy on organisational attraction as significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(2,32) = 3.87$, p = .031). Similarly, customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy group reported higher levels of job pursuit intentions vs. customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy group as demonstrated in the means results (i.e., 6.14 vs. 5.59).

6.2.2.7 Feasibility Criteria

Firstly, the autonomy manipulation was successful which is crucial to the implementation of the study. The statistical results demonstrate differences between high and low customer oriented subjects in how attractive they perceive high vs. low autonomy FLE roles, accordingly, the results supported the feasibility of the study. Based on the feedback of subjects, certain amends were made to the questionnaire design and format. Additional guidelines and instructions were provided throughout the survey to improve clarity. In addition, category labels were added to all measurement scales and colour and font variations were used to help make each section clearer. The fictional job advertisements details were shortened and boxes and bullet points were added to hold the subjects' interest and to make the advertisements easier and quicker to read.

6.3 MANIPULATION RESULTS

The manipulation results for Study 2 demonstrate that the role autonomy manipulation (i.e., question 19: do you think this job offers the successful applicant a lot of control and autonomy over their day-to-day tasks?) was successful at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 118) = 86.142$, $p = .000$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}} = 4.049$, $M_{\text{autonomy low}} = 2.593$). Full details are presented in Table 25.

TABLE 25 MANIPULATION CHECKS (BETWEEN TREATMENT GROUPS)

Dependent Variable: Does Job Offer a lot of control (Q19)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	63.577[a]	1	63.577	86.142	.000
Intercept	1323.177	1	1323.177	1792.940	.000
Autonomy	63.577	1	63.577	86.142	.000
Error	87.090	118	.738		
Total	1484.000	120			
Corrected Total	150.667	119			

a.R squared = .422 (Adjusted R^2= .417)

Autonomy Manipulation	**Control Question (Q19)**	**N**	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**	**STD. Dev.**	**Sig (*p*)**
High	Does job offer a lot of control	61	3	5	4.05	.740	.000
Low	Does job offer a lot of control	59	1	4	2.59	.967	

6.4 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H1

Initially, dummy variables representing (i) a median split for individual customer orientation: (high = 1; low = 2) and (ii) autonomy: (high = 1; low = 2) were created to facilitate data analyses. Hypothesis S2H1 posits that when customer orientation is high, job seekers are more attracted to customer facing roles in service organisations than when individual customer orientation is lower (attitudinal effect).

As the test contains control variables (i.e., age and gender), an ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) test which controls for the test covariates is used. This analysis was conducted to compare the effect of customer orientation on organisational attraction (outlined in Table 26). Age and gender were included as control variables as they have been identified as having an impact on individuals' manifestations of customer orientation and their behaviours (Donavan et al., 2004; Stock, 2016). The results show a significant effect of individual customer orientation on organisational attraction at the $p < .01$ level ($F(1, 116) = 6.11$, $p = .015$; $M_{\text{CO high}} = 5.74$, $SD = 1.16$; $M_{\text{CO low}} = 3.92$, $SD = 1.01$). The results authenticate that when customer orientation levels are higher, organisational attraction levels are also higher with the converse also true (i.e., when CO is lower, organisational attraction is lower). Table 27 presents the means statistics.

TABLE 26 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H1 (MEDIAN SPLIT OF CO)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	8.188[a]	3	2.729	2.152	.097
Intercept	315.167	1	315.167	248.52	.000
Gender	.583	1	.583	.460	.499
Age	.808	1	.808	.637	.427
CO_Split	7.752	1	7.752	6.113	.015
Error	147.108	116	1.268		
Total	3790.431	120			
Corrected Total	155.296	119			

a. R Squared = .053 (Adjusted R Squared = .028)

TABLE 27 MEAN RESULTS S2H1 (MEDIAN SPLIT OF CO)

CO Level	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**	**%**
High	5.74	1.162	61	51
Low	3.92	1.017	59	49

6.4.1 S2H1 Using CO x 4 Level Split

This hypothesis was further tested using the dummy variable (Quartile) whereby customer orientation is split into quartiles to provide a more granular level of analysis (i.e., quartiles of a given data set are the three points dividing the data into four equal groups, with each group containing a quarter of the data). ANCOVA analysis (outlined in Table 28) compared the effect of individual customer orientation on organisational attraction for the four conditions. There was a significant effect at the $p < .01$ level of customer orientation on organisational attraction ($F(3,114) = 4.56$, $p = .005$). The means results are the same for quartile 2 and quartile 3, and the biggest difference is between quartile 1 (i.e., means = 5.97) and quartile 4 (i.e., means = 4.93). This indicates that the largest difference between customer oriented workers lies at the extremities (i.e., highest level of CO vs. lowest level of CO). The means results are detailed in Table 29.

TABLE 28 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H1 (CO X 4)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	17.024[a]	5	3,405	2.807	.020
Intercept	317.628	1	317.628	261.171	.000
Gender	.395	1	.395	.326	.569
Age	.670	1	.670	.552	.549
Quartile	16.588	3	5.529	4.559	.005
Error	138.272	114	1.213		
Total	3790.431	120			
Corrected Total	155.296	119			

a. R Squared = .110 (Adjusted R Squared = .071)

TABLE 29 MEAN RESULTS S2H1 (CO X 4)

Customer Orientation Level	**Mean**	**SD**	**Frequency**	**%**
1st Quartile (Very High)	5.97	1.12	31	26
2nd Quartile (High)	5.55	1.16	32	27
3rd Quartile (Medium)	5.55	1.09	27	22
4th Quartile (Low)	4.93	1.14	30	25

The analyses conducted support S2H1. Expressly, when individual customer orientation is higher, job seekers are more likely to be attracted to FLE roles in service organisations than when CO is lower. This was confirmed by the main effect of customer orientation (using CO median split) on organisational attraction ($F(1, 116) = 6.11$, $p = .015$; $M_{\text{CO high}} = 5.74$, $SD = 1.16$; $M_{\text{CO low}} = 3.92$, $SD = 1.01$). Further support for S2H1 is provided by an analysis of variance using the quartile measure of customer orientation. A main effect of customer orientation was found for organisational attraction at the $p < .05$ level ($F(3,114) = 4.56$, $p = .005$), with subjects with the highest level of customer orientation reporting the highest levels of organisational attraction ($M = 5.97$, $SD = 1.12$). Accordingly, subjects with the lowest levels of customer orientation reported the lowest levels of attraction to the organisation ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.14$). Accordingly, as predicted by S2H1, high levels of customer orientation among job seekers is positively related to attitudinal job outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction) for customer facing roles in service organisations.

6.5 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H2

Hypothesis S2H2 predicts that when autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more likely to pursue an FLE role in a service organisation than when autonomy is lower and pre-supposes behavioural intent. ANCOVA (outlined in Table 30) analyses presented a significant effect of CO on job pursuit intentions at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 116) = 6.64$, $p = .011$; $M_{\text{CO high}} = 5.64$, $SD = 1.44$; $M_{\text{CO low}} = 5.09$, $SD = 1.25$), this is consistent with prior research. Table 31 presents the means results.

TABLE 30 ANCOVA TEST RESULTS S2H2 (MEDIAN SPLIT OF CO)

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	16.897[a]	3	5.632	3.128	.028
Intercept	269.568	1	269.568	149.702	.000
Gender	5.715	1	5.715	3.174	.077
Age	3.146	1	3.146	1.747	.189
CO_Split	11.966	1	11.966	6.645	.011
Error	208.881	116	1.801		
Total	3690.861	120			
Corrected Total	225.778	119			

a. R Squared = .075 (Adjusted R Squared = .051)

TABLE 31 MEAN RESULTS S2H2 (MEDIAN SPLIT OF CO)

Customer Orientation Level	Frequency	Mean	SD
High	61	5.64	1.44
Low	59	5.09	1.25

6.5.1 S2H2 Using CO x 4 Level Split

This hypothesis was then tested using the dummy variable (Quartile) to further investigate whether individual customer orientation (at a more granular level) has an impact on job pursuit intentions. ANCOVA (results outlined in Table 32) analyses demonstrated a significant effect at the $p < .01$ level for customer orientation ($F(3,114) = 5.61$, $p = .001$; $M_{\text{CO very high}} = 6.03$, $SD = 1.31$; $M_{\text{CO low}} = 4.72$, $SD = 1.18$). Similar to the quartile analysis in S2H1, for S2H2 the means results are almost the same for quartile 2 (i.e., 5.37) and quartile 3 (i.e., 5.38), with the biggest difference between quartile 1 (i.e., 6.03) and quartile 4 (i.e., 4.72). This indicates that the largest difference between customer oriented workers lies at the extremities (i.e., highest level of CO vs. lowest level of CO). The means results are detailed in Table 33.

TABLE 32 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H2 (USING CO X 4)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	33.334	5	6.667	3.949	.002
Intercept	272.801	1	272.801	161.602	.000
Gender	4.876	1	4.876	2.888	.092
Age	2.809	1	2.809	1.664	.200
Quartile	28.403	3	9.468	5.608	.001
Error	192.444	114	1.688		
Total	3690.861	120			
Corrected Total	225.778	119			

a. R Squared = .148 (Adjusted R Squared = .110)

TABLE 33 MEAN RESULTS S2H2 (QUARTILE_CO)

CO Level	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**	**%**
1st Quartile (Very High)	6.03	1.31	31	26
2nd Quartile (High)	5.37	1.54	32	27
3rd Quartile (Medium)	5.38	1.13	27	22
4th Quartile (Low)	4.72	1.18	30	25

The results support S2H2: when individual CO is higher, job seekers are more likely to pursue a role in FLE roles in service organisations than when CO is lower. This was substantiated by the significant effect of CO on job pursuit intentions ($F(1, 116) = 6.65$, $p = .011$) and the variance in means between the two groups. In addition, a significant effect of CO (using a quartile-level split of CO) was found for job pursuit intentions ($F(3,114) = 5.60$, $p = .001$) further corroborating support for S2H2.

6.6 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H3

Hypothesis S2H3 investigates whether there is a two-way effect between role autonomy and customer orientation on organisational attraction. In this approach the interaction effect is calculated by means of multiplying the variables together, in this case: customer orientation (high; low) and autonomy (high; low). Initially, the test employed the dummy variable (CO_SPLIT) representing the median split for customer orientation (i.e., 8.13) and the autonomy manipulation variable (1 = high autonomy; 2 = low autonomy) with age and gender included as control variables. ANCOVA results (outlined in Table 34) confirm a significant effect of autonomy and CO at the $p < .05$

level for organisational attraction ($F(1,114) = 4.43$, $p = .037$). The results substantiate a main effect of autonomy ($F(1, 114) = 77.38$, $p = .000$) for organisational attraction such that high customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy treatment reported higher levels of attraction to the organisation ($M = 6.42$, $SD = .59$) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects ($M = 5.91$, $SD = .88$) in the same treatment. High customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment reported lower levels of attraction to the organisation ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.038$) than low customer oriented subjects in the same treatment ($M = 4.81$, $SD = .976$), thereby indicating the importance of autonomy to high customer oriented subjects vs. the low customer oriented cohort. However, the results did not produce a main effect for customer orientation ($F(1, 114) = 1.38$, $p =$ n's.) on organisational attraction. The means results (presented in Table 35) also demonstrate the importance of autonomy to low customer oriented job seekers; low customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy treatment were less attracted ($M = 4.81$, $SD = .98$) than low customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy treatment ($M = 5.91$, $SD = .88$) although the result was not as strong as high customer oriented respondents in the high autonomy treatment ($M = 6.42$, $SD = .59$).

TABLE 34 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H3 (MEDIAN SPLIT CO & AUTONOMY)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	69.480[a]	5	13.896	18.460	.000
Intercept	349.296	1	349.296	464.012	.000
Gender	.326	1	.326	.433	.512
Age	1.326	1	1.326	1.761	.187
CO_SPLIT	1.042	1	1.042	1.384	.242
AUTONOMY	58.253	1	58.253	77.385	.000
CO_SPLIT_ * AUTONOMY	3.337	1	3.337	4.434	.037
Error	85.816	114	.753		
Total	3790.431	120			
Corrected Total	155.296	119			

a. R Squared = .447 (Adjusted R Squared = .428)

TABLE 35 MEAN RESULTS S2H3 (MEDIAN SPLIT CO & AUTONOMY)

Manipulation	CO Split	Mean	SD	N	%
1 High Autonomy	High (1)	6.42	.59	34	55
	Low (2)	5.91	.88	27	45
2 Low Autonomy	High (1)	4.69	1.03	27	46
	Low (2)	4.81	.97	32	54

6.6.1 S2H3 Using CO x 4 Level Split

S2H3 was further tested using ANCOVA (detailed in Table 36) with the four-level split of CO. The analyses endorse the effect of CO and autonomy on organisational attraction as significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(3,110) = 3.81$, $p = .012$). Notably, a significant main effect was found both for autonomy on organisational attraction ($F(1,110) = 75.31$, $p < .000$) and a less significant effect of customer orientation ($F(3,110) = 2.68$, $p = .050$). The means authenticate the results with Q1 (very high) customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy treatment reporting higher levels of attraction to the organisation ($M = 6.41$, $SD = .62$) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.09$) in the same treatment. Very high customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy treatment reported lower levels of attraction ($M = 4.10$, $SD = .74$) than high customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy treatment. The means show that quartile 2 (high CO) and quartile 3 (medium CO) behave in reverse order to quartile 1 (very high CO) and quartile 4 (low CO). This result indicates that the most significant difference lies in the extremities of CO with the results tighter in the mid-range of CO, although the reverse order effect between quartile 2 and 3 is unexpected, the difference in the means is not very large (i.e., high autonomy: 6.25 and 6.40; low autonomy: 4.89 and 4.91). In other words, the results indicate that differences are more pronounced between very high customer oriented subjects and lower customer oriented subjects, than for those subjects in the mid-range of customer orientation. The means results are detailed in Table 37.

TABLE 36 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H3 (CO & AUTONOMY)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	76.133[a]	9	8.945	11.754	.000
Intercept	345.669	1	345.669	480.20	.000
Gender	.543	1	.543	.754	.119
Age	1.166	1	1.166	1.621	.423
AUTONOMY	54.199	1	54.199	75.312	.000
Quartile	5.803	3	1.934	2.688	.050
AUTONOMY* Quartile	8.214	3	2.738	3.805	.012
Error	74.790	110	.720		
Total	3790.431	120			
Corrected Total	155.296	119			

a. R Squared = .490 (Adjusted R Squared = .449)

TABLE 37 MEAN RESULTS S2H3 (CO & AUTONOMY)

Manipulation	Quartile	Mean	SD	N	%
1 - High Autonomy	Q1 Very High	6.41	.62	19	31
	Q2 High	6.25	.67	15	25
	Q3 Medium	6.40	.42	12	21
	Q4 Low	5.40	1.09	15	23
Manipulation	**Quartile**	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**	**%**
2 - Low Autonomy	1 Very High	4.10	.746	12	20
	2 High	4.89	1.132	17	29
	3 Medium	4.91	.774	15	25
	4 Low	4.75	1.084	15	25

The analyses support S2H3; corroboration for the hypothesis is evidenced by the main effect found for CO (median split) and role autonomy on organisational attraction ($F(1,114) = 4.43$, $p = .037$) with customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment reporting higher levels of attraction ($M = 6.42$, $SD = .59$) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects ($M = 5.91$, $SD = .88$) in the same treatment. Verification is also provided by the main effect found for the 4-level split of CO ($F(3,110) = 3.81$, $p = .012$). This analysis shows that the highest customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment reported higher levels of attraction ($M = 6.41$, $SD = .62$) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.09$) in the same treatment. The analyses also verify that high customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy treatment reported lower levels of attraction ($M = 4.10$, $SD = .76$) than low customer oriented subjects in this treatment ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 1.08$).

6.7 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H4

Hypothesis S2H4 predicts there is a two-way effect between autonomy and customer orientation on job pursuit intentions. In other words, this hypothesis investigates whether when autonomy is high, higher customer oriented job seekers (vs. lower customer oriented job seekers) are more likely to pursue a role in an organisation than when role autonomy is lower. The interaction effect is calculated by multiplying the variables together i.e., customer orientation (high; low) and autonomy (high; low). This hypothesis was initially tested using the median split for customer orientation and the autonomy manipulation variable (1 = high autonomy treatment; 2 = low autonomy treatment). As for the previous hypothesis tests, this test also includes control factors gender and age.

ANCOVA analyses verified a significant effect of customer orientation and role autonomy for job pursuit intentions at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1,114) = 7.43$, $p = .007$; $M_{\text{CO high}} = 6.55$, $SD = .41$; $M_{\text{CO low}} = 5.85$, $SD = .95$), the results are presented in Table 38. High customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment reported lower levels of job pursuit intentions ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.38$) than high customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment and low customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.18$). There was a main effect for autonomy on job pursuit intentions ($F(1,114) = 90.04$, $p < .000$), however there was no main effect for customer orientation on job pursuit intentions ($F(1,114) = 1.61$, $p = .207$). In this instance, the results (despite randomised treatment assignment) produce an unexpected and unexplained result (given the randomised treatment allocation) and demonstrate a significant effect for one of the covariates (i.e., age) on job pursuit intentions at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1,114) = 4.45$, $p = .037$. This main effect of age was also found when the data was analysed using the quartile customer orientation variable in place of the CO: high; low variable ($F(1,110) = 4.19$, $p = .043$).

TABLE 38 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H4 (AUTONOMY & CO)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	112.882[a]	5	22.576	22.797	.000
Intercept	312.433	1	312.433	315.490	.000
Gender	.422	1	.422	.426	.515
Age	4.410	1	4.410	4.454	.037
AUTONOMY	89.173	1	89.173	90.045	.000
CO_Split	1.596	1	1.596	1.612	.207
AUTONOMY * CO_Split	7.363	1	7.363	7.435	.007
Error	112.895	114	.990		
Total	3690.861	120			
Corrected Total	225.778	119			

a. R Squared = .560 (Adjusted R Squared = .524)

6.7.1 S2H4 Using CO x 4 Level Split

S2H4 was further tested using four-level split of customer orientation. ANCOVA results (presented in Table 39) reveal a significant effect of level of CO and autonomy at the $p < .05$ level ($F(3,110) = 5.89$, $p = .001$). A main effect was found for autonomy ($F(1,110) = 86.08$, $p < .000$) but not for CO ($F(3,110) = 2.40$, $p = .071$). The means

results present significant differences between the groups; very high customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment reported higher levels of job pursuit intentions towards the service organisation (M = 6.61, SD = .32) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects (M = 4.00, SD = .89) in the same treatment. Very high customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment reported lower levels of intention to pursue a role in the organisation (M = 4.06, SD = 1.16) and were less likely to pursue a role than low customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment (M = 4.50, SD = .91).

In the quartile analysis the covariate 'age' also produces a significant effect on job pursuit intentions at the $p < .05$ level ($F(3,110) = 4.69$, $p = .033$. Analysis using the customer orientation variable split into 'high; low' (i.e., table 33) shows that there is no main effect for CO i.e. ($F(1,114) = 1.61$, $p = .207$), however, when the data is analysed using the quartile split for CO, a borderline main effect of CO is demonstrated i.e. ($F(3,110) = 2.82$, $p = .042$).

TABLE 39 ANCOVA RESULTS S2H4 (QUARTILE_CO)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	123.313[a]	9	13.70	14.709	.000
Intercept	307.109	1	307.109	329.693	.000
Gender	.176	1	.176	.189	.665
Age	3.906	1	3.906	4.194	.043
AUTONOMY	79.259	1	79.259	85.07	.000
QUARTILE_CO	6.716	3	2.239	2.403	.071
AUTONOMY *QUARTILE_CO	15.587	3	5.196	5.587	.001
Error	102.465	110	.931		
Total	3690.861	120			
Corrected Total	225.778	119			

a. R Squared = .546 (Adjusted R Squared = .509)

The test results provide support for Hypothesis S2H4. Specifically, when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers (vs. lower customer oriented job seekers) are more likely to pursue a role in an organisation than when role autonomy is lower. This was verified by a main effect of CO and autonomy for job pursuit intentions ($F(1,114) = 7.43$, $p = .007$). To summarise, the results show that high customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment reported higher levels

of job pursuit intentions towards the organisation (M = 6.55, SD = .40) as opposed to low customer oriented subjects (M = 5.85, SD = .95) in the same treatment. In addition, high customer oriented subjects in the low role autonomy treatment reported lower levels of job pursuit intentions (M = 4.26, SD = 1.37) than high customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment and low customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy treatment (M = 4.58, SD = 1.18). Furthermore, ANCOVA using the four-level split of CO found a significant two-way effect on job pursuit intentions ($F(3,110) = 5.81$, $p = .001$). The results specify that very high customer oriented subjects in the high role autonomy treatment reported higher levels of job pursuit intentions (M = 6.61, SD = .303) as opposed to high customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy treatment (M = 3.61, SD = 1.08).

6.8 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H5

Hypothesis S2H5 makes two predictions, it predicts that (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with perceived job complexity (high; low) playing a moderating role. The hypothesis forecasts that the relationships between role autonomy, customer orientation and organisational attraction will be moderated by job complexity with the relationship stronger when job complexity is higher and the relationship weaker when job complexity is lower. The hypothesis is tested for mediation using Hayes (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 8), Table 40 presents the test variables, Figures 21 presents the statistical model and Figure 22 presents the test variables S2H1 and S2H2 which are outside the model.

PROCESS is a computational tool for path analysis-based moderation and mediation analysis used in SPSS to construct a confidence interval for the indirect effect of the mediator and produces point estimates and confidence intervals facilitating assessment of the significance of a mediation effect. PROCESS uses a regression-based path analytical framework to estimate direct and indirect effects using bootstrapping. Significance of the indirect effect is tested using 5,000 bootstraps and examination of whether the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval around the indirect effect includes zero, if the result does not cross zero, then the indirect effect is considered statistically

significant. The PROCESS model used for the analysis of S2H5 is model 8. This model estimates the effect of 'x' (autonomy) on 'y' (organisational attraction) directly as well as indirectly through 'm' (individual customer orientation), with both direct and indirect effects moderated by the moderator variable 'w' (perceived job skill/complexity). The effect of autonomy (x) on organisational attraction (y) is modelled as moderated by perceived job skill/complexity; age and gender are included in the model as covariates. This model produces the indirect effect of the product of autonomy and perceived job skill on organisational attraction along with a percentile-based 95% bootstrap confidence interval.

TABLE 40 PROCESS MODEL 8 – TEST VARIABLES

Test Variables	
X (predictor)	Role Autonomy
M (mediator)	Individual Customer Orientation
W (moderator)	Job Skill/Complexity
Y (outcome)	Organisational Attraction

FIGURE 22 STATISTICAL MODEL – DV: ORGANISATIONAL ATTRACTION

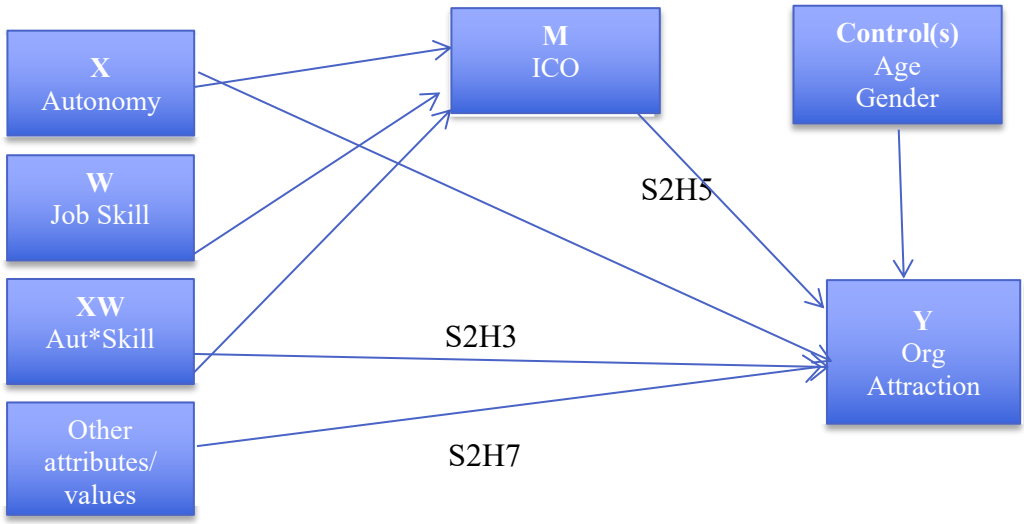
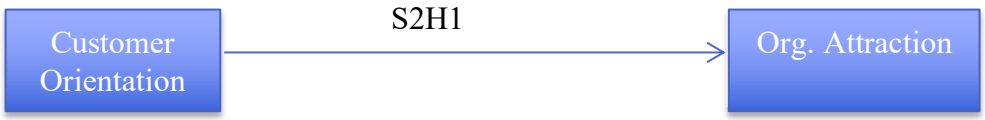


FIGURE 23 EFFECT OF CO ON ATTRACTION (S2H1)



As outlined, regression analysis using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) is used to interrogate hypothesis S2H5 i.e., that CO mediates the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role in the process. Firstly, the model indicates that approximately 20% of variance is attributable to the model variables in outcome 1: R^2 =.1973, $F(5,113) = 5.55$, $p < .001$ and 55% of variance in outcome 2: $R^2 = .5509$, $F(6,112) = 22.90$, $p < .001$. The results (outlined in Table 41, Outcome 1) show that the interaction effect (Autonomy x Perceived Job Skill/Complexity) on CO has a significant effect (β = .4614 *SE* = .1091, $t = 4.23$, $p < .001$), this provides initial evidence of conditional indirect effects. Further, the results indicate that autonomy is a significant predictor of CO (β = -.2116 *SE* = .103, $t = 2.05$, $p = .0424$). Next, the results in Outcome 2 reveal that the relationship between the mediator (CO) on the DV (organisational attraction) has a significant effect (β = -2540 *SE* = .071, $t = -3.58$, $p < .001$).

TABLE 41 S2H5 – REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Outcome: Customer Orientation (Outcome 1)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	Df2	*p*
.4441	.1973	5.5535	5.0000	113.0000	.0001
Model					
		Coif	Se	T	*p*
Constant		.1539	.3095	.4974	.6199
Autonomy		-.2116	.1031	2.0528	.0424
Skill		.0219	.1077	.2033	.8389
Autonomy x Skill		.4614	.1091	4.2275	.0000
Gender		.0056	.1866	.0302	.9760
Age		.0797	.1264	.6304	.5297

Outcome: Organisational Attraction (Outcome 2)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	Df2	*p*
.7423	.5509	22.9013	6.0000	112.0000	.0000
Model					
		Coif	Se	T	*P*
Constant		.5026	.2339	2.1489	.0338
CO		-.2540	.0710	-3.5773	.0005
Autonomy		-.4179	.0792	-5.2741	.0000
Job Skill		.3230	.0813	3.9723	.0001
Autonomy x Skill		.1804	.0887	2.0350	.0442
Gender		-.1636	.1409	-1.1612	.2480
Age		-.1482	.0956	-1.505	.1239

6.8.1 Mediator Effects – Customer Orientation

The results reveal that when perceived job skill/complexity is medium or high, the effects of autonomy on attraction are mediated by CO. Point estimates identify the mean over the number of bootstrapped samples, and as zero does not fall between the confidence intervals of the bootstrapping results, this confirms that there is a significant mediation effect of CO for perceived job skill/complexity when it is medium or high, but not when it is low. This test explains the causal mechanism for the effect of role autonomy on organisational attraction i.e., through the mediational effect of customer orientation and provides evidence for a significant indirect effect. The results are presented in Table 42.

TABLE 42 EFFECT OF MEDIATOR CO

Conditional Indirect Effect (s) of Autonomy on Organisational Attraction at Values of Moderator (Job Skill/complexity)

Job Skill/Complexity		Effect	Boot SE	Bootlaces	Botulin
CO	-1.0000	.0635	.0555	-.0073	.2334
CO	.0000	-.0537	.0352	-.1483	-.0031
CO	1.0000	-.1709	.0722	-.3447	-.0510

6.8.2 Moderation of the Indirect Effect

Evidence of moderation of the indirect effect by perceived job skill is found in a statistically significant interaction between role autonomy and perceived job skill/complexity in the model examining organisational attraction: $a3 = .4614$, $p = .000$. Given that the first stage of the mediation model (X→M) is moderated, it follows that the indirect effect is also moderated, as the indirect effect of X on Y through M is constructed as the product of the X→M effect, which is conditional on W (i.e., $a1 + a3W$) and the M→Y effect ($b1$). Therefore, the indirect effect of X on Y through M is no longer a single quantity but is a function of W and is consequently conditional: $(a1 + a3W)b1$. In this case, $a1 = -.2116$, $a3 = .4614$, and $b1 = -.2540$, and the indirect effect of X on Y through M is (.2116+ 0.4614W)(-2540).

6.8.3 Index Moderated Mediation

Significantly, the index of moderation mediation result does not cross zero (CI = -.2531 to -.0311) thereby providing evidence of a significant conditional indirect effect indicating the moderated mediation is significant. This is detailed in Table 43.

TABLE 43 INDEX OF MODERATION MEDIATION

Mediator	Effect	SE (Boot)	Bootlaces	Botulin
CO	-.1172	.0538	-.2531	-.0311

6.8.4 Interaction Effects: Skill & Autonomy on Organisational Attraction

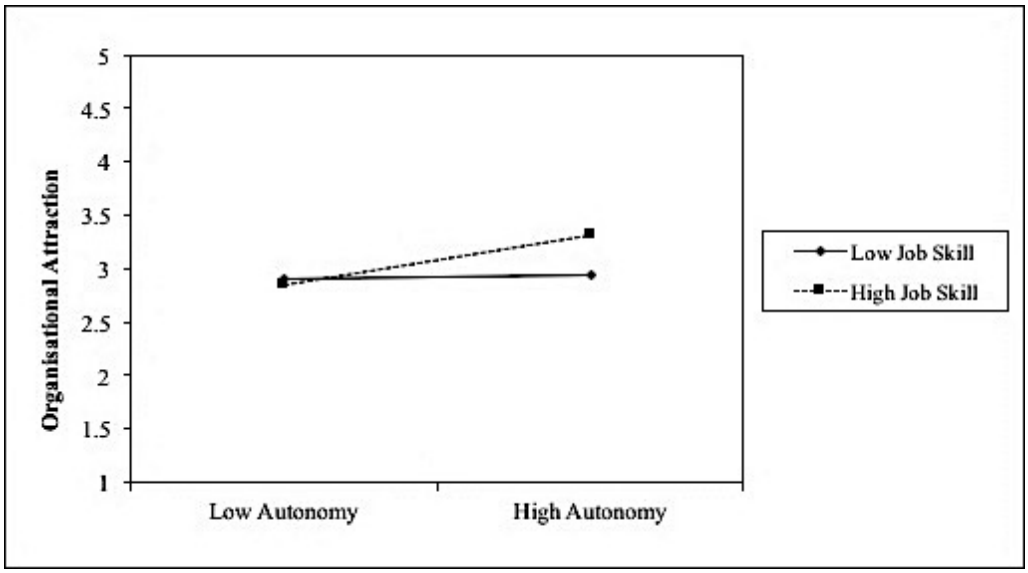
Simple slopes analysis presents the relationship between autonomy and the perception of job skill/complexity and effect on organisational attraction. Two independent variables are said to interact if the effect on one differs depending on the level of the other variable. In this instance, there is an interaction because the magnitude of the difference between low job skill/complexity and high job skill/complexity is different at different levels of autonomy. Figure 24 represents the nature of the two-way interaction between autonomy and job skill/complexity. The interaction which examines the high and low conditions of perceived job skill/complexity and autonomy indicates that perceptions of the high complexity job have a stronger effect on organisational attraction than low complexity. This indicates that the main effects are qualified by an interaction between perceived job complexity and role autonomy. The means of autonomy and perceived job skill/complexity indicate that when autonomy is high and the job is perceived to be more complex, this produces a stronger effect on organisational attraction ($M_{\text{jobs skill high}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}}$ = 6.28) than the low autonomy treatment where job skill/complexity is perceived to be low ($M_{\text{jobs skill low}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy low}}$ = 4.65). The means are detailed in Table 44.

TABLE 44 MEAN RESULTS S2H5 (PERCEIVED JOB SKILL & AUTONOMY)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction

Autonomy	**Job Perception**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Freq.**	**%**
1 High Autonomy	Job Perception High (1)	6.28	.794	43	71
	Job Perception Low (2)	6.05	.699	17	29
2 Low Autonomy	Job Perception High (1)	5.15	1.324	18	32
	Job Perception Low (2)	4.65	.806	39	68

FIGURE 24 INTERACTION EFFECT: PERCEIVED JOB SKILL & AUTONOMY



Overall, the analyses indicate that organisational attraction is stronger when role autonomy is high and the job is perceived to be more complex vs. low role autonomy and lower job complexity. The results infer that the relationships between role autonomy, customer orientation and organisational attraction will be further moderated by perceived job complexity such that the relationship is stronger when job complexity is higher ($M_{\text{jobs skill high}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}}$ = 6.28) and the relationship is weaker when job complexity (as perceived by the job seeker) is lower ($M_{\text{jobs skill low}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}}$ = 6.05).

The results support hypothesis S2H5. This hypothesis makes two prediction; (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction; (ii) with job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger (weaker) when job complexity is higher (lower). The results validate that customer orientation mediates the relationship between role autonomy and organisational attraction when perceived job skill/complexity is high, however, there is no such meditational effect when job skill/complexity perception is low.

6.9 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H6

Hypothesis S2H6 makes two predictions, it predicts (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions, (ii) with perceived job complexity playing a moderating role. The hypothesis is tested for mediation using Hayes (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 8). The model variables are presented in Table 45 and the statistical model is presented in Figures 25 and Figure 26 presents S2H2 which is outside the statistical model.

TABLE 45 PROCESS MODEL 8 – TEST VARIABLES

Test Variables	
X (predictor)	Role Autonomy
M (mediator)	Individual Customer Orientation
W (moderator	Job Skill/Complexity
Y (outcome)	Job Pursuit Intentions

FIGURE 25 STATISTICAL MODEL – DV: JOB PURSUIT INTENTIONS

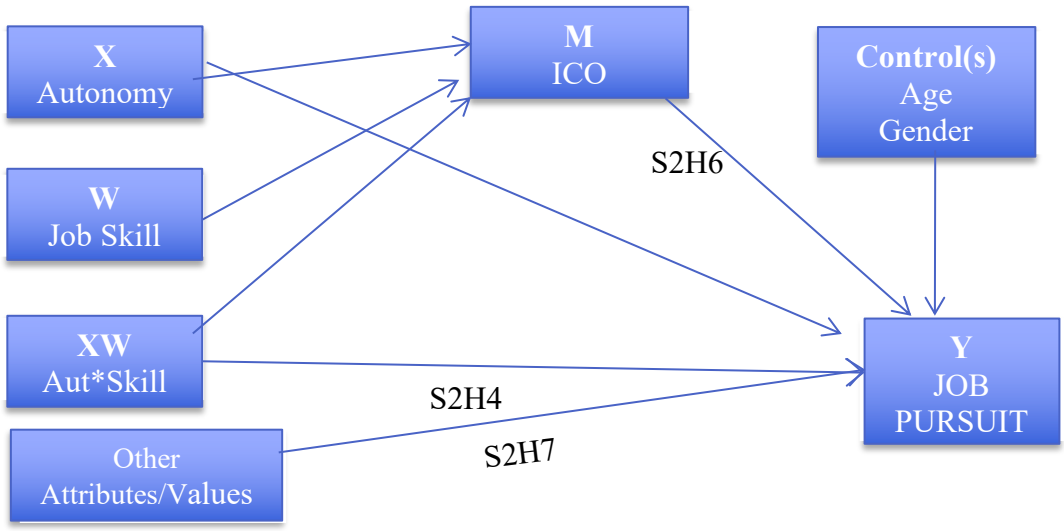
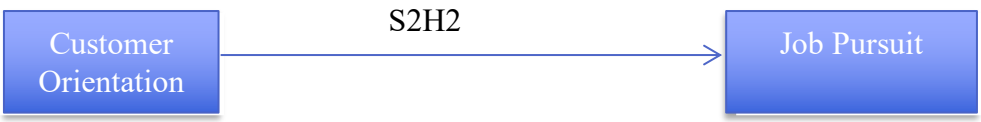


FIGURE 26 EFFECT OF CO ON JOB PURSUIT



Hypothesis S2H6 predicts that the relationship between autonomy, CO and job pursuit intentions is moderated by subjects' perceptions of job complexity. The model

specifies that 63% of variance in job pursuit intention (outcome 2) is attributed to the variables in the regression equation: $R^2 = .6345$, $F(4,114) = 49.48$, $p < .000$, with 19% of variance in outcome 1 (CO) attributed to the variables: $R^2 = .1944$, $F(3,115) = 9.25$, $p < .000$ (Table 46).

TABLE 46 HYPOTHESIS S2H6 – REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Outcome: CO (Outcome 1)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	Df2	*P*
.4409	.1944	9.2496	3.000	115.0000	.000
Model					
		Coif	SE	T	*p*
Constant		.2668	.1018	2.6209	.0100
Autonomy		.2105	.1020	2.0635	.0413
Job Skill/Complexity		.0237	.1069	.2214	.8252
Autonomy x Skill		.4658	.1067	4.3635	.0000
Gender		.0056	.1866	.03028	.9760
Age		.0797	.1264	.6304	.5297

Outcome: Job Pursuit Intentions (Outcome 2)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	Df2	*p*
.7966	.6345	49.4759	4.000	114.0000	.000
Model					
		Coif	SE	T	*p*
Constant		.1523	.0714	2.1317	.0352
CO		-.3117	.0636	-4.89033	.0000
Autonomy		-.4048	.0708	-5.7142	.0000
Job Skill/Complexity		.3574	.0729	4.9016	.0000
Autonomy x Skill		.2706	.0786	3.4440	.0008
Gender		.02839	.1246	.2268	.8210
Age		-.1922	.0845	-2.2740	.0249

The results show that the interaction effect (Autonomy x Job skill/complexity) on CO has a significant effect ($\beta = .4658$ $SE = .107$, $t = 4.36$, $p <.001$), this provides initial evidence of conditional indirect effects. Next, the results in Outcome 2 reveal that the relationship between the mediator (CO) on the DV (job pursuit intentions) also has a significant effect ($\beta = -.3117$ $SE = .0636$, $t = -4.90$, $p <.001$).

6.9.1 Mediator Effects – Organisational Customer Orientation (OCO)

The results demonstrate that when job skill/complexity is average or high, the effect of autonomy on job pursuit is mediated by CO. As zero does not fall between the confidence intervals of the bootstrapping results, this test confirms that there is a significant mediation effect of CO when job skill/complexity is average or high with no such effect when job skill/complexity is low, the results are presented in Table 47. This test explains the causal mechanism for the effect of role autonomy on job pursuit intentions i.e., through the mediational effect of organisational customer orientation and provides evidence for a significant indirect effect.

TABLE 47 EFFECT OF MEDIATOR CO

Conditional Indirect Effect (s) of Autonomy on Job Pursuit at Values of Moderator (Job skill/complexity)

Job Skill/Complexity	Effect	Boot SE	Bootlaces	Botulin
-1.0000 (low)	.0796	.0634	-.0118	.2422
.0000 (medium)	-.0656	.0358	-.1471	-.0042
1.0000 (high)	-.2108	.0622	-.3539	-.1058

6.9.2 Moderation of the Indirect Effect

Evidence of moderation of the indirect effect by perceived job skill is found in a statistically significant interaction between role autonomy and perceived job skill/complexity in the model examining organisational attraction: $a3 = .4658$, $p = .000$. Given that the first stage of the mediation model (X→M) is moderated, it follows that the indirect effect is also moderated, as the indirect effect of X on Y through M is constructed as the product of the X→M effect, which is conditional on W (i.e., $a1 + a3W$) and the M→Y effect ($b1$). Therefore, the indirect effect of X on Y through M is no longer a single quantity but is a function of W and is consequently conditional: $(a1 + a3W)b1$. In this case, $a1 = .2105$, $a3 = .4658$, and $b1 = -.3117$, and the indirect effect of X on Y through M is (.2105+ 0.4658W)(-3117).

6.9.3 Index Moderated Mediation

Significantly, the index of moderation mediation result does not cross zero (CI = -2683 to -.0619) providing evidence of a significant conditional indirect effect, this indicates that the moderated mediation effect is significant (detailed in Table 48).

TABLE 48 INDEX OF MODERATION MEDIATION

Mediator	Effect	SE (Boot)	Bootlaces	Botulin
CO	-.1452	.0516	-.2683	-.0619

6.9.4 Interaction Effects: Skill & Autonomy on Job Pursuit Intentions

Figure 27 presents the nature of the two-way interaction effect between customer contact and autonomy. The results show that when autonomy is high, high job skill/complexity predicted stronger levels of job pursuit intentions than when job skill/complexity is low and autonomy is high. The means results (detailed in Table 49) support the indirect effects results indicating that the condition with high perceived job skill/complexity and high autonomy produces a stronger effect on job pursuit intentions ($M_{\text{job skill/complexity high; } M_{\text{autonomy high}}} = 6.33$) than the high autonomy condition with low job skill/complexity ($M_{\text{job skill/complexity low; } M_{\text{autonomy high}}} = 6.15$).

FIGURE 27 INTERACTION EFFECT: AUTONOMY & PERCEIVED JOB SKILL

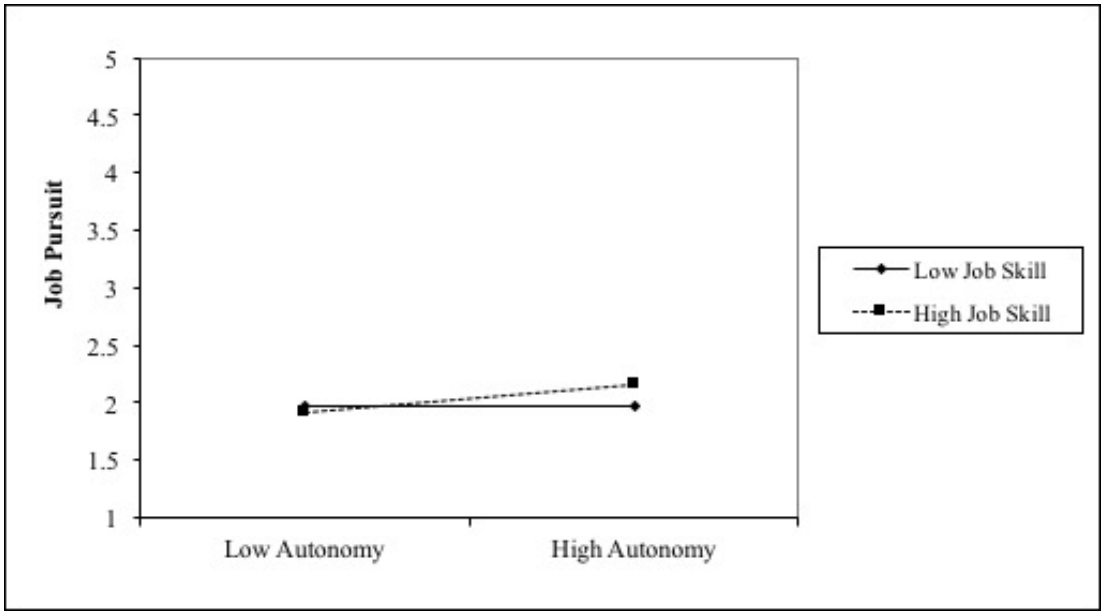


TABLE 49 MEAN RESULTS S2H6 (JOB SKILL/COMPLEXITY & AUTONOMY)

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit

Manipulation	Job Skill*	Mean	SD.	Freq.	%
1 High Autonomy	1 High	6.33	.167	43	71
	2 Low	6.15	.232	17	29
2 Low Autonomy	1 High	4.80	1.308	19	31
	2 Low	4.28	1.217	40	69

Note: *Job Skill = Median split for perceived job skill/complexity (1 = high; 2 = low)

As discussed, this hypothesis makes two prediction; (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions; (ii) with job skill/complexity playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger (weaker) when job complexity is higher (lower). The hypothesis provides further support for the importance of role autonomy in a customer oriented FLE context.

6.10 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S2H7

Hypothesis S2H7 proposes that service workers with different levels of customer orientation are attracted by different factors (measured with the 12-item job attribute and organisational value scale developed by Posner, 1981, with the inclusion of three additional variables, these are outlined in section 4.11.2 and Table 8). This hypothesis is interrogated by employing ANOVA and using the dummy customer orientation variable (median split) with each attribute examined in isolation. As such these are simple non-experimental tests designed to indicate whether the subjects are attracted by the attributes (the results are outlined in Table 50 and Table 51 respectively).

TABLE 50 JOB, ATTRACTORS FOR CUSTOMER ORIENTED SUBJECTS

Factor	High CO Mean	Low CO Mean	*p*
Opportunity to use abilities	4.902	4.390	.000
Variety of activities	4.393	4.071	.020
Challenging and interesting work	4.492	4.203	.018
Frequent customer contact	4.233	3.690	.001
Decision making authority	4.148	3.576	.001
Company reputation	4.328	3.864	.001
Organisational customer orientation	4.492	4.000	.001

TABLE 51 NON-SIG. JOB & ORG ATTRIBUTES - CUSTOMER ORIENTED SUBJECTS

Factor	High CO Mean	Low CO Mean	*p*
Opportunity to learn	4.902	4.678	.094
Rapid Advancement	4.000	3.741	.085
Salary	4.049	4.224	.203
Competent sociable co-workers	4.393	4.203	.192
Job security	4.213	4.414	.161
Location	3.918	3.897	.895
Training programmes	4.279	4.017	.091
Show effective performance	5.355	5.206	.365

As predicted by S2H7, customer oriented job seekers are attracted by different factors than low customer oriented workers. Factors found to be important to high customer oriented subjects include frequent customer contact, decision making authority and organisational customer orientation. The finding that decision-making authority is important to high customer oriented job seekers/workers is a significant finding and offers further support to S2H3, S2H4, S2H5 and S2H6 in this study. Additional factors which emerged as important included opportunity to use abilities: $p = .000$; variety of activities: $p = .020$; challenging and interesting work: $p = .018$; and company reputation: $p = .001$.

6.11 MEDIATION TEST: BARON AND KENNY (1986)

The mediation effects investigated in S2H5 and S2H6 are interrogated using Hayes (2013) PROCESS macro. As discussed in Section 4.22, Baron and Kenny (1986) offer another analysis strategy for testing mediation hypotheses. The Baron and Kenny (1986) approach remains a very common test for mediation, however, given increasing concerns (e.g., Zhao et al., 2010) about the method including its focus on establishing full mediation and the availability of newer, more effective and more powerful tools (e.g., Hayes', 2013 PROCESS macro), the decision was made to use the Hayes (2013) instrument as the primary analysis tool for establishing mediation in this research. In the Baron and Kenny (1986) method, mediation is tested through three regression tests outlined in Table 52. The results demonstrate a mediation effect for both 'attraction' and 'job pursuit'.

TABLE 52 RESULTS MEDIATION TESTS - STUDY 2 (BARON & KENNY, 1986)

Mediation Tests (Baron and Kenny, 1986)		
	Outcome (DV) – Attraction	**Result**
Test 1	Autonomy (IV) on mediator (CO)	$p = .029$
Test 2	Autonomy (IV) on DV (Attraction)	$p = .000$
Test 3	DV (Attraction) on mediator (CO) and Autonomy (IV)	$p = .050$
	Outcome (DV) – Job Pursuit	**Result**
Test 1	Autonomy (IV) on mediator (CO)	$p =. 029$
Test 2	Autonomy (IV) on DV (Pursuit)	$p = .000$
Test 3	DV (Pursuit) on mediator (CO) and Autonomy (IV)	$p = .008$

6.12 OTHER NON-HYPOTHESISED EFFECTS

The analyses in Study 2 produced non-hypothesised findings with statistically significant results for organisational attraction (i.e., attitudinal effects) and job pursuit intentions (i.e., behavioural effects). These are discussed in the following sections.

6.12.1 Two-Way Effect: Autonomy & OCO on Organisational Attraction

ANCOVA identifies a statistically significant 2-way effect between autonomy and perceived OCO on organisational attraction ($F(3,110) = 3.46$, $p = .019$). The results confirm that subjects in the high autonomy treatment perceive the firm to have a higher level of OCO ($M_{\text{role autonomy high}}$; $M_{\text{OCO high}} = 6.48$, SD = .595) than subjects in the low autonomy treatment ($M_{\text{role autonomy low}}$; $M_{\text{OCO high}} = 4.80$, SD = .215). These findings signify that autonomy effects job seekers' perceptions of OCO and produces a statistically significant effect on organisational attraction. The details of the analysis and the means are detailed in Table 53 and Table 54. The results show discrepancies between the sample numbers in each section, the most logical reason why the sample sizes are so low in OCO 3 and OCO 4 is due to the fact that this is the high autonomy treatment, and accordingly it appears that most subjects in this group consider that the organisation with the high autonomy treatment has higher levels of OCO.

TABLE 53 INTERACTION EFFECT (AUTONOMY & OCO)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	90.177[a]	9	10.020	16.925	.000
Intercept	290.101	1	290.101	490.040	.000
Gender	1.035	1	1.035	1.749	.189
Age	.970	1	.970	1.638	.203
AUTONOMY	9.840	1	9.840	16.621	.000
OCO	19.289	3	6.430	10.861	.000
AUTONOMY*OCO	6.152	3	2.051	3.464	.019
Error	65.119	110	.592		
Total	3790.431	120			
Corrected Total	155.296	119			

a. R Squared = .581 (Adjusted R Squared = .546)

TABLE 54 MEAN RESULTS AUTONOMY & PERCEIVED OCO

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction

Manipulation	Rating of OCO	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
1 High Autonomy	1 Very customer oriented	6.482	.595	30
	2	6.152	.600	21
	3	5.450	.443	8
	4 Not customer oriented	4.000	.566	2
2 Low Autonomy	1 Very customer oriented	4.800	.215	10
	2	5.150	.194	20
	3	4.838	.173	16
	4 Not customer oriented	4.051	.245	13

6.12.2 Chi-Square Test (OCO, Role Autonomy and Attraction)

A chi-square test was performed to test for the relationship between role autonomy, OCO and organisational attraction. The objective of this test is to establish if there is a variance between groups (i.e., high autonomy vs. low autonomy), perceptions of OCO and the effect this has on respondents' reported levels of organisational attraction. A statistically significant relationship was found between role autonomy, perceptions of OCO and organisational attraction: $x^2(60, N = 120) = 70.39, p = .000$.

6.12.3 Two-Way Effect: Autonomy and Perceived OCO on Job Pursuit

ANCOVA identifies a significant 2-way effect between autonomy and perceived OCO on job seekers/workers' job pursuit intentions ($F(3,110) = 3.97, p = .010$), the results are detailed in Table 55 The results show subjects in the high autonomy treatment

perceive the organisation to have a higher level of OCO ($M_{\text{role autonomy high}}$; $M_{\text{OCO high}}$ = 6.58, *SD* = .32) than subjects in the low autonomy treatment ($M_{\text{role autonomy low}}$; $M_{\text{OCO high}}$ = 4.42, *SD* = 1.32). The means statistics outlined in Table 56 reveal low sample sizes in CO 2 and 3, this is most likely due to this being the high autonomy treatment, accordingly it appears that most subjects in this group consider that the organisation has higher levels of OCO, as represented in Q4 and Q5. Accordingly, these results indicate that autonomy influences workers' perceptions of OCO producing a statistically significant effect on job pursuit.

TABLE 55 ANCOVA RESULTS (AUTONOMY & OCO)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	142.453[a]	9	15.828	20.895	.000
Intercept	259.575	1	259.575	342.677	.000
Gender	.007	1	.007	.010	.921
Age	2.903	1	2.903	3.833	.053
AUTONOMY	22.566	1	22.566	29.790	.000
Q16_COC	25.599	3	8.533	11.265	.000
AUTONOMY * COC	9.030	3	3.010	3.974	.010
Error	83.324	110	.757		
Total	3690.861	120			

a. R Squared = .631 (Adjusted R Squared = .601)

TABLE 56 MEAN RESULTS (AUTONOMY & OCO)

AUTONOMY	Rating of OCO	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1 High Autonomy	2 Not customer oriented	3.58	.118	4
	3	6.29	.344	8
	4	6.02	.741	21
	5 Very customer oriented	6.58	.324	28
2 Low Autonomy	2 2 Not customer oriented	3.40	1.365	13
	3 3	4.66	1.086	16
	4 4	4.98	.908	20
	5 Very customer oriented	4.42	1.320	10

6.12.4 Chi-Square Test (OCO and Job Pursuit Intentions)

A chi-square test was performed to test for the relationship between organisational customer orientation (OCO) and job pursuit intentions. In this test, the objective is to establish if there is a variance between groups who perceive a difference in OCO and

the effect this has on reported levels of intent to pursue a role with the organisation. The analyses verify a statistically significant relationship between OCO and job pursuit intentions: x^2 (81, N = 120) = 164.524, p = .000.

6.13 HYPOTHESIS RESULTS – STUDY 2

Table 57 presents the results to the seven hypotheses predicted for Study 2.

TABLE 57 HYPOTHESES RESULTS – STUDY 2

Hypothesis Statement		Result
S2H1	*High levels of customer orientation among job seekers is positively related to attitudinal job outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction) for FLE roles in service organisations.*	Accepted
S2H2	*High levels of customer orientation among job seekers is positively related to behavioural job outcomes (i.e., job pursuit intentions) for FLE roles in service organisations.*	Accepted
S2H3	*There will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction to a service organisation.*	Accepted
S2H4	*There will be a two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation.*	Accepted
S2H5	*This hypothesis makes two prediction; (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and (ii) organisational attraction with perceived job skill/complexity (high; low) playing a moderating role and is strongest when job skill/complexity is high.*	Accepted
S2H6	*This hypothesis makes two predictions: (i) customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions with (ii) perceived job skill/complexity (high; low) playing a moderating role and is strongest when job complexity is high.*	Accepted
S2H7	*There will be a positive relationship between high levels of customer orientation and factors such as (i) customer contact time, (ii) decision making authority, (iii) company reputation.*	Accepted

6.14 STUDY 2 – CONTRIBUTION TO CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Informed by Study 1, Study 2 further investigates autonomy and empirically demonstrates its importance for customer oriented job seekers, this is a key finding and provides support for objective 2 and for objective 3 by firstly establishing a two-way effect of autonomy and CO on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. Secondly, the findings demonstrate the moderating effect of job skill and complexity. Importantly, in Study 2, only autonomy was manipulated, this was important as it prevented autonomy being swamped by another variable which could possibly mask its effect. Davies and Gather (1993) argue that this is particularly of concern when the variable has not previously been tested in the specific context. By establishing the importance of autonomy for customer oriented workers, Study 2 therefore sets up Study 3 where more sophisticated tests evaluating the effect of autonomy can be investigated.

6.15 DISCUSSION EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH FINDINGS - STUDY 2

Following on from the findings in the qualitative study (Study 1), this first experimental study (Study 2) is designed to further explore autonomy, establish its effect on job seekers' attitudes and behaviours and to determine the conditions under which the effect is strongest. In this study, only autonomy was manipulated resulting in two treatments conditions (i.e., autonomy high; autonomy low); customer orientation and job skill/complexity were measured using the appropriate scales (outlined in chapter 4). Initial tests undertaken in Study 2 corroborate the findings in the exploratory study and demonstrate that when job seekers' levels of customer orientation are higher, they display more positive attitudes (i.e., organisational attraction) as predicted by S2H1 and behavioural intentions (i.e., job pursuit intentions) predicted by S2H2 towards customer facing roles in service organisations. Tests on S2H1 and S2H2 examining the effect of CO at a four-level split on the outcomes indicate that the biggest difference between customer oriented workers (i.e., high vs. low CO) lies at the extremities. This demonstrates tangible differences between the cohorts in relation to attraction and job pursuit, and gives rise to the possibility of other differences between the groups.

Overall, the positive results of S2H1 and S2H2 were not surprising as they are supported by extant research, most notably image congruence theory and fit theory which show that individuals are attracted to roles and organisations that match their values, abilities and personalities (Festinger, 1954; Kristof-Brown and Guay, 2011; Vanderstukken, Proost, and Van Den Broeck, 2018; Yen, 2017). Specifically, Dineen et al. (2018) finds a strong positive relationship between perceived role fit and role satisfaction among interns with stronger goal orientation. The role of fit was also explored by Kulkarni (2013) who posits that where a job candidate perceives a strong fit between themselves, the role and the organisation, then they are increasingly likely to self-select such roles. Donavan et al. (2004) and Liao and Subramony (2009) argue that from a customer orientation perspective, such workers are more likely to be drawn to roles where they identify congruence between themselves and the organisation as is evidenced by S2H1 and S2H2. This is further supported by Matthews et al. (2017) who discusses how customer oriented workers are more suited to roles entailing challenging customer interactions as their level of customer orientation (i.e., a job resource) protects them from difficult job conditions (i.e., challenging customer interactions). Accordingly, it is not unexpected that S2H1 found that customer oriented job seekers would be attracted to customer facing roles and interested in pursuing these roles (i.e., S2H2) as such roles match their skills and interests.

Significantly, the results also establish a two-way effect of autonomy and customer orientation on organisational attraction (S2H3) and job pursuit intentions (S2H4). This verifies the hypotheses that subjects with higher levels of CO are more attracted to customer facing roles offering higher levels of autonomy (S2H3) and are more likely to pursue a role in the organisation (S2H4) than lower customer oriented subjects. This empirical support for the two-way effect of autonomy and customer orientation on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions as demonstrated respectively by S2H3 and S2H4 is important as individual customer orientation is associated with increased job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012), organisational citizenship behaviours (Hanna, Kee, and Robertson, 2017), competitive differentiation (Babakus et al., 2007), job performance (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Zablah et al., 2012) and customer satisfaction (Menguc et al., 2015). Also when considered through the lens of fit theory (e.g., Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), this result is not unexpected as individuals (in this case

customer oriented individuals) are more likely to be attracted to roles that best match their particular skills and interests. The two-way effect of autonomy and customer orientation (S2H3 and S2H4) on the outcomes may also be explained by the tenets of fit theory (Avery et al., 2015; Farrell and Oczkowski, 2012; Gazzoli et al., 2013). Fit theory holds that workers are attracted to jobs where there is congruence between a worker's skills, knowledge and abilities (personal resources) with the demands of the job. The principles of fit theory also manifest in the moderated mediation analysis for organisational attraction (S2H5) and job pursuit intentions (S2H6) which indicated that the most attractive proposition for the subjects (i.e., graduate job seekers) was the high autonomy proposition when job skill and complexity was perceived to be high. These results also inform extant research, for example, Harold and Ployhart (2008) and Chapman et al. (2004) who posit that job seekers with a high self-value (e.g., graduates) will seek jobs that match their perceived marketability, in this case a high autonomy and high skill/complexity job.

Principally, the results empirically confirm a main effect of autonomy on the behaviours (S2H4) and attitudes (S2H3) of customer oriented job seekers (vs. lower customer oriented job seekers). On one level this is not surprising, as autonomy is widely examined in extant literature and shown to be important generally for most workers irrespective of customer orientation (e.g., Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi, 2017) whether they are customer facing or not and is conceptualised as both a personal and organisational resource in the JD-R model (Lopes et al., 2015; Rapp, Agnihotri, Baker, and Andzulis, 2015; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). However, in the context of the present research, S2H3 and S2H4 clearly demonstrate that autonomy is more important to high (vs. low) customer oriented workers. These results support extant research and imply that customer oriented job seekers recognise the importance of autonomy in a customer facing environment (Menguc et al., 2015).

The two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer orientation in organisational attraction as demonstrated by S2H3 and in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation demonstrated by S2H4 is important as these findings support a synergistic relationship between customer orientation and role autonomy for customer oriented workers specifically in the context of

organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). The importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers is indicated in the exploratory research (Study 1) and is also demonstrated empirically in the customer orientation literature stream (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Stock et al., 2016) however, this was not through the lens of understanding job pursuit intentions or organisational attraction.

6.15.1 Effect of Skill, Autonomy and ICO on Attraction and Job Pursuit

The exploratory research indicates that their skill level and the complexity of their job can determine the type of relationship that customer facing workers have with their customers. Expressly, an employee-customer dyad where the worker is highly skilled is more likely to precipitate a partnership-type relationship between the parties defined by trust and equality. The inter-relationships between job complexity, role autonomy and ICO on organisational attraction (S2H5) and job pursuit intentions (S2H6) is explored. A partnership driven relationship between the FLE and customer is indicative of a 'service centred' view as proposed by Vargo and Lusch (2004). Such a service-centred approach draws on operant resources and its core tenet is that service in itself is dominant, with knowledge the fundamental source of competitive advantage (Harrington, Hammond, Ottenbacher, Chathoth, and Marlowe, 2018; Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, and Moital, 2018). Zablah et al. (2016) discusses the positive individual and organisational outcomes deriving from affording customer-FLE dyads with autonomy. Drawing on Liao and Subramony (2009), it is to be expected that organisations which position the customer central in their business model consonant to a CDL perspective will attract customer oriented workers (as supported by image congruence and self-concept theory) (Strandvik and Holmlund, 2014).

When the employee has lower skill levels, the relationship with customers tends to be more transactional and short-term, with the worker adopting a more deferential stance with customers (Donavan et al., 2004; Zablah et al., 2016). In such relationships, the dyadic relationship between the customer and employee either does not exist or is only manifested (generally) to a superficial level as the interaction is happening (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015). In light of this, it is not surprising that S2H5 and S2H6

demonstrate that job complexity mediates the relationship between customer orientation and autonomy on organisational attraction as predicted by S2H5 and job pursuit intentions as predicted by S2H6 with the relationship strongest when job complexity is higher. Overall, the results of S2H5 and HS26 reveal that high customer oriented job seekers are more attracted and more likely to pursue a role offering high role autonomy with job skill/complexity having the strongest effect when it is high. Significantly, a recent study by Jeng (2018) investigates the interactive effect between job complexity and customer orientation, the study finds that job complexity increases customer orientation and by extension customer orientation increases employee creativity. This study further indicates the importance of autonomy and job skill for educated, high customer oriented job seekers as revealed in S2H5 and S2H6. Overall, the findings hypothesised by S2H5 and S2H6 corroborate the exploratory results in Study 1 and supports the importance of autonomy to customer oriented workers and indicates the weight workers assign to it when evaluating job options.

6.15.2 Other Factors Attracting Job Seekers

As predicted by S2H7, customer oriented job seekers are attracted by different factors than low customer oriented workers. Factors found to be important to high customer oriented subjects include frequent customer contact, decision making authority and OCO. Job attributes and organisational values such as frequent customer contact and OCO have been established as being important to customer oriented workers in previous research (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Menguc et al., 2016). However, prior to this study, these factors have not been specifically measured for their importance in attracting such workers to service organisations. The fact that specific attributes were found statistically significant for the high customer oriented group may be indicative that high and low customer oriented workers have different work values as discussed by Zablah et al. (2012) and Van der Doef and Maes (1999) and provides some corroboration for the psychological conceptualisation of customer orientation. Salary, location, competent/sociable co-workers and security did not emerge as important; however, Harold and Nolan (2010) contend that job seekers may be reticent to state the importance of some job aspects (e.g., salary) in such a scenario.

6.15.3 Effect of CO, Autonomy and OCO for Person Job Fit

Finally, Study 2 presented a (non-hypothesised) statistically significant 3-way effect between individual customer orientation, autonomy and organisational customer orientation (OCO) for person job fit. This reveals that when role autonomy is high, and perceptions of OCO are also high that customer oriented job seekers identify a stronger fit between themselves and the organisation. This supports fit theory and is congruent with the literature which demonstrates that individuals are attracted to similar others including organisations with similar values thereby heightening overall feelings of fit. This is discussed by Grizzle et al. (2009) who demonstrated the significant influence of organisational climate for customer oriented workers which may precipitate positive or negative effects on employee customer orientation.

6.16 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the findings from the first experimental study (Study 2) and interprets the findings with respect to existing literature. S2H1 and S2H2 demonstrate that role autonomy has a positive effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented workers. Autonomy being recognised as important in itself is not unexpected, given that it is acknowledged as a universal resource (i.e., a job and a personal resource) in the JD-R model (Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). The particular and heightened importance of autonomy for customer oriented workers however, appears to be significant as evidenced by both the exploratory and experimental studies, specifically S2H3 and S2H4 and is supported by the literature (e.g., Babakus et al., 2016; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2016) however not in relation to attraction and job pursuit outcomes. Furthermore, the results reveal that individual customer orientation mediates the relationship between autonomy and both outcomes with job skill/complexity having the strongest effect when it is high. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings from the second experimental study, Study 3 which includes an additional treatment variable (i.e., customer contact) and so extends Study 2.

~ CHAPTER ~

7

DATA ANALYSIS – STUDY 3 QUANTITATIVE DATA

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA ANALYSIS - STUDY 3

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 presents the results from the first phase of the experimental research (Study 2). Drawing on the literature and the findings from the experimental research in Study 1, Study 2 tested the influence of role autonomy alone and its combined influence with job skill/complexity for customer oriented workers on the research outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). The findings are comprised of the results of both sets of interviews (i.e., interviews with customer service champions and managers). Furthermore, the results reveal that individual customer orientation mediates the relationship between autonomy and both outcomes with job skill/complexity having the strongest effect when it is high. Study 3 extends Study 2 by introducing a new treatment variable shown to be important to customer oriented workers: customer contact. Study 3 investigates the interaction effect between role autonomy and customer contact level and their effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.

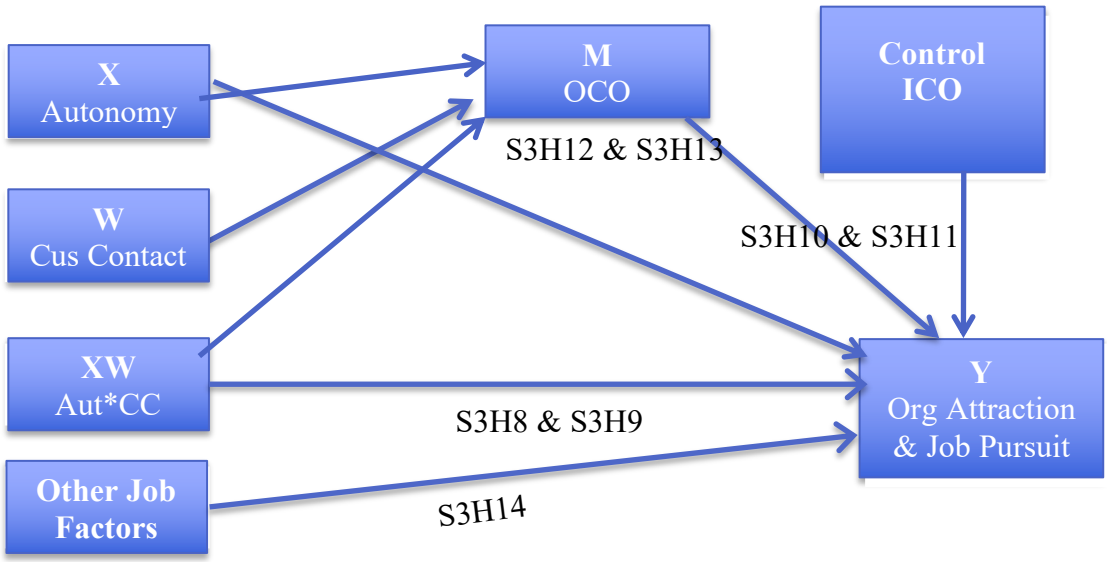
7.2 STUDY 3

While recognised as a universal resource in the JD-R model, role autonomy appears to have a particular importance to customer oriented workers as demonstrated in Study 1 and by Study 2. The specific importance of role autonomy for customer oriented FLEs appears to be driven by a need to meet customer needs (i.e., as a requirement for their job) and a want to meet customer needs (i.e., customer oriented individuals enjoy meeting customer needs). The objective of Study 3 is to extend Study 1 and 2 and further investigate the importance of autonomy as an attitudinal and behavioural influence on customer oriented workers. In addition, Study 3 introduces a treatment variable proven to have an important attitudinal and behavioural influence on customer

oriented workers: customer contact (high; low) (Liao and Subramony, 2009; Menguc et al., 2015). Adhering to the tenets of JD-R model, Study 3 seeks to establish whether the combined influence of autonomy (i.e., job resource) and customer contact (i.e., job demand) will predict customer oriented workers' attraction and job pursuit intentions.

The research hypotheses were informed by the review of the literature, and were based on the qualitative findings and the findings from Study 2. The hypotheses address the particular importance of specific factors (i.e., customer contact time, role autonomy and situational context) to predict customer oriented job seekers' attraction and intention to pursue a job in a service organisation. The study also investigates whether OCO will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions with customer contact (high; low) playing a moderating role. Figure 28 presents the statistical model design for Study 3 detailing the hypotheses and paths.

FIGURE 28 STATISTICAL MODEL – STUDY 3



7.2.1 Research Hypotheses – Study 3

Table 58 presents the research hypotheses for Study 3.

TABLE 58 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES – STUDY 3

Hypothesis	Insight from literature	Source
S3H8: Autonomy (i.e., job resource) and customer contact time (i.e., job demand) will predict customer oriented workers' attraction towards FLE roles in service organisations (a two-way interaction controlling for ICO).	Autonomy protects workers' self-efficacy, it improves individual and organisational outcomes and protects the worker. Autonomous customer-employee dyad are more productive and effective.	Stock (2016) Zablah et al. (2016); Menguc et al. (2015)
S3H9: Autonomy (i.e., job resource) and customer contact time (i.e., job demand) will predict customer oriented job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards FLE roles in a service organisation (a two-way interaction).		
S3H10: There will be a three-way effect of role autonomy, customer contact time and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' attraction towards a service organisation	This supports a synergistic relationship of CO and autonomy, whereby autonomy protects workers from challenging customer interactions. The research indicates roles offering autonomy will be more attractive to customer oriented workers. It reveals the importance of customer contact for customer oriented workers.	Matthews et al. (2017); Menguc et al. (2015); Stock (2016); Donavan et al. (2002)
S3H11: There will be a three-way interaction between autonomy, customer contact time and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation.		
S3H12 (i) & (ii): This hypothesis makes two predictions: (i) OCO will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with customer contact playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and weaker when contact is lower.	The evidence in the literature is that organisational attractiveness affords organisations the potential to achieve a competitive advantage in their endeavours to attract employees. OCO has been shown to be an important influencer to customer oriented workers.	Harold and Ployhart (2008); Trank, Rynes, and Bretz (2002); Cable and Turban (2001); Jiang and Iles (2011, p. 106)
S3H13: This hypothesis makes two predictions (i) Climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions (ii) with customer contact playing a moderating role with the relationship stronger when contact is higher and weaker when contact is lower.		
S3H14: There will be a positive relationship between high levels of CO and factors such as org. reputation with organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.	Extant research indicates that customer oriented vs. low customer oriented workers are attracted by different factors and values.	Donavan et al. (2004)

7.3 STUDY 3 – USE OF PANELS

The pilot for Study 3 and the main study were implemented by a marketing agency using an online panel. This decision was influenced by the difficulty in recruiting a

sample of a sufficient size for the research, efforts were made to recruit subjects on a number of occasions but were not successful despite offering an incentive of a guaranteed monetary prize for one individual drawn at random. Survey Monkey, the agency chosen has an established and successful reputation in the field and has been used for survey implementation previously by Waterford Institute of Technology. Budgetary considerations were also important and Survey Monkey provide a cost-effective solution, however, the maximum sample size possible taking into consideration research requirements (i.e., candidates needed to be employed or seeking employment in service roles in service organisations) was 100 (the final number achieved was 104). Survey Monkey requires their panel members to take self-profiling surveys regularly to keep demographics updated. The number of surveys that panel respondents receive are limited (i.e., between three and six annually), thereby helping to ensure data quality. The company's member panel has a large diverse population across the United States and worldwide through affiliate relationships. Members take surveys for charity and a chance to win a prize, the objective is that by offering non-cash incentives this encourages panel members to provide honest, considered answers. After joining the panel, members complete a profile information form facilitating Survey Monkey to gather a variety of profile attributes, including demographics and other targeting characteristics. Accordingly, the decision was made to test the effectiveness of this approach in the pilot study using a sample of 50 subjects (the pilot totalled 51) drawn from a pool of workers/job seekers in customer service roles in service organisations.

7.4 PILOT STUDY

The objective of the research is to establish factors that influence the organisational attraction of customer oriented workers. The first experimental study, Study 2 validates the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers. The objective of Study 3 is to validate the influence of role autonomy on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers. The interactive effect of other variables demonstrated in extant literature as important (i.e., customer contact and OCO) is also investigated.

7.4.1 Rationale for Assessing Feasibility

The pilot study is fundamental to assessing the feasibility for the main study. The pilot study tests the research design which employs experimental research, using a factorial design with two manipulated variables (i.e., role autonomy; customer contact level) with randomised assignment to one of the four treatments.

7.4.2 Participants and Setting of the Study

The eligibility criteria for participants including the inclusion-exclusion conditions are identical to the main study; i.e., people employed or seeking employment in FLE roles in service industries. As the research seeks to establish the factors attracting customer oriented workers to service organisations it was important to ensure that the sample was drawn from a pool satisfying this requirement. The protocol and materials were the same as planned for the main study. The pilot was implemented by SurveyMonkey using an online panel in June 2017, n = 51, this sample size adheres to Treece (1982), who argues that a robust pilot should comprise 10% - 20% of the overall study.

7.4.3 Manipulations

The study is a between-subjects experimental study (2 x 2 factorial design with random assignment) with two manipulated variables: autonomy and customer contact. The pilot process helped to estimate statistical parameters for analysis and investigate variables of interest and to examine how they could be operationalised and tested.

7.4.4 Statistical Analysis

Data was analysed using SPSS, analysis of variance and co-variance (ANOVA; ANCOVA) and PROCESS macro.

7.4.5 Outcomes and Feasibility Criteria

51 surveys were completed by the online panel for the pilot. The analysis demonstrates that the manipulation for autonomy was successful with the result significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 48) = 5.52$, $p = .023$). Similarly, the contact variable manipulation was also successful: ($F(1, 48) = 6.19$, $p = .016$). The pilot analyses endorse the two

way effect of CO and autonomy on organisational attraction as significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1,46) = 6.25, p = .016$), the means demonstrate that high customer oriented workers were more attracted by the role vs low customer oriented workers (high: 4.94; low: 4.44). The findings also support the two way effect of CO and autonomy on job pursuit intentions: ($F(1,36) = 5.76, p = .020$). Customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy group reported higher levels of intent to pursue a role vs. customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy group as demonstrated in the means results (i.e., 5.01 vs. 4.64). The analyses provide support for the two way effect of CO and autonomy on organisational attraction as significant at the $p < .05$ level ($F(2,32) = 3.87$, p = .031). Similarly, customer oriented subjects in the high autonomy group reported higher levels of job pursuit intentions vs. customer oriented subjects in the low autonomy group as demonstrated in the means results (i.e., 6.14 vs. 5.59).

7.4.6 Feasibility Criteria

Both the autonomy and contact manipulation were successful with no cross interaction (i.e., the autonomy manipulation was not significant for the contact variable, and the contact manipulation was not significant for the autonomy variable). The statistical results also demonstrate a significant two-way interaction between role autonomy and CO on both organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. The analyses indicated that the contact variable was swamped by autonomy, accordingly, the description of customer contact was strengthened, the low contact description read "these are supporting roles with a low degree of control" and "employees will spend 20% of time working with customers". The high contact description was strengthened as follows: "employees will have a high degree of control" and "employees will spend 80% of time working with customers".

7.5 MANIPULATION RESULTS – STUDY 3

Central to the veracity of the study is the success of the two manipulations (i.e., customer contact and autonomy). A between subjects ANOVA indicates that both the role autonomy ($F(1, 101) = 32.147, p = .000$) and customer contact manipulations ($F(1, 101) = 34.532, p = .000$) were successful (outlined in Table 18). Subjects in the high role autonomy treatment condition rated the level of autonomy inherent in the

manipulated job advertisement stronger ($M_{\text{role autonomy high}} = 3.69$) than subjects in the low role autonomy treatment condition ($M_{\text{role autonomy low}} = 2.33$). Similarly, subjects in the high customer contact treatment rated the level of customer contact as stronger ($M_{\text{customer contact high}} = 4.56$) than subjects in the low customer contact treatment ($M_{\text{customer contact low}} = 3.25$). Also, there were no cross-interaction effects between the manipulated variables and the manipulation checks. Manipulated variable 'customer contact' did not affect the rating of 'role autonomy' ($F(1, 101) = .207$, $p = .650$). Similarly, the manipulated variable 'role autonomy' did not produce an effect on 'customer contact' ($F(1, 101) = 1.67$, $p = .811$). Furthermore, each manipulation did not produce a cross-interaction effect on the two-way effects of the other manipulation. The results of the manipulation tests are presented in Table 59.

TABLE 59 MANIPUATION CHECKS

Autonomy Manipulation	**N**	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**	**SD**	***P***
High (Does job offer a lot of control)	55	1	5	3.69	.98	.000
Low (Does job offer a lot of control)	48	1	5	2.33	1.43	
Customer Contact Manipulation	**N**	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**	**SD**	***P***
High (customer contact)	48	1	5	4.05	.71	.000
Low (customer contact)	55	1	5	2.59	1.39	

7.6 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S3H8

Initially, a fixed factor for role autonomy and customer contact level was created; high cases were coded: high = 1, low cases coded: low = 2 for both manipulated variables. S3H8 posits that autonomy and customer contact will predict customer oriented workers' organisational attraction (i.e., a two-way interaction). ANCOVA analyses compared the effect of autonomy and customer contact time on job seekers' organisational attraction towards service organisations. Covariates include age, gender, CO, location, education and job, as discussed in section 4.9.3.6. The results confirm a moderately significant two way interaction between autonomy and customer contact on attraction ($F(1, 88) = 5.15$, $p = .026$). The results suggest that together autonomy and customer contact have an effect on organisational attraction therefore, this is consistent with S3H8 (Table 60 details the ANCOVA results, Table 61 details the means results).

TABLE 60 ANCOVA TEST RESULTS S3H8

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	39.259[a]	9	4.362	3.439	.001
Intercept	12.521	1	12.521	9.871	.002
Co	2.388	1	2.388	1.883	.173
Age	13.331	1	13.331	10.510	.002
Gender	.082	1	.082	.065	.800
Location	.525	1	.525	.414	.522
Education	3.612	1	3.612	2.847	.095
Job	4.095	1	4.095	3.228	.076
Autonomy	3.390	1	3.390	2.672	.106
CustCon	.019	1	.019	.015	.904
Autonomy*CustCon	6.529	1	6.529	5.147	.026
Error	111.621	88	1.268		
Total	2328.880	98			
Corrected Total	150.880	97			

a. R Squared = .260 (Adjusted R Squared = .185)

The combined means for autonomy and customer contact confirm the high autonomy; low contact role ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; customer contact low}}$ = 5.27, *SD* = .97) produces stronger effects than high autonomy; high contact ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; customer contact high}}$ = 4.64, *SD* = 1.00). In other words, the findings reveal respondents were more attracted to service organisations offering low customer contact, high autonomy FLE roles.

TABLE 61 MEAN RESULTS H1B (AUTONOMY & CUSTOMER CONTACT)

Autonomy	**Customer Contact**	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**	**%**
1.00 High	1.00 High	4.64	1.00	24	49
	2.00 Low	5.27	.97	27	51
2.00 Low	1.00 High	4.56	1.02	21	44
	2.00 Low	4.32	1.61	26	56

7.6.1 Contrasts Analysis

The effect of customer contact is explored further by employing contrast analysis, this facilitates investigating the contrast differences between groups. In this instance, contrast analysis is used to isolate customer contact (high) and customer contact (low) to specifically drill down into the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction for each group (i.e., high customer contact group and low customer contact group). Contrast analysis is discussed in section 4.21.2.

7.6.1.1 Contrasts: Customer Contact High

ANCOVA analysis of contrasts on the high customer contact cases demonstrate a non-significant effect for autonomy on organisational attraction ($F(1, 47) = .218$, $p = .64$; $M_{\text{role autonomy high}} = 4.74$; $M_{\text{role autonomy low}} = 4.56$).

7.6.1.2 Contrasts: Customer Contact Low

ANCOVA analysis was conducted to establish the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction in the low contact group (outlined in Table 62). Unlike the high customer contact group, when controlled for gender, age, education, location and job type the results show a significant two way effect of the contrast results for low customer contact show a significant effect for autonomy on organisational attraction at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 46) = 8.408$, $p = .006$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}} = 5.27$; $M_{\text{autonomy low}} = 4.32$). The results determine that when customer contact is low, the effect of autonomy on job pursuit intentions is magnified with no such effect of autonomy on organisational attraction when customer contact is high. Table 63 outlines the means results.

TABLE 62 CONTRAST RESULTS S3H8 (CUSTOMER CONTACT: LOW)

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	25.422[a]	6	4.237	3.897	.003
Intercept	8.344	1	8.344	7.674	.008
Age	7.874	1	7.874	7.242	.010
Gender	.184	1	.184	.174	.679
Region	.003	1	.003	.003	.960
Educ	2.000	1	2.000	1.840	.182
Job	5.518	1	5.518	5.075	.024
Autonomy	9.142	1	9.142	8.408	.006
Error	50.015	46	1.087		
Total	1300.400	53			
Corrected Total	75.437	52			

a. R Squared = .337 (Adjusted R Squared = .251)

TABLE 63 MEAN RESULTS S3H8 (CUSTOMER CONTACT: LOW)

Autonomy	Mean	SD	N
1.00 High	5.28	.97	27
2.00 Low	4.32	1.25	26

7.6.1.3 Low Customer Contact Cases Tests (CO and Autonomy)

Contrast results within customer contact (low) reveal a significant effect of autonomy on organisational attraction for high customer oriented respondents. The two-way effect of CO (using a median split of CO, with 1 = high CO; 2 = low CO) and autonomy (1 = high; 2 = low) was tested using ANCOVA. When controlled for gender, age, education, location and job the results show a moderately significant two way effect of autonomy and CO on organisational attraction ($F(1, 48) = 4.36$, $p = .042$) with a significant main effect for autonomy ($F(1, 48) = 7.09$, $p = .010$) and a non-significant main effect for customer orientation ($F(1, 48) = .052$, p = n's.).

The means (presented in Table 64) confirm that when autonomy and CO are high ($M_{\text{autonomy high;}}$ $M_{\text{CO high}} = 5.54$, $SD = .86$) this produces a stronger effect on organisational attraction than when autonomy is high and CO is low ($M_{\text{autonomy high;}}$ $M_{\text{CO low}} = 4.81$, $SD = 1.03$) or when autonomy is low and CO is high ($M_{\text{autonomy low;}}$ $M_{\text{CO high}} = 4.05$, $SD = 1.40$). These findings suggest that when customer contact is low and when role autonomy is high that job seekers with a high level of customer orientation will be more likely to be attracted to the organisation.

TABLE 64 MEANS RESULTS S3H8

Autonomy	CO Median	Mean	SD	N
1.00 High	1.00 High	5.54	.86	17
	2.00 Low	4.81	1.03	10
2.00 Low	1.00 High	4.05	1.40	14
	2.00 Low	4.63	.99	12

Overall, the results provide support for S3H8, autonomy and customer contact interact to create a significant effect on attraction for job seekers. The findings further suggest that when autonomy is high and customer contact is low, this produces the strongest effect on customer oriented job seekers' attraction to the organisation with

no such effect when customer contact is high. As outlined, S3H8 demonstrates a two-way interaction between role autonomy and customer contact time in predicting customer orientation workers' organisational attraction towards a service organisation.

7.7 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S3H9

Hypothesis S3H9 investigates effects of autonomy (i.e., a job resource) and customer contact (i.e., a job demand) on job seekers' intention to pursue a role in a service organisation (i.e., behavioural effect). Consistent with S3H8, the same covariate variables are employed. ANCOVA analysis produced a significant two way interaction between autonomy and customer contact on job pursuit intentions at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 88) = 5.77$, $p = .018$), presented in Table 65, therefore, the interaction effect is consistent with S3H9. However, the combined means for autonomy and customer contact are contrary to expectations with ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; customer contact low}} = 5.36$, $SD = 1.25$) producing a stronger effect on job pursuit intentions than ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; customer contact high}} = 4.76$, $SD = 1.41$). This is presented in Table 66.

TABLE 65 ANCOVA RESULTS S3H9

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	74.701[a]	9	8.300	5.325	.000
Intercept	1.831	1	1.831	1.175	.281
CO	14.252	1	14.253	9.143	.003
Age	26.341	1	26.341	16.898	.000
Gender	1.379	1	1.379	.885	.350
Location	.178	1	.178	.114	.737
Education	5.760	1	5.760	3.695	.058
Job	6.038	1	6.038	3.873	.052
Autonomy	3.028	1	3.028	1.942	.167
CustCon	.676	1	.676	.433	.512
Autonomy*CustCon	8.992	1	8.992	5.768	.018
Error	137.178	88	1.900		
Total	2471.720	98			
Corrected Total	211.880	97			

a. R Squared = .353 (Adjusted R Squared) = .286

TABLE 66 MEANS RESULTS S3H9

Autonomy	Customer Contact	Mean	SD	N	%
1.00 High	1.00 High	4.76	1.41	24	24
	2.00 Low	5.36	1.25	27	27
2.00 Low	1.00 High	4.69	1.54	21	22
	2.00 Low	4.36	1.60	26	26

The findings indicate a significant main effect of autonomy and a non-significant effect of customer contact on job pursuit intentions. This was further interrogated by using contrast analysis, this involved splitting the customer contact group into high contact (1) and low contact (2) and testing the effect of autonomy on job pursuit for each group (i.e., high contact; low contact).

7.7.1 Contrasts: Customer Contact - High

Contrasts within customer contact tested with ANCOVA confirm the absence of an effect for autonomy on job pursuit intentions when customer contact is high ($F(1, 47) = .210$, $p = .65$; $M_{\text{role autonomy high}} = 4.88$; $M_{\text{role autonomy low}} = 4.68$). In other words, this denotes that when the job offers a high degree of customer contact (a demand), the level of autonomy (a resource) has no effect on the dependent variable.

7.7.2 Contrasts: Customer Contact - Low

ANCOVA was conducted to establish the effect of autonomy on job pursuit in the low customer contact group. Contrary to the high contact group, there was a significant effect of autonomy on job pursuit at the $p < .05$ level ($F(1, 53) = 7.30$, $p = .009$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}} = 5.36$, $SD = 1.25$; $M_{\text{autonomy low}} = 4.36$, $SD = 1.60$). Table 67 presents the results of the analysis.

TABLE 67 CONTRAST RESULTS (CUSTOMER CONTACT: LOW)

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit Intentions					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	35.804[a]	6	5.967	3.343	.008
Intercept	11.729	1	11.729	6.571	.014
Age	10.106	1	10.106	5.662	.022
Gender	.909	1	.909	.509	.479
Region	1.010	1	1.010	.566	.456
Education	5.925	1	5.925	3.319	.075
Job	4.432	1	4.432	2.483	.122
Autonomy	15.725	1	15.725	7.301	.009
Error	82.111	46	1.785		
Total	1373.840	53			
Corrected Total	117. 915	52			

a R Squared = .304 (Adjusted R Squared = .213)

Overall, the findings of the contrast analyses between groups indicates that when customer contact is low, the effect of autonomy on job pursuit intentions is magnified with no such effect of autonomy when customer contact is high.

7.7.3 Low Customer Contact Cases (CO and Autonomy)

Contrasts within customer contact reveal a significant effect of autonomy on job pursuit for high customer oriented subjects when customer contact is low. The two-way effect of CO (using median split of CO: 1 = high CO; 2 = low CO) and autonomy (1 = high; 2 = low) was tested using between subjects ANCOVA. The results show a moderately significant two-way effect between autonomy and CO on job pursuit ($F(1, 52) = 4.83$, $p = .032$) with a main effect for autonomy ($F(1, 52) = 5.84$, $p = .019$) and a non-significant effect for individual customer orientation ($F(1, 52) = .391$, p = n's.) for the low contact group.

Furthermore, the means bear out that when autonomy and CO are high (for the low contact group); ($M_{\text{autonomy high;}}$ $M_{\text{CO high}} = 5.75$, $SD = .88$), this produces a stronger effect that when autonomy is high and CO is low ($M_{\text{autonomy high;}}$ $M_{\text{CO low}} = 4.65$, $SD = 1.45$) or when autonomy is low and CO is high ($M_{\text{autonomy low;}}$ $M_{\text{CO high}} = 3.95$, $SD = 1.86$). These findings suggest that when customer contact is low and autonomy is high that high customer oriented job seekers will be more likely to pursue a role in the organisation. Accordingly, the results provide support for S3H9, autonomy and

customer contact level interact to create a significant effect on job pursuit intentions for customer oriented job seekers ($F(1, 52) = 4.83$, $p = .032$) and this is further validated by the means results. The results establish that when customer contact is low, high autonomy has a significant effect on job pursuit, with no such effect when customer contact is high. Moreover, when customer contact is low, high autonomy has a significant effect on job pursuit for customer oriented job seekers producing a stronger effect than when autonomy is high and CO is low. This indicates that counter-intuitively, high customer oriented job seekers are more likely to pursue FLE roles in service organisations when role autonomy is high and customer contact is low.

7.8 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S3H10

Hypothesis S3H10 suggests a three-way interaction between autonomy, customer contact and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' organisational attraction. As such, hypothesis S3H10 centres on predicting attitudinal effects and was tested using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), detailed in Table 68. Age, gender, education, job level and location were included as control variables in this three-way test, as they have been identified in CO and attraction research streams as having an impact on individuals' manifestations of CO and attitudes and behaviours, as discussed in section 4.9.3.6). Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to ascertain effects of autonomy, customer contact and CO on organisational attraction.

TABLE 68 ANCOVA TEST RESULTS S3H10

Dependent Variable: Organisational Attraction					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	56.746[a]	22	2.579	2.055	.011
Intercept	27.582	1	27.582	21.973	.000
Age	10.118	1	10.118	8.061	.006
Gender	1.664	1	1.664	1.352	.253
Education	5.217	1	5.217	4.156	.045
Job	4.844	1	4.844	3.859	.053
Autonomy	1.159	1	1.159	.923	.340
CustCon	5.326	1	1.331	1.061	.192
CO	10.930	4	2.732	1.934	.382
Autonomy*CustCon	7.820	1	7.820	6.230	.015
Autonomy*CO	4.949	4	1.237	.986	.421
CustCon*CO	4.057	4	1.014	.808	.524
Autonomy*CustCon*CO	8.484	2	4.242	3.379	.039
Error	94.144	75	1.255		
Total	2328.880	98			
Corrected Total	150.880	97			

a. R Squared = .376 (Adjusted R Squared = .193)

ANCOVA results present a main effect of autonomy and customer contact on organisational attraction ($F(1, 75) = 6.23, p = .015$) and a moderately significant three-way effect of autonomy, customer contact and customer orientation on organisational attraction ($F(2, 75) = 3.38, p = .039$). The results therefore are consistent with S3H10. The cell means uncover a significant difference in the means for autonomy, customer orientation and customer contact such that the high autonomy and low customer contact treatment has a stronger effect on organisation attraction for customer oriented workers ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; } M_{\text{customer contact low; } M_{\text{CO high}}} = 5.21$, $SD = .91$) than high role autonomy and high customer contact for customer oriented workers ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; } M_{\text{customer contact high; } M_{\text{CO high}}} = 4.88$, $SD = .85$). The means are detailed in Table 69.

TABLE 69 MEAN RESULTS S3H10

Autonomy	**Customer Contact**	**ICO**	**Mean**	**SD**	**N**	**%**
1.00 High	1.00 High	2.00 Low CO	3.80	1.62.	10	40
		1.00 High CO	4.88	.85	15	60
	2.00 Low	2.00 Low CO	5.30	.141	9	28
		1.00 High CO	5.21	.911	18	72
2.00 Low	1.00 High	2.00 Low CO	4.29	1.10	9	43
		1.00 High CO	4.87	1.57	12	57
	2.00 Low	2.00 Low CO	3.80	.282	5	20
		1.00 High CO	4.41	1.35	21	80

The results offer support for S3H10 by demonstrating a moderately significant three-way effect of role autonomy and customer contact on organisational attraction for customer oriented job seekers. The means results establish that the effect on organisational attraction is strongest for customer oriented workers when autonomy is high and contact is low which is contrary to expectations. The findings which demonstrate the importance of role autonomy and customer contact in predicting customer oriented workers attraction to service organisations is important, as this has not previously been demonstrated for customer oriented workers in this context.

7.9 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S3H11

Hypothesis S3H11 investigates the three-way effect of role autonomy, customer contact time and customer orientation in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation. As such, hypothesis S3H11 centres on predicting behavioural effects and was tested using analysis of variance (ANCOVA), outlined in Table 70. As for the tests on the previous hypotheses in Study 3, education, job level and location were included as control variables.

TABLE 70 ANCOVA RESULTS S3H11

Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	102.704[a]	22	4.668	3.207	.000
Intercept	14.890	1	14.890	10.229	.002
Age	14.441	1	14.441	9.921	.002
Gender	.708	1	.708	.486	.488
q17_Edu	6.504	1	6.504	4.468	.038
q2job	7.221	1	7.221	4.960	.029
Q17_Loc	.032	1	.032	.022	.882
Autonomy	2.033	1	2.033	1.397	.241
CustCon	.412	1	.412	.283	.596
CO	19.196	4	4.799	3.297	.015
Autonomy*CustCon	8.470	1	8.470	5.819	.018
Autonomy*CO	5.124	4	1.281	.880	.480
CustCon*CO	10.844	4	2.711	1.862	.1262
Autonomy*CustCon*CO	13.886	2	6.943	4.770	.011
Error	109.176	75	1.635		
Total	2471.720	98			
Corrected Total	211.880	97			

a. R Squared = .485 (Adjusted R Squared = .334)

ANCOVA analysis revealed a significant two-way effect of autonomy and customer contact on job pursuit intentions ($F(1, 75) = 5.82$, $p = .018$) and a significant three-way effect of autonomy, customer contact and CO on job pursuit intentions ($F(2, 75) = 4.77$, $p = .011$). The cell means (Table 71) show a difference in the means for autonomy, CO and customer contact such that the high autonomy and low customer contact treatment has a stronger effect on job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; } M_{\text{customer contact low; } M_{\text{CO high}}}} = 5.47$, $SD = .807$) than high role autonomy and high customer contact for customer oriented workers ($M_{\text{role autonomy high; } M_{\text{customer contact high; } M_{\text{CO high}}}} = 5.15$, $SD = 1.02$).

TABLE 71 MEAN RESULTS S3H11

Autonomy	Cust Contact	ICO	Mean	SD	N	%
1.00 High	1.00 High	2.00 Low CO	4.00	2.08	10	40
		1.00 High CO	5.15	1.02	15	60
	2.00 Low	2.00 Low CO	4.70	.704	9	36
		1.00 High CO	5.47	.807	18	64
2.00 Low	1.00 High	2.00 Low CO	3.72	1.11	6	29
		1.00 High CO	4.76	.988	15	71
	2.00 Low	2.00 Low CO	4.10	.424	5	16
		1.00 High CO	4.51	1.59	21	84

The results provide support for S3H11 by establishing a significant three-way effect of autonomy and customer contact on job pursuit intentions for CO job seekers ($F(2, 75) = 4.77$, $p = .011$). The means results further highlight that the effect on organisational attraction is strongest for customer oriented workers when autonomy is high and contact is low.

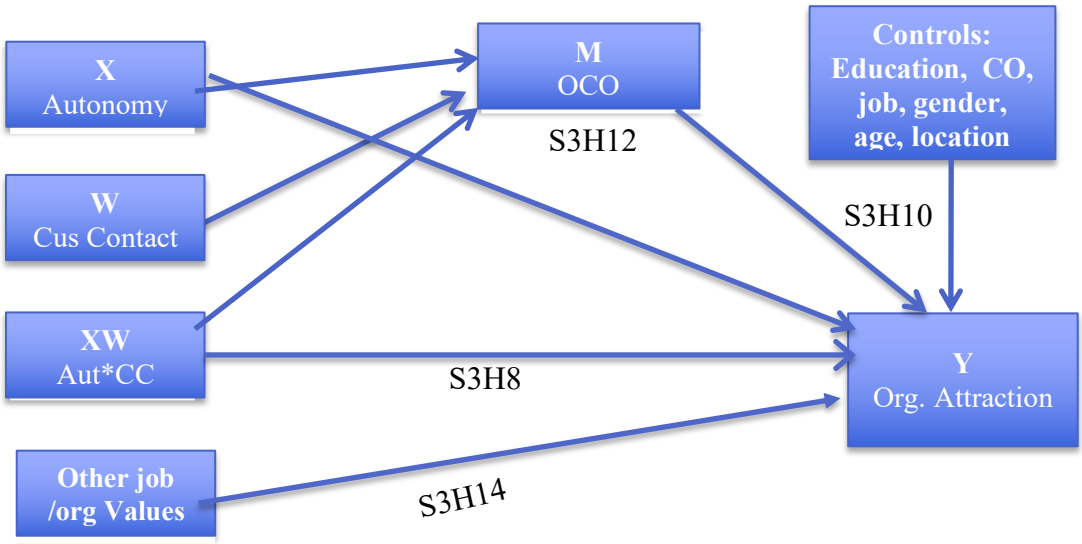
7.10 RESULTS: HYPOTHESIS S3H12

Hypothesis S3H12 makes two predictions, (i) predicts that organisational customer orientation (OCO) will mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction with (ii) customer contact (high; low) playing a moderating role. Accordingly, mediation analysis (using PROCESS) was conducted to assess whether OCO mediates the effects of autonomy and customer contact on organisational attraction (Hayes, 2013). Table 72 presents the test variables and Figure 29 details the test model.

TABLE 72 PROCESS MODEL 8 – TEST VARIABLES

Test Variables	
Y (outcome)	Organisational Attraction
X (predictor)	Autonomy
M (mediator)	Organisational Customer Orientation
W (moderator)	Customer Contact
Controls	Age, Gender, CO, Job, Education, Region

FIGURE 29 STATISTICAL MODEL – STUDY 3



As outlined, regression analysis using the PROCESS macro (Model 8) (Hayes, 2013) is used to interrogate hypothesis S3H12, i.e., that OCO mediates the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction with customer contact level playing a moderating role in the process. The results demonstrate that for Outcome 1 (detailed in Table 73) approximately 22% of variance is attributable to the variables in the model: $R^2 = .2246$, $F(8,89) = 3.22$, $p = .002$. For Outcome 2, 38% of variance is attributable to the variables in the model: $R^2 = .3808$, $F(9,88) = 6.02$, $p < .000$.

TABLE 73 S3H12 REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Outcome: Organisational Customer Orientation (Outcome 1)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	df2	P
.4739	.2246	3.2221	8.0000	89.0000	.0029
Model					
		Coif	Se	T	P
Constant		2.2614	.7655	2.8954	.0048
Autonomy		.8652	.4235	2.041	.0440
Customer Contact		.7320	.4089	1.7903	.0768
Autonomy X Contact		-.6580	.2609	-2.5224	.0134
CO		.0607	.0626	.9695	.3347
Education		-.1078	.0491	-2.1960	.0307
Job		.078	.0554	1.3136	.1924
Gender		.0979	.1378	.7101	.4795
Region		-.0130	.0328	-.3950	.6938
Age		.2409	.0728	3.3096	.0014

Outcome: Organisational Attraction (Outcome 2)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	df2	P
.6172	.3096	6.0158	5.0000	88.0000	.0000
Model					
		Coif	Se	T	P
Constant		-.1981	1.2886	-.1537	.8782
OCO		.7515	.1706	4.4054	.000
Autonomy		.4338	.6973	.6221	.5355
Contact		. 9447	.6697	1.4107	.1619
Autonomy X Contact		-.4609	.4346	-1.0570	.2934
CO		.1808	.1003	1.8021	.0746
Education		-.0857	.0811	-1.0570	.2934
Job		.1103	.0900	1.2244	.2241
Gender		-.1529	.2224	-.6874	.4936
Region		.9482	.0529	.9107	.3649
Age		.2957	. 1241	2.3821	.0194

The results of Outcome 1 show that the interaction effect (Autonomy x Contact) on OCO has a significant effect (β = -.6580 *SE* = .2609, *t* = -2.522, *p* = .0134), this provides initial evidence of conditional indirect effects. Next, the results in Outcome 2 reveal that the relationship between the mediator (OCO) on the DV (organisational attraction) has a significant effect (β = .7515 *SE* = .1706, *t* = 4.41, *p* <.000).

7.10.1 Mediator Effects – Organisational Customer Orientation

The results reveal when customer contact is low the effects of autonomy on attraction are only mediated by OCO (β = -.3388, SE .1647, Bootlaces: -.7357, Botulin: -.0735). Point estimates identify the mean over the number of bootstrapped samples, as zero does not fall between the confidence intervals of the bootstrapping results, this confirms a significant mediation effect of OCO (i.e., confidence interval result does not include zero) when contact is low. When contact is high, there is no such mediational effect, as the confidence interval results crosses zero (Table 74). This test explains the causal mechanism for the effect of autonomy on attraction i.e., through the mediational effect of OCO providing evidence for a significant indirect effect.

TABLE 74 EFFECT OF MEDIATOR OCO

Conditional Indirect Effect (s) of Autonomy on Organisational Attraction at Values of Moderator (Customer Contact)				
Customer Contact	Effect	Boot SE	Bootlaces	Botulin
OCO 1.0000 (high)	.1557	.1516	-.08869	.5262
OCO 2.0000 (low)	-.3388	.1647	-.7357	-.0735

7.10.2 Moderation of the indirect effect

Evidence of moderation of the indirect effect by customer contact level is found in a statistically significant interaction between autonomy and customer contact in the model examining organisational attraction: $a3$ = -.6580, p = .0134. As the first stage of the mediation model (X→M) is moderated, it follows that the indirect effect is also moderated, as the indirect effect of X on Y through M is constructed by the product of the X→M effect, which is conditional on W and the M→Y effect. Therefore the indirect effect of X on Y through M is no longer a single quantity but is a function of W and is consequently conditional: $(a1 + a3W)b1$. In this case, $a1$ = .8652, $a3$ -.6580, and $b1$= .7515 and the indirect effect of X on Y through M is (.8652 - .6580W)(.7515).

7.10.3 Index of Moderated Mediation

The index of moderation mediation result does not cross zero (CI = -1.0910 to -.0834) providing evidence of a significant conditional indirect effect (Table 75).

TABLE 75 INDEX OF MODERATION MEDIATION

Mediator	Effect	SE (Boot)	Bootlaces	Botulin
OCO	-.4945	.2326	-1.0552	-.1297

7.10.4 Interaction: Contact & Autonomy: Organisational Attraction

Figure 30 presents the nature of the two-way interaction effect between customer contact and autonomy. The results reveal that when autonomy is high, low contact predicted stronger levels of organisational attraction than when contact is high and autonomy is high. When autonomy is low and contact is low, this predicted the lowest levels of organisational attraction. The means results (detailed in Table 76) support the indirect effects results indicating that the condition with low contact and high autonomy produces a stronger effect on attraction ($M_{\text{customer contact low}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}}$ = 5.27, SD = .96) than the high autonomy condition with high contact ($M_{\text{customer contact high}}$; $M_{\text{autonomy high}}$ = 4.62, SD = 1.42). The results signal that when autonomy is high, job seekers favour a less demanding role (i.e., with lower customer contact).

FIGURE 30 INTERACTION EFFECT: AUTONOMY & CUSTOMER CONTACT

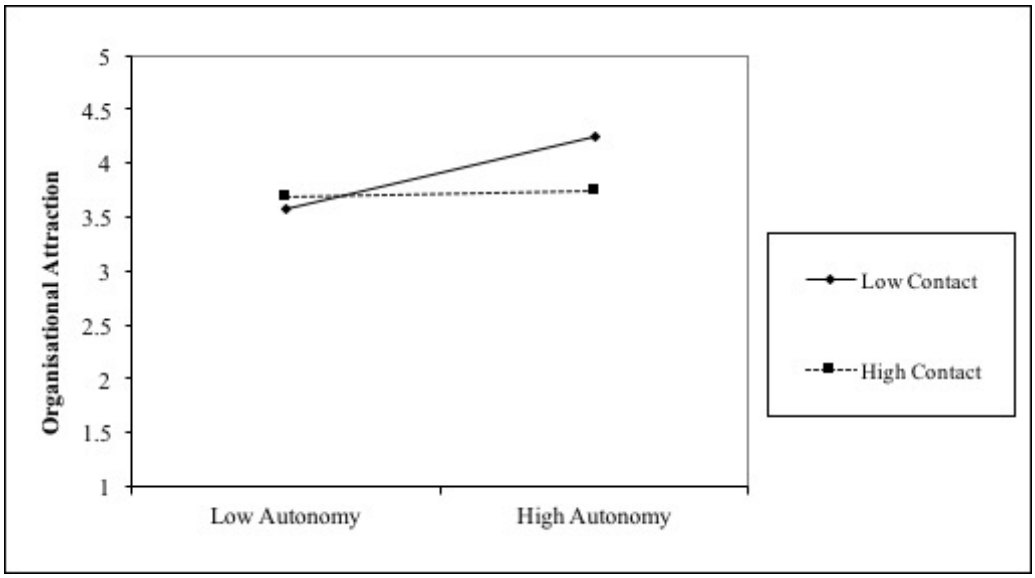


TABLE 76 MEANS RESULTS S3H12 (AUTONOMY & CUSTOMER CONTACT)

Autonomy	Customer Contact	Mean	SD	N	%
1.00 High	1.00 High	4.617	1.4191	27	26.5
	2.00 Low	5.270	.95648	28	27
2.00 Low	1.00 High	4.630	1.6076	21	20
	2.00 Low	4.196	1.34499	27	26.5

As outlined, this hypothesis makes two prediction; (i) organisational customer orientation climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction with (ii) customer contact play a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger (weaker) with customer contact is higher (lower). The results partially support hypothesis S3H12 in that they validate that organisational customer orientation mediates the relationship between role autonomy and organisational attraction when customer contact is low, however, there is no such meditational effect when customer contact is high. Using contrast analysis, the high and low customer oriented groups were compared and contrasted, this revealed that the significant effect of 'high autonomy; low contact' was only observed in high CO cases for organisational attraction (using the median split of CO) ($F(1.48) = 4.019$, $p = .051$); with no effect for the low CO group.

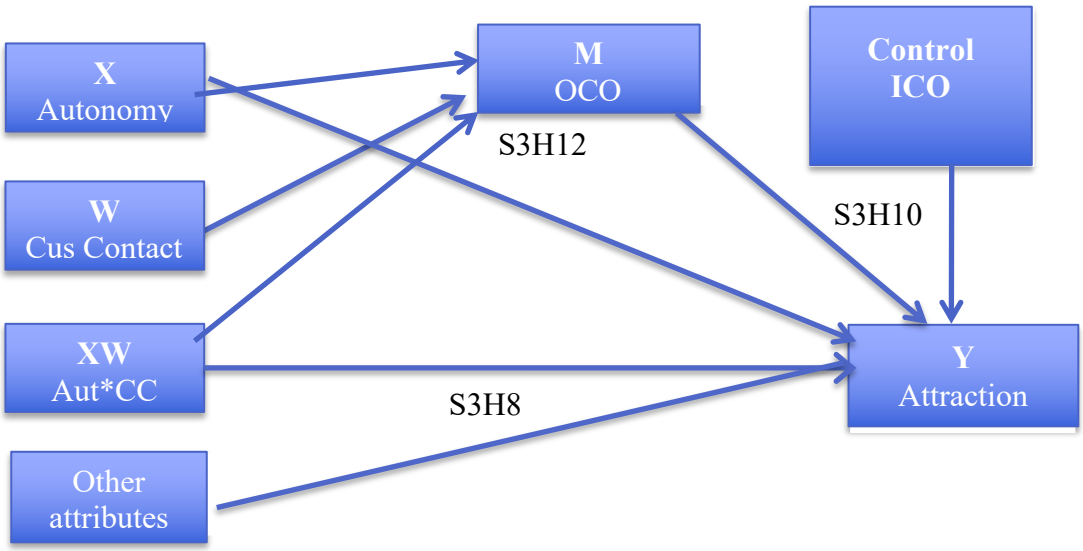
7.11 HYPOTHESIS S3H13

S3H13 makes two predictions (i) organisational customer orientation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions (ii) with customer contact (high; low) playing a moderating role. As for S3H12, S3H13 is tested using PROCESS macro (Model 8) developed by Hayes (2013). Table 77 presents the test variables and Figure 31 details the statistical model.

TABLE 77 PROCESS MODEL 8 – TEST VARIABLES

Test Variables	
Y (outcome)	Job Pursuit Intentions
X (predictor)	Autonomy
M (mediator)	Organisational Customer Orientation
W (moderator)	Customer Contact
Controls	Age, Gender, CO, Job, Education, Region

FIGURE 31 STATISTICAL MODEL – DV: ORGANISATIONAL ATTRACTION



The results of Output 1 presented in Table 78 indicate that 22% of variance in OCO is attributed to the variables in the regression equation: R^2 = .2246, $F(8,89) = 3.22$, p = .0029. The results in Output 2 specify that 43% of variance in job pursuit intention is attributed to the variables in the regression equation: R^2 = .4320, $F(9,88) = 7.44$ $p <$ .000. Output 1 shows the interaction effect of autonomy x customer contact on OCO is significant: (β =.8652 SE = .4235, t = 2.04, p = .0440) providing evidence of conditional indirect effects. The results in Output 2 further reveal the relationship between OCO mediator () on the DV (attraction) has a significant effect (β = .9231 SE = .1936, t = 4.77, p <.000).

TABLE 78 HYPOTHESIS S3H13 – REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Outcome: OCO (Output 1)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	df2	P
.4739	.2246	3.2221	8.0000	89.0000	.0029
		Coif	Se	T	P
Constant		2.2164	.7655	2.8954	.0048
Autonomy		.8652	.4235	2.0431	.0440
Customer Contact		.7320	.4089	1.7903	.0768
Autonomy X Contact		-.6580	.2609	-2.5224	.0134
CO		.0607	.0626	.9695	.3347
Education		-.1078	.0491	-2.1960	.0307
JOB		.0728	.0554	1.3136	.1924
Gender		.0979	.1378	.7101	.4795
Region		-.0130	.0328	-.3950	.6938
Age		.2409	.0728	3.3096	.0014

TABLE 78 (CONTINUED)

Outcome: Job Pursuit Intentions (Output 2)					
Model Summary					
R	R-sq.	F	df1	df2	P
.6573	.4320	7.4373	9.0000	88.0000	.0000
Model					
		Coif	Se	T	P
Constant		-1.2621	1.4616	-.8629	.3905
OCO		.9231	.1936	4.7679	.0000
Autonomy		.4195	.7915	.5300	.5974
Customer Contact		.7240	.7601	.9525	.3435
Autonomy X Contact		-.4955	.4808	-1.0305	.3053
CO		.4215	.1104	3.8167	.0002
Education		-.1336	.0920	-1.4516	.1502
Job		.1199	.1022	1.17271	.2441
Gender		.1201	.2525	.4755	.6356
Region		-.0066	.0601	-.1101	.9126
Age		.4966	.1409	3.5238	.0007

7.11.1 Mediator Effects – Organisational Customer Orientation

The results establish that when customer contact is low, the effects of autonomy on job pursuit intentions are mediated by OCO, as the bootstrap confidence interval does not contain zero: (β = -.6100, *SE* .2451, BootLLCI: -.1.1215, BootULCI: -.1582), the results are outlined in Table 79 Accordingly, as zero does not fall between the confidence intervals of the bootstrapping method (for low customer contact), this test shows that there a mediation effect of OCO however when customer contact is high there is no such mediational effect.

TABLE 79 EFFECT OF MEDIATOR OCO: JOB PURSUIT

Conditional Indirect Effect(s) Autonomy at Values of Moderator Customer Cont.				
Customer Contact	Effect	Boot SE	Bootlaces	Botulin
OCO 1.0000 (high)	.1913	.184	-.1022	.6368
OCO 2.0000 (low)	-.4162	.1986	-.8696	-.0902

This test explains the causal mechanism for the effect of autonomy on job pursuit intentions i.e., through the mediational effect of organisational customer orientation

and provides evidence for a significant indirect effect. The results demonstrate there is a mediational effect which only occurs when customer contact is low.

7.11.2 Moderation of the Indirect Effect

Evidence of moderation of the indirect effect by customer contact level is found in a statistically significant interaction between autonomy and customer contact in the model: $a3 = -.6580$, $p = .0134$. As the first stage of the mediation model is moderated, it follows that the indirect effect is also moderated. The indirect effect of X on Y through M is no longer a single quantity but is a function of W and is consequently conditional: $(a1 + a3W)b1$. In this case, $a1 = .8652$, $a3$ -.6580, and $b1 = .9231$.

7.11.3 Index of Moderated Mediation

Significantly, the index of moderation mediation result does not cross zero (CI = -1.2893 to -.1556) providing evidence of a significant conditional indirect effect detailed in Table 80. This indicates that the moderated mediation is significant.

TABLE 80 INDEX OF MODERATED MEDIATION

Mediator	Effect	SE (Boot)	Bootlaces	Botulin
OCO	-.6075	.2899	-1.2893	-.1556

7.11.4 Interaction Effects: Customer Contact & Autonomy on Job Pursuit

Figure 32 presents the nature of the two-way interaction effect between customer contact and autonomy. The results show that when autonomy is high, low contact roles predicted stronger levels of job pursuit intentions than when contact and autonomy are high. Conversely, the results show that when autonomy and contact are low, this predicted the lowest levels of job pursuit intentions. The means results (detailed in Table 81) support the indirect effects results and indicate that the condition with low customer contact and high autonomy produces a stronger effect on job pursuit intentions: ($M_{\text{customer contact low;}}\ M_{\text{autonomy high}} = 5.32$) than the high autonomy condition with high customer contact: ($M_{\text{customer contact high;}}\ M_{\text{autonomy high}} = 4.88$). The results signal that when autonomy is high, job seekers favour a less demanding.

FIGURE 32 INTERACTION EFFECTS: CUSTOMER CONTACT & AUTONOMY

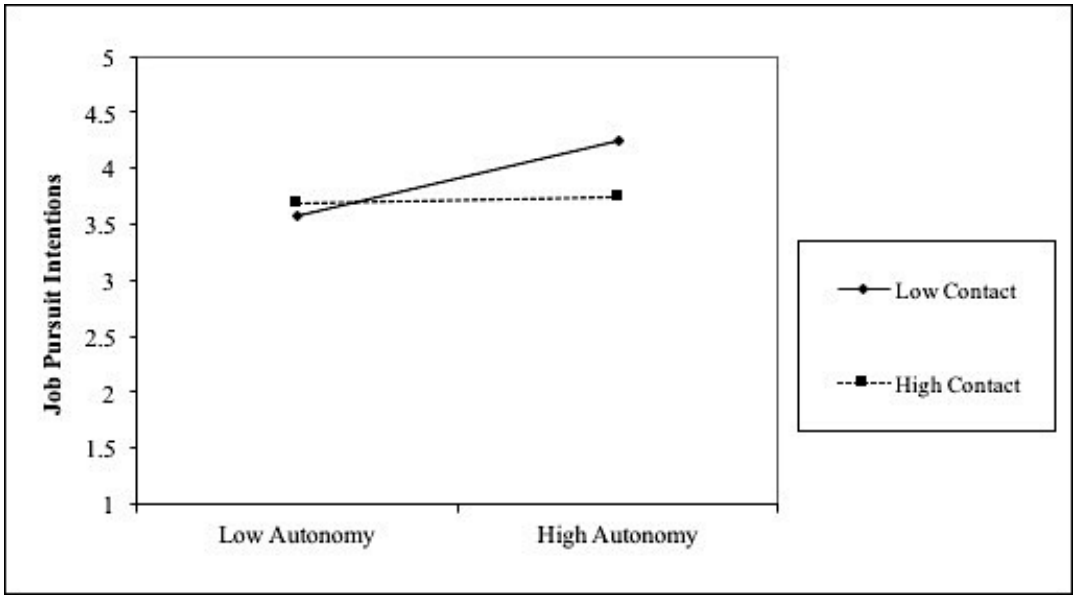


TABLE 81 MEANS RESULTS S3H13

Autonomy	Customer Contact	Mean	SD	N	%
1.00 High	1.00 High	4.8815	1.40686	27	26
	2.00 Low	5.3214	1.24048	28	27.5
2.00 Low	1.00 High	4.6847	1.54347	21	20.5
	2.00 Low	4.2519	1.67111	27	26

Contrast analysis is used to compare the high and low CO groups, this reveals that the effect only occurs in the high customer oriented group ($F(1,48) = 8.180$, $p = .006$). The results partially support hypothesis S3H13 and reveal that OCO mediates the relationship between role autonomy and job pursuit intentions when customer contact is low, however, there is no such meditational effect when customer contact is high.

7.12 MEDIATION TEST: BARON AND KENNY (1986)

Although S3H12 and S3H13 were tested to establish mediation using Hayes (2013) PROCESS macro, the hypotheses were also tested using the method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). This test remains very popular however, increasingly newer and more effective tools such as Hayes' mediation instrument (PROCESS) are employed by researchers. In the Baron and Kenny (1986) method, mediation is tested through regression tests outlined in Table 82. The results demonstrate a mediation effect for both 'attraction' and 'job pursuit'.

TABLE 82 RESULTS MEDIATION TESTS – STUDY 3 (BARON & KENNY, 1986)

Mediation Tests (Baron and Kenny, 1986)		
	Outcome (DV) – Attraction	**Result**
Test 1	Autonomy (IV) on mediator (OCO)	$p = .050$
Test 2	Autonomy (IV) on DV (Attraction)	$p = .014$
Test 3	DV (Attraction) on mediator (OCO) & Autonomy (IV)	$p = .020$
	Outcome (DV) – Job Pursuit	**Result**
Test 1	Autonomy (IV) on mediator (OCO)	$p =. 050$
Test 2	Autonomy (IV) on DV (Pursuit)	$p = .028$
Test 3	DV (Pursuit) on mediator (OCO) & Autonomy (IV)	$p = .000$

7.13 HYPOTHESIS S3H14: ATTRIBUTES & VALUES ATTRACTING JOB SEEKERS

Hypothesis S3H14 proposes that workers with different levels of customer orientation are attracted by different factors (measured with the 12-item job attribute and organisational value scale developed by Posner, 1981). This hypothesis is interrogated using ANOVA using the dummy CO variable (the findings are presented in Table 83 (significant effects), Table 84 (non-significant effects).

TABLE 83 SIGNIFICANT JOB ATTRIBUTES: CUSTOMER ORIENTED SUBJECTS

Factor	High CO Mean	Low CO Mean	*P*
Opportunity to learn	4.706	4.294	.003
Opportunity to use abilities	4.769	4.471	.041
Variety of activities	4.538	3.961	.000
Challenging and interesting work	4.654	4.235	.002
Opportunity show effective performance	4.654	4.154	.000
Company reputation	4.442	3.980	.015
OCO	4.492	4.000	.001

TABLE 84 NON-SIG. JOB ATTRIBUTES: CUSTOMER ORIENTED SUBJECTS

Factor	High CO Mean	Low CO Mean	*P*
Rapid Advancement	3.635	3.280	.152
Salary	4.212	4.314	.575
Competent sociable co-workers	4.288	4.039	.155
Job security	4.569	4.353	.203
Location	3.918	4.118	.584
Training programmes	3.827	3.647	.435

Analogous to S2H7 (Study 2) S3H14 (Study 3) indicates that customer oriented job seekers are attracted by different factors than low customer oriented workers,

7.14 HYPOTHESIS RESULTS - STUDY 3

Study 3 replicate the effects of autonomy shown in Study 2. Study 3 extends to a moderator accepted as being important for customer oriented workers i.e., customer contact (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Menguc et al., 2015) and investigates the effect of OCO as a mediator. The results for the hypotheses are presented in Table 85.

TABLE 85 STUDY 3: HYPOTHESES RESULTS SUMMARY

Hypothesis and Hypothesis Statement		Result
S3H8	*Autonomy and customer contact will predict customer oriented job seekers' attraction towards FLE roles in service organisations.*	Accepted
S3H9	*Autonomy and customer contact will predict customer oriented job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards FLE roles in service organisations.*	Accepted
S3H10	*There will be a three-way effect of autonomy, contact and CO in predicting job seekers' attraction towards a service organisation.*	Accepted
S3H11	*There will be a three-way effect of autonomy, customer contact and CO predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions towards a service organisation.*	Accepted
S3H12	*OCO climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction (ii) with customer contact playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and the relationship is weaker when customer contact is lower.*	Partial: when contact is low
S3H13	*OCO climate will play a mediational role in the relationship between autonomy and job pursuit intentions (ii) with customer contact playing a moderating role such that the relationship is stronger when customer contact is higher and is weaker when contact is lower.*	Partial: when contact low
S3H14	*There will be a positive relationship between high levels of customer orientation and factors such as organisational reputation with attraction and job pursuit intentions.*	Accepted

7.15 STUDY 3 – CONTRIBUTION TO CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Using a 2 x 2 factorial experiment design, Study 3 further investigates autonomy and its interactive effect with customer contact; a variable demonstrated in earlier research to be important to customer oriented workers on the job outcomes concerned. Study 3 builds on Study 2 and empirically demonstrates role autonomy's importance as a job resource for customer oriented workers and job seekers. The study establishes that role autonomy influences organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented workers, this is a key finding. Supported by the tenets of JDR, Study 3 investigates the interactive effect between role autonomy (job resource) and customer contact (job demand) and finds contrary to existing knowledge, that the treatment with the most significant effect on the job outcomes is 'high autonomy; low contact'.

7.16 DISCUSSION EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH FINDINGS - STUDY 3

The exploratory study (Study 1) indicated the importance of role autonomy, while other factors were important for some customer service champions and not others, autonomy was unanimously important for all participants. The importance of role autonomy was verified by Study 2 (the first experimental study). Study 3 builds on the observations gleaned from the previous studies and further investigates the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers and job seekers. Study 3 is a between-subjects experimental study (2 x 2 factorial design with random assignment) which extends Study 2 and introduces a treatment variable proven to have an important attitudinal and behavioural influence on customer oriented workers: customer contact: high; low (Donavan et al., 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009; Menguc et al., 2015).

Significantly, Study 3 replicates the effects of autonomy found in the first experiment (Study 2) on organisational attraction (S3H8) and job pursuit intentions (S3H9) for customer oriented workers. Explicitly, the results in Study 3 (S3H10 and S3H11) determine that role autonomy produces a stronger effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers/job seekers vs. low customer oriented workers. The importance of role autonomy both in general (e.g., Dineen et

al., 2018) and specifically for customer oriented workers is widely explored in the literature, for example, Stock (2016) discusses how autonomy protects FLE workers from issues such as boreout which can be prevalent in such roles. Zablah et al. (2016) also posits that for customer oriented workers autonomy is correlated with improved outcomes. Their study also reveals that FLE-customer dyads with a level of autonomy perform to a higher standard, with improved outcomes for all parties. Accordingly, on one level, the results of S3H8 and S3H9 supporting the influence and importance of autonomy are not surprising however, the finding that role autonomy is statistically more important for customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented which was demonstrated across two separate studies, with two different samples in two markets is significant.

7.16.1 Counter-Intuitive Finding: 'High Autonomy; Low Customer Contact'

S3H8 and S3H9 demonstrate a significant two-way effect of role autonomy and customer contact level for customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented workers on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions. The means for autonomy and customer contact confirm that the 'high autonomy; low contact' treatment produces stronger effects than the 'high autonomy; high contact' scenario expected. Explicitly, the results produced by S3H8 (on attraction) and S3H9 (on job pursuit) are contrary to expectations and were further interrogated using contrast analysis. This additional analysis revealed that autonomy only has an effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions when customer contact is low. The results further demonstrate a two-way effect for customer orientation and autonomy on the outcomes in the low customer contact group. S3H10 and S3H11 also suggest that when customer contact is low and autonomy is high that customer oriented workers/job seekers are more likely to be attracted and to pursue a role in the organisation. This result of 'high autonomy; low contact' as the treatment eliciting the strongest effect for customer oriented workers/job seekers is contrary to expectations, given that existing research unambiguously demonstrates the importance of frequent customer contact to customer oriented workers (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009; Menguc et al., 2015; Teng and Barrows, 2009). Chuang, Shen, and Judge (2016) and Schneider (2008) posit that individuals have certain needs they look

to fulfil through their jobs, and will seek jobs in organisations that best fit these needs. Therefore, given that customer oriented workers enjoy meeting customer needs, it is rational to expect that they would be attracted to customer facing roles offering high levels of contact (e.g., Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Menguc et al. 2015), however, the results of S3H8, S3H9, S3H10 and S3H11 contradict this.

These counter intuitive findings may be understood in the context of the JD-R model, the principles of the model hold that customer contact is a job demand (irrespective of the level of job satisfaction a worker derives from it). Essentially while customer contact (specifically for customer oriented workers) can be argued to function as a resource, it requires accountability and potentially greater job responsibility. Accountability and responsibility indicate psychological, physical and emotional effort, thereby supporting its classification as a demand as proposed by the JD-R model (Matthews et al., 2017). Understanding customer contact as a demand even in the case of customer oriented job candidates (who have yet to start the role) can possibly be understood in the context of job demands having two distinct dimensions: i.e., challenges and hindrances (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Expressly, customer contact presents a greater challenge to job seekers and may be considered a hindrance until they become established in their role, when they (probably) come to view customer contact as a positive challenge. Accordingly, the emergence of 'high autonomy; low contact' as most significant treatment for customer oriented workers is supported by the JD-R model, which demonstrates that workers will try to maximise resources and minimise demands making the finding predictable in the context of the JD-R model.

7.16.2 Typology Depicting the Four Treatment Conditions

As outlined, Study 3 reveals that of the four treatments tested, customer oriented job seekers are most attracted to the 'high autonomy; low contact' scenario as demonstrated by S3H8 and S3H10. This treatment also elicited the strongest effect on job pursuit intentions as revealed by S3H9 and S3H11. The treatments in order of attractiveness to customer oriented job seekers are denoted by 1 (most attractive) to 4 (least attractive), this is illustrated in Figure 33; starting at the top right quadrant, the pattern of attraction follows an anti-clockwise direction.

FIGURE 33 TYPOLOGY STUDY 3: AUTONOMY & CONTACT CUSTOMER ORIENTED FLEs

		Customer Contact	
		High Demand	**Low Demand**
Role Autonomy	**High Resource**	**2.** High Autonomy: High Contact	**1.** High Autonomy: Low Contact
	Low Resource	**3.** Low Autonomy: High Contact	**4.** Low Autonomy: Low Contact

7.16.2.1 Quadrant 1: 'High Autonomy; Low Contact'

Contrary to expectations based on extant research demonstrating that customer oriented workers seek high customer contact roles (e.g. Liao and Subramony, 2009; Menguc et al., 2017), the treatment with the strongest effect on organisational attraction (e.g., S3H10) and job pursuit intentions (e.g., S3H11) for customer oriented workers was the 'high autonomy; low contact' scenario. The emergence of autonomy as a component of the strongest treatment is predicted based on extant literature signifying the importance of autonomy for all workers and customer oriented workers in particular (Babakus et al., 2017; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Herhausen et al., 2017). Babakus et al. (2017) for example, demonstrate that work engagement is strengthened when role autonomy is high and correspondingly, turnover intentions are reduced. Evidence in the research stream establishes that customer oriented workers look to work in roles offering opportunities for high customer contact (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009), this did not emerge in the experimental study. Nevertheless, the counter intuitive finding revealed in S3H8, S3H9, S3H10 and S3H11 is predicted by the JD-R model, which holds that workers seek roles offering high resources (e.g., role autonomy) and low demands (e.g., customer contact) as such a scenario best supports individual self-efficacy and well-being (Bakker et al., 2004; 2007). Specifically customer contact represents a challenge

and so may be considered a hindrance or threat until workers become established in their new role Katz and Kahn (1978).

7.16.2.2 Quadrant 2: 'High Autonomy; High Contact'

This quadrant represents the expected result for customer oriented workers among the four treatments, this prediction is underpinned by an understanding of CO and drivers of customer oriented workers. The result was expected based on the findings of researchers including Menguc et al. (2017); Liao and Subramony (2009); Teng and Barrows (2009) who discuss how customer oriented workers are attracted to customer contact roles due to their inherent desire to meet customer needs and their enjoyment of such roles (Babakus, Yavas, and Karatepe, 2017; Bruno, 2018; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Zablah et al., 2016). However, the result is in keeping with the tenets of JD-R which holds that such a role comprising high demands and high resources does not represent the optimum scenario for workers and their well-being (Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Nevertheless, support for the 'high autonomy; high contact' role eliciting the strongest effect for customer oriented workers is expected based on the results in the exploratory research. However, this did not emerge in the experimental results where the 'high autonomy; low contact' scenario transpired as the strongest predictor of attraction and job pursuit intentions.

Importantly, there is a fundamental difference between the sample in the exploratory study and the experimental studies. Study 1 is comprised of customer service workers who discussed their experience of their *actual* job, whereas in the experimental studies (2 and 3), the subjects evaluated a *potential* job (i.e., from the perspective of job candidates). This difference between the samples may indicate why this treatment was not the preferred option for the customer oriented cohort, Katz and Kahn (1978) asserted that sometimes certain aspects of a job normally viewed as positive may in extraneous circumstances be considered by the individual to be a demand (e.g., for job seekers a challenging aspect of a role may be perceived negatively). Extant literature indicates that customer oriented workers seek out roles with high contact (e.g. Liao and Subramony, 2009) however, in spite of this, Matthews et al. (2017) argues that

customer interactions for FLEs can represent a challenge irrespective of how rewarding the worker normally finds such aspects for their job.

7.16.2.3 Quadrant 3: 'Low Autonomy; High Contact'

Autonomy is categorised in the JD-R model as a resource beneficial for workers, it is represented in the model twice, reflecting personal autonomy (subjective autonomy) and role autonomy (objective autonomy). The significance of autonomy for customer oriented FLEs is widely discussed in the literature, scholars such as Babakus et al. (2017) and Menguc et al. (2017) discuss the positive influence of autonomy for individuals, organisations and customers. Hennig-Thurau (2004) and Stock (2016) suggest that role autonomy has a particular importance for customer oriented FLEs due to their close, frequent and often challenging interactions with customers and the general prevailing imbalance in power between the actors. However, role autonomy equalises relations between these parties (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017). This is evident in the role that autonomy plays in the dyadic FLE-customer relationship, where the relationship is often naturally imbalanced, however, Zablah et al. (2016) discusses how autonomy improves outcomes for the worker, the organisation and the customer. Stock (2016) considers FLE roles depicted in 'quadrant 3' as overtly detrimental to employees' wellbeing. This perspective is supported by Rychalski et al. (2017), in their study into the well-being of call centre agents, they found that the combination of high frequency, challenging customer interactions and lack of autonomy is associated with poor outcomes for workers and organisations.

7.16.2.4 Quadrant 4: 'Low Autonomy; Low Contact'

This scenario of low resources; low demands is theorised by Stock (2016) as being the most unfavourable for customer oriented workers, resulting in role ambiguity, stress and ultimately boreout. In this scenario, the FLE has low role autonomy (i.e., low job resource) and low customer contact (i.e., low job demand/job challenge). Based on evidence in extant literature advocating the benefits of customer contact (Donavan et al., 2004; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Zablah et al., 2016) and role autonomy (Babakus et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2017; Stock et al., 2016), it is predicted

that this 'low demand; low resource' scenario will produce the weakest effect on the outcomes for customer oriented workers. This is demonstrated in the experimental findings and is predicted by the JD-R model (Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Such a role, if occupied by customer oriented workers lacks a vital resource (autonomy) and a desired challenge (i.e., customer contact) and is likely to result in role ambiguity and increased turnover (Rychalski et al., 2017; Stock et al., 2016).

7.17 EXPLAINING THE 'HIGH AUTONOMY; LOW CONTACT' RESULT

The link between customer contact and customer orientation and subsequent outcomes as hypothesised in S3H10 and S3H11 have been extensively examined with many empirical studies demonstrating the importance of customer contact for customer oriented workers. For example, Grizzle et al. (2009) and Stock (2016) argue that for customer oriented workers, human interaction is fundamentally important because the construct is grounded in a social context where relationships with other people promote wellbeing and improve organisational and individual outcomes (Brady et al., 2012; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). This was explored more recently by Menguc et al. (2015) who asserts that the relationship between an FLE and a referent (e.g., customer or co-worker) is implicit in PE theory and is in accord with social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954). Supporting this perspective, Liao and Subramony (2009) posit that customer service roles are more likely to be more attractive to customer oriented individuals than less (customer) proximal roles. This is corroborated by Donavan et al. (2004) who found that the influence of customer orientation on important outcomes such as job satisfaction (Anaza, 2012) commitment (Fernandez-Lores, Gavilan, Avello, and Blasco, 2016) and organisational citizenship behaviours (Bernerth and Aguinis, 2016; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2014) is stronger when FLEs spend more time in contact with customers (Menguc et al., 2015).

This perspective is also supported by fit theory (Bakker et al., 2007), studies including Ifie (2014) have shown that job fit is stronger between customer oriented workers and service roles; Hennig-Thurau (2004) and Zablah et al. (2016) demonstrate that customer oriented individuals are better at understanding customer needs and consequently more likely to demonstrate customer oriented behaviours and perform

altruistic organisational citizenship behaviours (Hogan et al., 1984; Donavan et al., 2004). Therefore, given the empirical evidence supporting the significance of customer contact for customer oriented workers and accepting the importance of role autonomy for these workers, it is noteworthy that customer oriented subjects were more attracted to a 'low' rather than a' high' customer contact role (e.g., S3H8 and S3H9) which given the extent of current literature demonstrating the synergy between CO and customer contact is an unexpected outcome albeit supported under the tenets of JD-R (Bakker et al., 2004). Clarity as to why the 'high autonomy; low contact' proposition had the strongest effect on customer oriented job seekers' perceptions of organisational attraction (S3H8 and S3H10) and job pursuit intentions (S3H9 and S3H11) may also be provided in part by Katz and Kahn (1978) who propose that in certain circumstances, for example, when assessing a new job opportunity, job seekers may seek to limit job challenges. This may also occur when a worker is new to a role, or when a worker feels particularly challenged in a role (Matthews et al., 2017). In addition, in circumstances where demands are high (e.g., high customer contact roles) this may give rise to role ambiguity where individuals are uncertain about what others (customers, colleagues, management) expect from them in their roles (Zablah et al., 2012). Therefore, new customer oriented employees may need to first feel established in their role before they want, or feel equipped to deal with frequent customer interactions.

The issue of how demands and resources are perceived is also considered by Kammeyer-Mueller, Judge, and Scott (2009) in the context of differential exposure and differential reactivity; differential exposure hypothesis asserts that workers' pools of resources influences how they perceive their work situation. Differential reactivity hypothesis indicates that once workers perceive a threat, workers with adequate resources will experience less strain because of their ability to counteract the possible threat (Matthews et al., 2017). Accordingly, autonomy may be an additional important resource to help protect workers against possible stressful challenges (e.g., challenging customer interactions in a new role). As outlined, the JD-R model (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014) argues that a 'low demands; high resources' proposition is the most beneficial to a worker's wellbeing as is reflected in the results of Study 3. Although customer contact is categorised as a demand in the JD-R model, Schaufeli and Taris

(2014) posit that ambiguity within the confines of the model exist over what constitutes a demand and what constitutes a resource. In other words, a 'demand' for one worker might be a 'resource' for another, furthermore, the concepts are fluid and can change over time, with a demand becoming a resource and vice versa (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014).

7.17.1 Cumulative Effects of Autonomy and Customer Orientation

The two-way interaction between autonomy and CO influencing organisational attraction as demonstrated in S3H10 and in predicting job seekers' job pursuit intentions as established by S3H11 is important and supports a synergistic relationship between CO and autonomy for customer oriented workers specifically in the context of organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2012).

The job demands-control model (JDC) predicts that jobs lacking in challenges (e.g., customer contact) but which offer autonomy will draw less energy from the worker because autonomy affords them more power to execute their job tasks and interactions with customers in a self-fulfilling manner (Karasek, 1979). In support of this perspective, Smulders and Nijhuis (1999) and more recently Stock (2016) argue that as the damaging effects of lack of challenge (e.g., low customer contact) can be buffered by autonomy, consequently, the well-being of a person in a low challenge job should improve when he has higher rather than lower autonomy. This perspective is supported by S3H10 and S3H11 which reveals a three way interaction effect between CO, autonomy and customer contact on attraction (S3H10) and job pursuit (S3H11). This is also corroborated by Hobfoll (2002) who argues that resources accumulate; in other words, the more resources a worker has, the more they will accrue. For example, autonomy and customer orientation can precipitate self-efficacy which leads to enhanced outcomes (Babakus et al., 2017; Leo and Russell-Bennett, 2014; Matthews et al., 2017). Therefore, the evidence suggests the 'high autonomy; low contact' scenario presents job seekers and opportunity to apply more control over their job tasks and will also draw less energy from them, maximising resources as predicted by JD-R theory (Bakker et al., 2007; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014).

Clearly, existing literature demonstrates that for FLEs, autonomy is a need, i.e., because of the nature of the role, where decisions need to be made quickly, customer facing workers *need* autonomy to do their job (Babakus et al., 2017; Stock, 2016). In addition, previous research also shows that by their nature customer oriented workers want to meet customer needs which requires autonomy, therefore customer oriented workers *want* autonomy, as this will allow them to do their job (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Wheatley, 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). This results in a cumulative impact and importance of autonomy for customer oriented workers in customer facing roles (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Lopes et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2016). Accordingly, autonomy is a fundamental requirement for (i) customer oriented workers; (ii) customer facing workers (irrespective of their level of customer orientation) with its importance appearing to be augmented for customer oriented service workers (Babakus et al., 2017; Matthew et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2016).

7.17.2 Mediating Influence of OCO

S3H12 (i) and S3H13 (i) investigated whether OCO plays a mediating role in the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions with customer contact playing a moderating role (S3H12 (ii) and S3H13 (ii)). Similar to previous tests in Study 3, the findings show that when customer contact is low, the effects of autonomy on job pursuit and organisational attraction for customer oriented workers and job seekers is mediated by organisational customer orientation (OCO), with no such effect when contact is high (S3H12 (ii) and S3H13 (ii)). In other words, in a 'low contact' scenario (i.e., where demands are low), autonomy and OCO (i.e., job resources) it would appear are particularly important. The importance of OCO for customer oriented workers, is supported in the literature and by S3H12 for its influence over organisational attraction and S3H13 for its influence of job pursuit intention. A CO climate has been shown to play a key role in supporting employees precipitating high levels of engagement and shared perceptions about the quality of their organisation's service climate (Jiang and Iles, 2011; Paul et al., 2015; Stock, 2016). Kristof-Brown et al. (2004) discusses the importance of climate in the context of compatibility between workers and their employer, and argues that this is positively related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment and career success and

negatively related to turnover intentions. Person-environment fit theory demonstrates that perceived fit between the individual and the organisation and job will influence individuals' job choice decisions and important job outcomes (Nolan and Harold, 2010; Chuang et al., 2016). Herhausen, De Luca, and Weibel (2017) in investigating the influence of OCO propose that the effectiveness of organisational CO initiatives including training and employee empowerment explain the link between employee CO and performance. Furthermore, Smulders and Nijhuis (1999) posit that the negative effects of lack of challenge (e.g., low customer contact) can be supressed by autonomy, with the well-being of a worker in a low-challenge role improving when he has higher rather than lower autonomy. The mediating role of OCO (S3H12 (i) and S3H13 (i)) is consistent with marketing and management behaviour literature which proposes that individuals are attracted to similar others which includes similar organisations and is consistent with mediators used in the JD-R model (Kulkarni, 2013; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Accordingly, an organisation espousing the value of CO will logically be attractive to a customer oriented individual (Kristof-Brown and the negative effectsGuay, 2011; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) and its attractiveness will be heightened by higher role autonomy. The results also reveal a significant combined effect of autonomy and perceived OCO on attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented job seekers (S3H12 and S3H13). This result supports extant research (e.g., Grizzle et al., 2009) and indicates that when an organisation is perceived as customer oriented, prospective (high customer oriented) job applicants will more favourably rate their job pursuit intentions and the organisation's attractiveness.

The distinct influence of autonomy and OCO as demonstrated in the findings are also consistent with the ASA framework which proposes that individuals are attracted to organisations with similar goals and personalities to their own (Schneider, 2008; Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Slaughter et al., 2005). A customer oriented climate has been shown to play a key role in supporting employees and can precipitate high levels of engagement and shared perceptions about the quality of their organisation's service climate (Jiang and Iles, 2011; Paul et al., 2015; Stock, 2016). The literature also validates the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers (e.g., Menguc et al., 2015). Zablah et al. (2016) discusses how dyadic relationships between FLEs and customers are more productive when the FLE has autonomy. Stock (2016)

also discusses role autonomy's importance to customer oriented workers and discusses how it forms a buffer against challenges inherent in FLE roles and allows workers to acquit their job tasks in a self-fulling manner (Matthews et al., 2017).

7.18 OTHER FACTORS ATTRACTING CUSTOMER ORIENTED WORKERS

Finally, S3H714 investigate the factors that attract customer oriented workers using Posner's (1981) organisational and job attributes scale. Analogous to S2H7 (Study 2), S3H14 indicates that high and low customer oriented job seekers are attracted by different factors with customer oriented individuals attracted by many of the same attributes; despite differences in sample composition and setting (i.e., Ireland and the US). This finding contributes to the research stream as it demonstrates a distinct difference between the attributes identified as important to high and low customer oriented workers in evaluating job options, this is discussed in the literature by Donavan et al. (2004) and supported by findings in the exploratory research. The attributes identified as important to customer oriented job seekers at the $p = < .05$ level are outlined in Table 86.

TABLE 86 SIGNIFICANCE JOB, ORGANISATIONAL ATTRIBUTES

	Study 3			**Study 2**		
Factor	**High CO**	**Low CO**	***p***	**High CO**	**Low CO**	***P***
Opportunity to learn	4.706	4.294	.003	4.902	4.678	n/s
Opportunity to use abilities	4.769	4.471	.041	4.902	4.390	.000
Variety of activities	4.538	3.961	.000	4.393	4.071	.020
Challenging and interesting work	4.654	4.235	.002	4.492	4.203	.018
Show effective performance	4.654	4.154	.000	n/s	n/s	n/s
Company reputation	4.442	3.980	.015	4.328	3.864	.001
OCO	4.492	4.000	.001	4.492	4.000	.001
Frequent customer contact	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.233	3.690	.001
Decision making authority	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.148	3.576	.001

7.19 CONCLUSION

This chapter interprets and describes the findings from Study 3, the second experimental study. This study corroborates the particular importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers and job seekers indicated in the earlier studies. While autonomy can reasonably be considered important for all workers, the study indicates that autonomy is more important to customer oriented workers vs. low customer oriented workers with possible reasons for this discussed.

Study 3 also revealed that customer oriented job seekers and workers were most attracted by the 'high autonomy; low contact' proposition. The choice of a 'low contact' role by customer oriented job seekers is counter intuitive, but can be largely explained by the job demand resource and job demand-control models which demonstrate that workers seek to reduce demands and maximise resources, with autonomy in particular, acting as a buffer against negative job challenges (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, and Xanthopoulou, 2007; Karasek, 1979; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Stock, 2016). The emergence of autonomy as a factor influencing organisational attraction and job pursuit for customer oriented job seekers is a definitive finding and is reflected in the JD-R model where 'autonomy' is identified as both a job resource (i.e., objective autonomy) and a personal resource (i.e., subjective autonomy) (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). This knowledge can play a role in recruiting and retaining customer oriented workers by ensuring that they have sufficient autonomy to acquit their job tasks, interact confidently with customers and maintain their levels of self-efficacy.

The next and final chapter presents and discusses the conclusion and proposed contributions of the research, theoretically and for business practice. The limitations of the research are outlined and finally, recommendations on further research are proposed.

~ CHAPTER ~

8

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter interprets the findings from the final study (Study 3), this study corroborates the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers and successfully demonstrates a causal link between role autonomy and attitudinal and behavioural outcomes for customer oriented job seekers vs. low customer oriented job seekers. The study revealed a counter intuitive finding which is contrary to existing research whereby the treatment with the strongest influence was the 'high autonomy; low contact' treatment. This final chapter commences with the research objectives and a synopsis of the relevant findings. The chapter presents the research conclusions, and proposes theoretical and practical contributions stemming from the research findings. Areas that the research contributes to include the conceptualisation of job attraction and job pursuit intentions, and the symbiotic nature of customer orientation and autonomy. Potential managerial implications are discussed, these include considerations for recruitment, job design and internal marketing. Finally, recommendations for future research are proposed and the limitations of the research are outlined.

8.1.1 Research Objectives and Research Findings

The research objectives as outlined in chapter 1 are now presented with a synopsis of the relevant research findings. By addressing these research aims, this study considers an important means to influencing long-term sustainable growth in the service sector; the attraction of customer oriented workers.

Objective 1: Investigate and identify conditions under which (i) customer oriented job seekers are attracted to a service organisation and (ii) are most likely to pursue an FLE role in a service organisation.

There is a broad source of research into job seeker motivations from the perspective of both the job seeker and the potential employer (e.g., Behling et al., 1968; Breaugh, 2013; Carless, 2005; Craig 2017; Clements and Kamau, 2017; Harold and Ployhart, 2008). Accordingly, many attraction factors have been identified in the literature, most of which are largely attractive to a broad spectrum of job seekers not only to customer oriented individuals. The exploratory research indicated the particular influence of role autonomy for the customer service champions, this was supported by both experimental studies. Studies 2 and 3 demonstrate that customer oriented job seekers were more attracted and more likely to pursue a role in a service organisation vs. low customer oriented job seekers. Other factors shown to be significant to customer oriented workers in the experimental studies include: opportunity to learn; opportunity to use abilities; variety of activities; challenging and interesting work; opportunity to show effective performance; company reputation.

Objective 2: Establish if when role autonomy is high, customer oriented job seekers are more (or less) attracted to a service organisation and are more (or less) likely to pursue an FLE role than low customer oriented job seekers:

The strongest factor to manifest as important in the exploratory research for the customer service champions is role autonomy. This influence of role autonomy on job outcomes for customer oriented job seekers was verified by both experimental studies. These results are not unexpected; role autonomy is recognised in the JD-R model as a universal resource for all workers and is conceptualised as having personal and work dimensions (Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Taris (2014). However, while many studies demonstrate the importance of autonomy for all workers irrespective of their level of CO (e.g., Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Sekiguchi, Li, and Hosomi (2017), role autonomy has not been expressly identified as a job attraction factor for customer oriented workers in prior research.

Objective 3: Examine the combined influence of autonomy and other job demands and job resources; these are (i) customer contact level, (ii) job complexity and (iii) organisational customer orientation on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (i.e., organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions). Study 2 finds that customer orientation mediates the relationship between autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions with perceived job skill/complexity playing a moderating role. This is not surprising, as extant research indicates that job skill/complexity are related to personal marketability and Harold and Ployhart (2008) and Chapman et al. (2004) argue that job seekers with high self-value seek jobs matching their perceived marketability. A surprising result in Study 3 was that the treatment with the strongest effect on organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers was 'low customer contact: high role autonomy'. Although supported under the tenets of the JD-R model, from a CO perspective, the result is unanticipated as extant literature supports the importance of contact for customer oriented workers and illustrates how such workers gravitate to these roles (Donavan et al. 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2008). Study 3 also demonstrates that OCO mediates the relationship between autonomy and attraction and job pursuit for customer oriented job seekers when customer contact is low. While this is predicted by JD-R, it is contrary to existing knowledge on customer orientation.

8.2 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The research contributes to customer orientation literature by providing empirical support for the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented job seekers/workers. The importance of autonomy for these workers is widely discussed in the literature (e.g., Babakus et al., 2017; Johnson et al., 2001; Stock, 2016). Scholars posit that the high intensity customer-contact interactions inherent in FLEs' jobs creates an enhanced importance for role autonomy for these workers (Hennig Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2015; Zablah et al., 2016). Arguably the most significant outcome in the research is the counter-intuitive finding in Study 3 which reveals that contrary to expectations, high customer oriented workers are most attracted to the 'high autonomy; low customer contact' job treatment. While the emergence of the importance of autonomy is not surprising, as extant research is

replete with evidence demonstrating its significance to customer oriented workers (e.g., Matthews et al., 2017; Menguc et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2016), the result is contrary to existing knowledge (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Matthews et al., 2017).

The treatments in order of attractiveness to customer oriented job seekers are represented in the typology in Figure 34; quadrant 1 represents the most attractive and quadrant 4 the least attractive; beginning at the top right quadrant, the order of attraction follows an anti-clockwise course. The typology is discussed in detail in Section 7.14.2; the counter intuitive finding is explored further in section 8.3.1.

FIGURE 34 TYPOLOGY STUDY 3: AUTONOMY & CONTACT CUSTOMER ORIENTE DFLES)

		Customer Contact	
		High Demand	**Low Demand**
Role Autonomy	**High Resource**	**2.** High Autonomy: High Contact	**1.** High Autonomy: Low Contact
	Low Resource	**3.** Low Autonomy: High Contact	**4.** Low Autonomy: Low Contact

8.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Much of the research into customer orientation has focused on the positive outcomes prompted by customer orientation and customer oriented workers (Donavan et al., 2004; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). This research study broadens the depth of knowledge of customer orientation through testing and identifying (within the JD-R framework) that specifically role autonomy influences the attraction of customer oriented workers and/or job seekers to service organisations.

8.3.1 Counter-Intuitive Finding

Specifically, the findings indicate that autonomy alone and in a two-way effect with customer contact has a heightened influence for customer oriented workers. This cumulative effect appears to be underpinned by customer oriented workers' personal desire or want to meet customer needs coupled with a requirement to meet customer needs being a specific condition of their job (Hobfoll, 2002). In other words, as evidenced from the exploratory research and existing literature (e.g., Zablah et al., 2012) customer oriented workers *want* to have autonomy as this empowers them to meet customer needs and enhances their self-efficacy. Furthermore, workers in customer facing roles (irrespective of whether they are customer oriented or not) generally *need* to meet customer needs as part of their job requirements, this further drives the employee's requirement for autonomy. Importantly, Hobfoll (2002) posits that resources tend to accumulate, leading to enhanced personal and organisational outcomes. This would imply that the combination of customer orientation and autonomy for a worker in a customer facing role will invariably lead to the accumulation of more resources (e.g., self-efficacy, self-confidence) and ultimately improved performance (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014).

The unanticipated finding of the 'high autonomy; low contact' treatment exerting the most influence over organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers is contrary to existing knowledge evidencing the importance of customer contact (e.g., Donavan et al., 2004; Liao and Subramony, 2009). However, it is supported within the boundaries of the JD-R model which holds that high job demands lead to strain and health impairment (the health impairment process), further, that high resources lead to increased motivation and higher productivity (the motivational process) (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). The unpredicted finding in this study provides evidence indicating that when evaluating a new job, customer oriented job seekers may seek to minimise job demands (e.g., customer contact) and heighten job resources (e.g., role autonomy) which is a core principle of the JD-R model but contrary to existing knowledge on customer orientation (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Schaufeli and Taris (2014) argued however, that there is ambiguity within the JD-R model over what constitutes a job demand and what constitutes a job resource. Given

that extant research indicates that customer oriented individuals (in contrast to other workers) perceive customer contact to be something they actively seek, it appears that they view customer contact as a resource or as a positive job demand (i.e., a challenge). Therefore it is surprising that the results of Study 3 indicate that customer oriented job seekers appear to consider customer contact to be a demand and seek to minimise their exposure to it accordingly.

The rationalisation for this unpredicted finding may be apprised by a number of factors. Firstly, both samples in Studies 2 and 3 were job seekers evaluating *potential* jobs as opposed to workers evaluating their own job. Also, in contrast to the current research, much of the work demonstrating the importance of customer contact to customer oriented workers specifically relates to workers evaluating their own job experiences (Donavan et al., 2004; Grizzle et al., 2009). Moreover, the JD-R model specifically considers workers as opposed to job seekers. Therefore this may be a crucial distinction; Katz and Kahn (1978) posit that under certain conditions including when a worker feels unsure of their role (i.e., role ambiguity) or when they are changing jobs or starting a new job, in an effort to preserve self-efficacy, they may try to reduce demands including so-called positive job demands or challenges. Support for this perspective is found in Matthews et al. (2017), they maintain that although enjoyable for customer oriented workers, high frequency, challenging customer interactions can sometimes be a source of threat to customer oriented workers' self-efficacy.

Katz and Kahn's (1978) argument is also supported by Karasek's (1979) job demands-control (JD-C) model which posits that role autonomy counter-acts negative effects of a low challenge environment which may also indicate why customer oriented job seekers' chose the 'high autonomy; low contact' role. The JD-C model identifies autonomy as an important resource for FLEs and describes how it affects the relationship between job demands and behavioural outcomes. The model holds that jobs lacking challenges such as customer contact but which offer high job autonomy draw less energy from a worker than when challenges and autonomy are low which may further explain why the 'high autonomy; low contact' treatment arose as the most attractive (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Furthermore, the JD-C model holds that

contextual factors (e.g., whether it is a new role) play an important role in influencing whether an individual views a job factor as a resource or a demand and these can shift as circumstances change. As Schaufeli and Taris (2014) explained when discussing ambiguity within the JD-R model, some workers may consider a job factor a resource, while another worker may consider it to be a demand. This difference in perspective can be influenced by individual differences and situational differences (e.g., new worker vs. existing worker).

Furthermore, Smulders and Nijhuis (1999) argue that as detrimental effects of lack of challenge can be buffered by role autonomy, the well-being of a person in a job with low challenges should improve when he has higher rather than lower autonomy. Stock (2016) expands on this and argues that FLEs in a low challenge environment but with high job autonomy have more latitude to execute their work in an authentic, self-fulfilling manner which weakens detrimental effects of a low challenge environment. Accordingly, it may be that customer oriented job seekers first need to feel comfortable in their new role before they seek significant levels of customer contact, in other words, when they no longer consider customer contact a demand (i.e., a hindrance) but a resource (or a positive demand, i.e., a challenge). Conversely, had customer oriented customer service workers evaluated their own job, (i.e., instead of job seekers evaluating a job advertisement), it is more likely that they would perceive customer contact as a resource because they are less likely to consider customer interactions a threat and are intrinsically motivated to help customers meet their needs (Zablah et al., 2012; Matthews et al., 2017).

8.3.2 Conceptualising Attraction & Intention to Pursue

Guided by Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action, Chapman et al. (2005) and Phillips et al. (2014) argued that job pursuit intention is the best proxy variable for job seekers' actual job choices as it mediates much of the effect of recruitment predictors influencing employment selection. This is supported by Jaidi et al. (2011) who determined that job attitudes are strongly related to job pursuit intentions, which in turn are related to actual job pursuit behaviours. However, taking an opposing view, Aiman-Smith et al. (2001) makes the distinction between job pursuit intentions and

organisational attraction of job seekers and argued that they are two distinct and separate concepts, predicted by different factors. Explicitly, the finding of Studies 2 and 3 support the opposing view to this perspective. The studies reveal that organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions were actually both influenced by the same variables tested (i.e., autonomy and customer contact – Study 3 and autonomy and job skill and complexity – Study 2) although the extent of the influence of the variables on the outcomes fluctuated. To illustrate, Study 2 indicates that job skill and complexity moderates the effect of autonomy on organisational attraction at high, medium and low levels, whereas for job pursuit intentions, job skill and complexity moderate autonomy at low and medium levels with no such effect when job skill and complexity is high. The findings imply that job attitudes and job intentions are in fact strongly related and both predict job seeker's job choice behaviour, this is supported by Nolan and Harold (2010) Acknowledging the complexity of the job pursuit decision-making process, Nolan and Harold (2010) find that congruence between the candidates and the organisation's values and image influences both job seekers' attitudes and their intentions towards the organisation inferring that attraction and pursuit are strongly associated (Nolan et al., 2013; Nolan and Harold, 2010).

8.3.3 Symbiotic Nature of Role Autonomy and Customer Orientation

The findings in Studies 2 and 3 contribute to the customer orientation research stream by identifying that autonomy has a particular relevance for customer facing workers. In the face of high intensity customer interactions, autonomy has been found to act as a defence to protect customer oriented workers against job demands and their psychological and physiological consequences (Matthews et al., 2017). This may be due to high levels of customer contact inherent in FLE roles which can be demanding for workers, even those who are customer oriented and enjoy dealing with customers can find high intensity customer interactions challenging (Donavan et al., 2004; Stock, 2016; Zablah et al., 2012). The exploratory research findings reveal that such workers want to be trusted by their employer to make decisions around customer needs. This supports extant research, for example, Wall et al. (2008) assert that service workers need to have their organisations' support to act autonomously in fulfilling their job

tasks or they face the onerous task of dealing with customers who hold them responsible even when the service problems are not of their making (Wheatley, 2017). It is accepted by JD-R theory and evidenced in management literature that autonomy is universally important for workers, including those in customer facing and non-customer facing roles (Schaufeli and Taris, 2009; Sekiguchi et al. 2017; Wheatley, 2017). However, the results from the current research empirically support that role autonomy is of fundamental importance to customer facing workers (Matthews et al., 2017; Paul et al., 2015).

Using JD-R theory as a framework to understand the impact of these demands and resources, the experimental research by demonstrating the importance of role autonomy for FLEs indicates that customer orientation and autonomy appear to be synergistic in nature and together support workers' self-efficacy and provide a buffer against challenging job demands e.g., high frequency customer interactions, (e.g., Matthews et al., 2017; Stock, 2016). This is explained under JD-R theory which holds that personal resources mediate the relationship between job attributes and personal well-being (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Significantly, JD-R proposes that a motivational process is precipitated by copious job resources, this supports earlier research, Hobfoll (2002) argues that an accumulation of resources such as customer orientation and autonomy is likely to precipitate the accrual of additional resources, with improved outcomes the result. In other words, other than being just synergistic or complementary, customer orientation and autonomy combined may be even more influential for service workers. For example, customer oriented FLEs working in a supportive and resourceful environment are more likely to grow in self-confidence and self-efficacy, which in turn initiates positive organisational outcomes. (Matthews et al., 2017).

8.3.4 Fit Theory

The findings contribute to fit theory (specifically in the context of customer orientation), which holds that compatibility between workers and organisations exists when the parties' values are matched (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This study's proposed contribution to fit theory centres on the revelation that organisational

customer orientation and autonomy positively influence customer oriented job seekers' attitudes and intentions towards an organisation. This is also supported under JD-R theory; equilibrium between demands and resources result in a more motivational setting for workers (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Bakker et al., 2007). Patently, the findings demonstrate that autonomy and strong organisational customer orientation heighten the perceptions of person job fit and person organisation fit among customer oriented job seekers. These findings are consistent with marketing literature exploring job seekers' attraction to similar others and supports the contention that customer oriented job seekers are more attracted to service organisations with similar values (i.e., customer orientation) to their own (Kulkarni et al., 2013). In addition, the importance of fit has been evidenced by the JD-R model, which has been used to empirically demonstrate that workers with poor PJ fit (for example workers with low CO in an FLE role) will experience more negative outcomes both personally and for the organisation.

8.3.5 Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) Model

The JD-R model is a leading stress model which assumes that any demand and any resource may affect employee well-being. The model is not prescriptive, rather it is heuristic in nature and so represents a way of thinking, accordingly, it can be used to test studies that have no overlap in concepts but are still based on and test the same assumptions of the JD-R model (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Bakker et al., 2007). Studies outside the domain of job stress and burnout have used the model as a conceptual framework to test various hypotheses, rather than testing the model itself. For example, Huhtala and Parzefall (2007) used the JD-R model as a conceptual framework for their meta-analysis integrating empirical studies investigating employees' propensity to innovate. In addition, the model has been used to test models of safety behaviour at work (Nahrgang et al., 2011) and in the field of customer orientation (Zablah et al., 2012) to test whether job stress and job engagement are related psychological processes mediating customer orientation's influence on service workers' job outcomes (i.e., performance and propensity to leave). More recently the model has been used as a framework to investigate negative aspects of autonomy for customer oriented workers (Matthews et al., 2017). Given that JD-R has been

employed by Zablah et al. (2012) to investigate the customer orientation construct and Matthews et al. (2017) to examine implications of 'the dark side of autonomy' for customer oriented workers, its use in the present research investigating customer orientation and autonomy is not a novel application.

This research informs the model through investigating the nature of the causal relationship between autonomy (i.e., a job resource) and customer contact (i.e., a job demand) on customer oriented job seekers' attitudes and behaviours, specifically job pursuit and organisational attraction. Prior to this, the model has not been used to predict job outcomes such as organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers. The successful use of the model in this context is noteworthy, organisational attraction and job pursuit is important, particularly in situations where tight labour markets prevail (Hsieh and Chen, 2011). Specifically, predicted growth in the service sector may make recruiting talented customer oriented workers more difficult for service organisations (Gerhards et al., 2018). Accordingly, the model may help inform the process for service companies which may need to develop attractive roles and reward packages to attract workers with the required skillset (Craig, 2017; Cross et al., 2007; Jena, 2017). As the JD-R model has been used in this research to empirically demonstrate the most effective balance between role autonomy (i.e., job resource) and customer contact (i.e., job demand) for customer oriented workers (i.e., 'high autonomy; low contact'), this supports the prospect that the model may lend itself to use as a recruitment tool for customer oriented workers or indeed for other workers with required skills.

Furthermore, by applying the model in an attraction context, the research uses it outside of its usual domain (as it is normally used to establish the effect of job demands and resources on workers and not job seekers), and so this may add to its continued development and use. Finally, given that Zablah et al. (2012), Matthews et al. (2017) and the present study have used JD-R successfully to test aspects of customer orientation and organisational customer orientation which are not specifically named in the JD-R model as resources, there is a strong argument for their inclusion as (i) an individual or personal resource, and (ii) organisational customer orientation as a job resource.

8.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This research presents new insights into attracting customer oriented job seekers and so offers value to both practitioners in the marketing and management fields and to service organisations and business in general. Research in the customer orientation sphere is unambiguous that customer orientated workers positively influence organisational performance, including financial performance (Grizzle et al., 2009; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Matthews et al., 2017; Zablah et al., 2012). Furthermore, the intangibility of services and the inherent ambiguity in service delivery and co-creation introduces additional significance to customer-employee interactions. In a service context, customer involvement tends to be more complex and multifaceted with the employee-customer relationship often a cooperative endeavour with both parties co-creating the service experience. Therefore, by identifying the importance of role autonomy for customer oriented workers, this study is beneficial to business practice, because for service organisations attracting customer oriented workers offers significant and positive organisational outcomes. Specifically, the results indicate that customer oriented workers are more attracted and more likely to pursue high autonomy FLE roles; with autonomy being more important to high vs. low customer oriented workers. This knowledge can play a role in recruiting and retaining customer oriented workers by ensuring that they are trusted with sufficient autonomy to acquit their job tasks, and interact confidently with customers. Patently, job seekers' decisions define the quantity and quality of the employee pool, therefore understanding this decision-making process and understanding the importance of role autonomy helps organisations target recruitment activities more effectively.

The research findings may also have implications for job design, the exploratory research revealed that customer orientation is not always valued by employers, particularly when the job in question is complex. The exploratory findings and extant research reveals the importance of ensuring that FLEs have a level of customer orientation, irrespective of the complexity of their job thereby striking a cautionary note for employers in underestimating the influence and effects of customer orientation as evidenced in Study 1. Customer orientation has been shown to be a valuable job resource in protecting workers during challenging customer interactions (e.g.,

Matthews et al., 2017). While it is unequivocal that technical proficiency is crucial, particularly, in high skilled roles where it is recognised as the 'uno acto' characteristic [essential skill/attribute] (Henning-Thurau, 2004, p. 463), it is important that service organisations recognise the importance of individual customer orientation for customer facing roles regardless of the skill level required by the specific job. Apart from customer orientation helping to protect employees' wellbeing, customer oriented front-line workers have been shown to precipitate improved organisational and personal outcomes, including customer satisfaction and financial performance (Grizzle, et al., 2009; Matthews et al., 2017).

However, researchers including Menguc (2016), suggest that recruiting customer oriented individuals in itself is not sufficient, there must be organisational support for the marketing concept and customer facing employees must be empowered within their own roles to put it into practice through role autonomy, this is also evidenced in the exploratory research where role autonomy and 'boss support' are recognised as vital resources. The importance of organisational customer orientation is further supported by Study 3 which empirically determines that OCO mediates the relationship between role autonomy and organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions for customer oriented workers, but only when customer contact is low (i.e., the counter intuitive finding). The connection between OCO and role autonomy for customer oriented workers has implications for organisational culture (i.e., an organisational culture that espouses customer orientation) and in addition, for internal marketing. Essentially, customer oriented employees should intrinsically understand that their employer wants and needs them to meet customer needs and empowers and trusts them to do so. Such an expression of trust by the organisation potentially can have positive results for the organisation and should help align, motivate and empower employees at all levels to consistently deliver a satisfying customer experience. Finally, the current research employed the JD-R model to underpin an integrative framework to help establish that role autonomy plays an important role in attracting customer oriented job seekers, therefore, it may be appropriate to employ the model in a recruitment context. Expressly, if organisations are seeking to attract workers with particular skills, the JD-R model could be used to inform the process by helping

establish the factors that attracted existing employees with the required skill-set and these factors could be taken into consideration when designing a recruitment strategy.

8.5 LIMITATIONS

While this study helps to advance knowledge of customer orientation and attractors for customer oriented workers, it has limitations. Firstly, subjects in Study 2 were undergraduates and/or postgraduate students which constitutes a niche group as rationally their career focus most probably would be on high skilled roles. Students in the hospitality, tourism and marketing fields were specifically chosen for the sample because it was important for the research objectives that the sample contained a sufficient proportion of customer oriented individuals, given that the objective of the research is to inform the understanding of what attracts customer oriented workers. However, this contributes to a possible weakness of the study in that the study is not controlled for sub-sector, however, the group comprised only subjects in the specified industries (i.e., marketing, hospitality, tourism and culinary arts). Consequently, Study 2 results are specific to this demographic and do not represent less skilled and less educated job seekers or workers, thereby giving rise to concerns around generalisation of findings. However, the sample is considered representative of potential job seekers for graduate employment positions in service organisations. A note of caution for Study 2 is that analogous to Catanzaro et al. (2010) a single variable (autonomy) was subject to manipulation and so the study lacks the complexity of Study 3. However, employing a single manipulation ensures that the manipulation cannot be swamped by a second potentially stronger variable thereby possibly masking its effect (Davies and Gather, 1993). This is particulary of concern when the variable has not previously been tested in the specific context.

Another limitation relates to Study 3, the sample (n = 104) is smaller than that in Study 2 (n = 120), normally a subsequent study would be expected to have a larger sample, however, the smaller sample was due to the difficulties in recruiting subjects. As a result of the difficulties in enlisting a sample, the researcher engaged an agency (Survey Monkey) to recruit a sample from an online sample. Budgetary constraints however, meant that a sample of 104 could only be recruited, this ultimately precluded

some more indepth analyis (e.g., analysis of high and low autonomy/contact groups at five levels of CO). It would be beneficial if future work structured the research to facilitate examination and contrasts of customer orientation in different industry sectors. Such a study could investigate more fully the finding in Study 1 that different industries (often driven by the skill level requirements) place different levels of value on customer orientation. Special attention would need to be given to the industries contrasted, as FLE roles vary greatly between industries (vis-à-vis skill/complexity) this may make generalisations and extrapolation of findings between service sectors difficult (Chakravarty, Kumar, and Grewal, 2014; Donavan et al., 2004). Finally, both samples were comprised of (i) graduates or (ii) job seekers who evaluated a fictional job therefore future research could focus on actual employees rating their own role and organisation which may provide a different outlook and different results as employees rating their own job will possibly be more invested in the study.

8.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused particularly on role autonomy as an attraction factor for customer oriented workers, future avenues could explore the interaction between autonomy and some of the other factors that emerged as important during the research including for example, brand reputation, organisational prestige and opportunities for personal development. This would provide a more comprehensive picture of attractors for customer oriented workers. If empirically tested differences between attractors for high and low customer oriented workers emerge, then this would provide added credence to a personality conceptualisation of customer orientation.

Another area which warrants more investigation is how autonomy is viewed in different industry sectors. Given the accepted importance of autonomy, and how industries appear to value it differently, this could be explored more in the context of specific service industries. To illustrate, it emerged in the exploratory research that FLEs in the financial sector have much less autonomy than workers in other industries, due in part to legal requirements and regulatory restrictions. Such research could possibly empirically examine the impact that lack of autonomy has on customer facing workers in general and on customer oriented customer facing workers in particular.

The findings indicate that employee skill level is a key determinant for the level of importance placed by an organisation on customer orientation. In particular, in high skilled customer facing roles, skill is seen as more much important than customer orientation, however, Zablah et al. (2016) and Matthews et al. (2017) argue that customer orientation is a valuable resource as it protects all customer facing workers regardless of their skill level. Therefore, an investigation into how different industry sectors value customer orientation among their customer facing workers would provide evidence of whether customer orientation is valued more in low skilled customer facing roles and the possible impact of how customer orientation is perceived by the organisation has on employee wellbeing and on employee performance.

8.7 CONCLUSION

This final chapter draws on the results from the three studies and proposes theoretical contributions and possible implications for business arising from the research including recruitment and job design. Next, limitations to the research were outlined and discussed. Following this, future avenues for research were proposed including the extent to which customer orientation is valued in different industries and the impacts that this may have on workers' wellbeing and performance. Finally, the impetus for this research emanates from prior research demonstrating the imbedded importance of customer orientation in a service context where prevailing conditions mean that the actual service and the frontline employee are often indistinguishable to the customer (Chahal and Devi, 2013; Grizzle et al., 2009; Zablah et al., 2016). Accordingly, attracting customer-oriented employees is a vital element of a strategic intent focused on achieving success through growth and sustained competitive advantage (Palmatier et al., 2007). Considering the demonstrable strategic importance customer orientation plays in businesses success and long-term viability, this research endeavours to investigate this void in knowledge and employs experimental research to identify conditions under which customer oriented workers are attracted to service organisations. This research adds to knowledge on attracting customer oriented workers to service organisations, with the findings from the three studies conducted providing empirical evidence of the influence of role autonomy for customer oriented job seekers on two key outcomes: organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A: STUDY 1: Exploratory research Study (Materials)

- Interview protocol and process overview
- Interview guide - managers
- Interview guide - customer service champions
- Consent and release form

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The interviews adhered to a semi-structured format i.e., asking questions according to a pre-defined question plan but allowing the interviewer to delve further when deemed necessary (e.g., to probe tangential comments which may provide valuable insight). The process is as follows:

- Introduction and overview of the interview schedule
- Explanation of the research
- Declaration of consent form
- Interview
- Concluding comments

INTERVIEW PROCESS OVERVIEW

The interviews were scheduled to last approximately 30 minutes, most lasted between 30-40 minutes, with two lasting 1.5 hours. Before the interview commenced, the interviewer again (having already spoken by phone or email with the participants) outlined the reason for the research. At this point, the interviewer stressed the confidential nature of the research and requested the participants to sign the consent forms (completed in all cases) and the interviews were recorded with the interviewees' consent. Following the interview, the researcher concluded by thanking the interviewee and addressing any questions. The interviewees were advised that within one week, they would be sent the interview transcript for their approval.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTION PLAN – MANAGERS

Question	Addressing	Reference – Example
Your company has been nominated for [*name of customer service award*]. Can you tell me what it is that has helped you achieve high customer service standards?	Customer oriented focus	Narver & Slater (1990) Saxe & Weitz (1982)
How important is a customer service focus to your company (growing in importance)? Do you think that customers' expectations from the customer service experience are becoming higher?	Increasing importance of customer orientation	Brik et al. (2011) Kohli & Jaworski (1990) Korschun et al. (2014)
How has the company benefited from a customer service focus?	Organisational performance	Zablah et al. (2012)
How do you support a customer focus among your customer service staff (training, KPIs, reviews, rewards, development programmes)?	Boss support Job resources	Bakker et al. (2007a) Zablah et al. (2012)
Thinking about your best customer service employees, what characteristics make them better in their role than others?	Individual Customer Orientation	(Avery, Fournier, & Wittenbraker, 2014) Cross et al. (2007) Donavan et al. (2004)
Do you think that your best customer service employees enjoy their job and enjoy dealing with customers?	Individual CO; Job satisfaction	Bakker et al. (2007) Zablah et al. (2012)
Do you think that your best customer service employees are more inclined to be team players and more inclined to help colleagues with tasks (i.e. go 'above and beyond')?	Organisation identification OCBs	Anaza (2012) Babakus et al. (2009)Korschun et al. (2014)
Do you think that providing excellent customer service is something that can be learned, or do you think that it is mainly down to the employee's personality?	Behavioural vs. Psychological perspective	Bagozzi et al. (2012) Grizzle et al. (2009) Korschun et al. (2014) Zablah et al. (2012)
When recruiting for customer-facing roles what specific values and characteristics do you look for? How do you determine the individual possesses the characteristics necessary for customer service employees? How do you ensure that the recruitment approach allows for the most suitable individual to be identified?	Person-Job Fit Measures of Customer Orientation	Brown, Mowen, Donavan, & Licata, (2002) Narver & Slater (1990) Saxe & Weitz (1982)
How do you attract highly customer-oriented individuals? Do you think there are certain factors that attract these individuals and encourage them to engage in the recruitment process?	Attracting customer oriented individuals	Hatch & Schultz (2003)Kotler (2001) Korschun et al. (2014)
What are the staff turnover levels, customer service can be very challenging. Do you see 'burnout' as an issue that affects frontline employees?	Job Resources	Salanova et al. (2005) Zablah et al. (2012)

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTION PLAN – SERVICE WORKERS

Question	Theme	Reference – Example
You have been identified as a customer service 'champion'. Why do you think this is?	Importance/definition of CO	Avery et al. (2014)
Would you say that you enjoy your job? And what are the things you most enjoy about your role?	Job satisfaction	Donavan et al. (2004) Wright et al. (2007)
Do you feel that your role is clearly defined and structured? Do you feel supported by your manager in your role?	Boss support; job resources; job satisfaction	Bakker et al. (2007) Zablah et al. (2012)
Is there anything that you find stressful about your job?	Boss support; job resources; job satisfaction	Skålen (2009 Zablah et al. (2012))
How much of your job is dealing directly with customers? What 4/5 words would you use to generally describe these interactions (i.e. mostly enjoyable, satisfying, challenging, stressful)?	CO, job satisfaction; customer focused behaviour	Donavan et al. (2004) Menguc (2016)
What do you understand by good customer service? What does customer satisfaction mean to you?	CO, customer focused behaviour	Donavan et al. (2004)Liao & Chuang (2004)
Can you give an example of a time you went out of your way to ensure a customer received the best possible service from you and organisation? What was their reaction?	CO, customer focused behaviour	Anaza (2012) Brady et al. (2012) Korschun et al. (2014) Homburg et al. (2011)
Do you generally work to scripts? Does much 'off-script' interaction with customers occur and what strategies are in place to deal with this?	Job resources/stress; individual CO	Bakker et al. (2007) Grizzle et al. (2009) Umphress et al. (2010) Zablah et al. (2012)
What are the factors (e.g. attributes and attitudes) that make a good customer service employee?	Individual CO, customer focused behaviour	Brown et al. (2002) Narver & Slater (1990) Saxe & Weitz (1982)
Do you think that people can be taught how to be good at providing customer service, or do you think it depends on their personality?	Behaviour vs. psychological perspective	Grizzle et al.(2009) Korschun et al. (2014) Zablah et al. (2012)
Do you think that you share the values of the company, if for example the company were a person, would you identify with them?	Attraction; Organisation Identification	Brik et al. (2011) Donavan et al. (2004) Korschun et al. (2014)
When you were considering applying to work for the firm what appealed to you most about the company?	Attraction; Organisation Identification	Brik et al. (2011)

Question	Theme	Reference – Example
Do you feel that the company has a strong culture of focusing on customers? Is this something that is encouraged?	Attraction; Customer Focus; Organisation Identification	Grizzle et al. (2009) Salanova et al. (2005)
In your role, how important is support from your manager?	Boss support, Job resources	Babakus et al. (2009) Salanova et al. (2005) Wright et al. (2007) Zablah et al. (2012)

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Consent and Release Form (In-depth Interviews)

Event	**Interview**
Date	
Location	
Interviewee (Block capitals)	

Permission to record

	Yes	**No**
I understand my interview will be recorded for the purpose of being used for research purposes.		
I give my permission and authorise WIT (or its nominees) to audiotape my interview, and to use it only for the purposes stated above.		

I declare I have read the above, fully understand its meaning and effect, and agree to be bound by it.

Signature	
Date	

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B: STUDY 2: Explanatory research (Materials)

- Introduction letter
- Survey Instrument (the original was designed using Survey Monkey, this is a pdf copy of the survey)
- Manipulated job advertisement (high autonomy)
- Manipulated job advertisement (low autonomy)

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Research Study into Customer Orientation

Dear Student,

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The aim of this project is to develop an understanding of what attracts job seekers to service organisations. Your cooperation is extremely important, as understanding what attracts talented applicants is vital for organisations and helps them to remain competitive by being able to attract and recruit the most talented job seekers.

The study includes a fictional job advertisement, please take time to read this in full and answer the questions as honestly and accurately as possible. In answering the questions, please assume this fictional advertisement is one of your actual employment options.

Survey Instructions

- Please read the instructions carefully and complete each section as honestly as you can – there are no right or wrong answers.
- If you are unsure of any questions, please ask for assistance.
- All answers are confidential and will only be used for the specific research purpose (i.e., to understand what attracts customer oriented job applicants to organisations).

Thank you for your valued assistance.

Sharon O'Brien
PhD Candidate

STUDY 2:

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

CUSTOMER ORIENTATION SURVEY

1. Questions on Fictional Job Advertisement

1. What is your gender?

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male

2. What is your age?

- ◯ 18 to 24
- ◯ 25 to 34
- ◯ 35 to 44
- ◯ 45 or older

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ◯ Secondary Level
- ◯ Post Leaving Certificate Course
- ◯ Bachelor Degree
- ◯ Higher Diploma
- ◯ Post Graduate Degree

Other (please specify)

[ ]

4. Please detail below the course you are currently studying

[ ]

5. Please imagine you are working in a customer-facing role, and read the following statement and rate each on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). Please answer as completely and accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers.

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Undecided	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	9 Strongly Agree
I try to help customers achieve their goals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I achieve my own goals by satisfying customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get customers to talk about their service needs with me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I take a problem-solving approach with my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I keep the best interests of the customer in mind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to answer a customer's questions correctly	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find it easy to smile at each of my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy remembering my customers' names	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It comes naturally to have empathy for my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy responding quickly to my customers' requests	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get satisfaction from making my customers happy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I really enjoy serving my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

6. This section asks you to identify which job and organisational attributes are important to you when deciding to accept a job. Please rate the importance of each attribute from 1 (very unimportant) to 5 (very important)

	1 Very Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important	5 Very Important
Opportunity to learn	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity to use my abilities	○	○	○	○	○
Variety of activities	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity for rapid advancement	○	○	○	○	○
Salary	○	○	○	○	○
Challenging and interesting work	○	○	○	○	○
Frequent customer contact	○	○	○	○	○
Competent and sociable co-workers	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity to show effective performance	○	○	○	○	○
Job security	○	○	○	○	○
Decision-making authority in the job	○	○	○	○	○
Location	○	○	○	○	○
Reputation of the company	○	○	○	○	○
Training programmes	○	○	○	○	○
Company's level of customer orientation or customer focus	○	○	○	○	○

INSERT FICTIONAL JOB ADVERTISEMENT HERE (EITHER HIGH AUTONOMY MANIPULATION OR LOW AUTONOMY MANIPULATION)

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7. Please rate how well you feel your skills match the job on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree)

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Undecided	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	9 Strongly Agree
My skills and abilities perfectly match what this job demands	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My personal likes and dislikes match perfectly what this job demands	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
There is a good fit between this job and me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

8. Using the scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) please rate the job's level of autonomy

	1 Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**5 Strongly Agree**
The job will allow me to make my own decisions about how to schedule my work	○	○	○	○	○
The job will allow me to decide on the order in which tasks are done	○	○	○	○	○
The job will allow me to plan how I do my work	○	○	○	○	○
The job will give me a chance to use my initiative or judgement in doing the work	○	○	○	○	○
The job will allow me to make a lot of decisions on my own	○	○	○	○	○
The job provides me with significant autonomy in making decisions	○	○	○	○	○
The job will allow me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in my work	○	○	○	○	○

9. Please imagine you are doing the job in the advertisement and rate each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	5 Strongly Agree
The job requires me to analyse a lot of information	○	○	○	○	○
The job requires me to keep track of more than one thing at a time	○	○	○	○	○
The job requires that I engage in a large amount of thinking	○	○	○	○	○
This job requires me to be creative	○	○	○	○	○
The job involves dealing with problems I have not met before	○	○	○	○	○
The job involves solving problems that have no obvious correct answer	○	○	○	○	○
The job requires a variety of skills	○	○	○	○	○
The job requires a depth of knowledge or experience	○	○	○	○	○
The job requires me to use a number of complex or high level skills	○	○	○	○	○

10. Please estimate the amount of customer contact time you would expect in the role as advertised

- ☐ 0%
- ☐ 0-9%
- ☐ 10-19%
- ☐ 20-29%
- ☐ 30-39%
- ☐ 40-49%
- ☐ 50-59%
- ☐ 60-69%
- ☐ 70-79%
- ☐ 80-89%
- ☐ 90-100%

11. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please rate how attractive you consider the organisation

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	7 Strongly Agree
This company would be a good company to work for	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would want a company like this in my community	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would like to work for the company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This company cares about its employees	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find the company very attractive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

12. Please reflect on the company in the advertisement and rate each statement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	7 Strongly Agree
I would accept a job offer from this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would request more information about this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If this company visited campus I would want to speak with a representative	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would attempt to gain an interview with this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would actively pursue obtaining a position with this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If this company was at a job fair I would seek out their booth	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

13. Would you be interested in a *job* with the company?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

14. Would you be interested in a *career* with the company?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

15. Please indicate what annual salary level you would accept for the job as advertised

☐ €22,500 - €26,000 ☐ €26,500 - €30,000 ☐ €30,500 - €34,000

16. How do you rate the company's level of customer orientation or focus on meeting customer needs?

	Not very Customer Oriented 1	2	3	4	Very Customer Oriented 5
.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. Please rate how well you feel this job offers graduates the opportunity to use their skills and knowledge

	Low Opportunity to use skills 1	2	3	4	High Opportunity to use skills 5
.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Would the level of personal decision-making control or autonomy in this job influence your decision to apply for the job?

☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Do you think this job offers the successful applicant a lot of control and autonomy over their day-to-day tasks?

	Low Control 1	2	3	4	High Control 5
.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Do you think that having the personal authority to make decisions is particularly important in a customer facing role?

	Very Unimportant 1	2	3	4	Very Important 5
.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

STUDY 2:

FICTIONAL MANIPULATED HIGH AUTONOMY ADVERTISEMENT

Graduate Positions

Have you got what it takes to join one of Ireland's leading hotel groups?

Are you looking to build an exciting and rewarding career in the hospitality industry? We need customer-focused and resourceful people for a variety of customer service roles.

For us nothing is more important than our customers, we believe customer service is all about going the extra mile to always deliver the best experience for each customer.

Graduate Positions

Manage, organise and lead one of our customer service teams
Your work will be varied and wide-ranging
You will enjoy independence and control over the pace of your work
You will be a visible, active presence in the hotel
You will interact with customers and lead your team in delivering a personal and excellent customer experience

What you can expect from us

- Great career opportunities
- Ongoing training
- Competitive financial package and bonus scheme
- Generous annual leave
- Friendly and supportive team environment
-

What we need from you

- Ability to deliver first class service
- You must be self-motivated
- You must be willing to work hard and autonomously
- Team player
- 3rd level qualification in tourism or related business discipline

Your work will be varied and wide ranging and you will enjoy independence and autonomy in your role

STUDY 2:

FICTIONAL MANIPULATED LOW AUTONOMY ADVERTISEMENT

Graduate Positions

Have you got what it takes to join one of Ireland's leading hotel groups?

Are you looking to build an exciting and rewarding career in the hospitality industry? We need customer-focused and resourceful people for a variety of customer service roles.

For us nothing is more important than our customers, we believe customer service is all about going the extra mile to always deliver the best experience for each customer.

Graduate Positions

You will work in a supporting role
You will assist colleagues as you learn and adapt to your role in the team
You will be a visible, active presence in the hotel
You will interact with customers
You will support your colleagues to deliver personal customer service

What you can expect from us

- Great career opportunities
- Ongoing training
- Competitive financial package and bonus scheme
- Generous annual leave
- Friendly and supportive team environment

What we need from you

- Ability to deliver first class service
- You must enthusiastic
- Be willing to work hard
- 3rd level qualification in tourism or related business discipline

You will work in a supporting role and your work will be varied and wide ranging

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C: STUDY 3: (External study) Explanatory Research

Materials

- Survey Instrument (the original was designed and implemented using Survey Monkey, this is a pdf copy of the survey)
- Manipulated fictional job description (high autonomy; high contact)
- Manipulated fictional job description (high autonomy; low contact)
- Manipulated fictional job description (low autonomy; high contact)
- Manipulated fictional job description (low autonomy; low contact)

STUDY 3:

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Company Attraction Survey

Demographic Information

* 1. What is the highest level of education you have completed? Please tick the relevant box.

- ◯ High school
- ◯ Bachelor degree
- ◯ Higher certificate
- ◯ Post graduate degree
- ◯ Higher diploma

Other (please specify)

* 2. Which of the following best describes your current job level?

- ◯ Senior Management
- ◯ Intermediate Level
- ◯ Middle Management
- ◯ Entry Level
- ◯ Other (please specify)

3. How long have you worked at your current company?

- ◯ Less than 6 months
- ◯ 6 - 10 years
- ◯ 6 months - 11 months
- ◯ 11 or more years
- ◯ 1 - 2 years
- ◯ Not Applicable
- ◯ 3 - 5 years
- ◯ Other (please specify)

Company Attraction Survey

Customer Orientation

* 4. Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). Please answer all sections completely and as accurately as possible.

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Undecided	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	9 Strongly Agree
I try to help customers achieve their goals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I achieve my own goals by satisfying customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get customers to talk about their service needs with me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I take a problem-solving approach with my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I keep the best interests of the customer in mind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to answer a customer's questions correctly	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find it easy to smile at each of my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy remembering my customers' names	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It comes naturally to have empathy for my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy responding quickly to my customers' requests	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get satisfaction from making my customers happy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I really enjoy serving my customers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Company Attraction Survey

Customer Orientation & Organisational Attributes

* 5. Please rate your **personal level** of customer orientation or the extent to which you focus on meeting customer needs

1 Low degree of customer orientation	2	3	4	5 High degree of customer orientation
○	○	○	○	○

* 6. Please identify how important each of the following job and organisational factors are to you using a scale from 1 (very unimportant) to 5 (very important)

	1 Very Unimportant	2 Somewhat Unimportant	3 Somewhat Important	4 Important	5 Very Important
Opportunity to learn	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity to use my abilities	○	○	○	○	○
Variety of activities	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity for rapid advancement	○	○	○	○	○
Salary	○	○	○	○	○
Challenging and interesting work	○	○	○	○	○
Competent and sociable co-workers	○	○	○	○	○
Opportunity to show effective performance	○	○	○	○	○
Job security	○	○	○	○	○
Location	○	○	○	○	○
Reputation of company	○	○	○	○	○
Training programmes	○	○	○	○	○

Company Attraction Survey

Company & Job Information

Please carefully read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow. *Please imagine this is one of your actual job options*. There are no right or wrong answers.

Company Attraction Survey

Evaluation Fictional Job & Organisation

* 7. Please reflect on the firm and rate each statement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

	1 Strong Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	7 Strongly Agree
If I was seeking a job I would accept a job offer from this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I was seeking a job I would request more information about this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I was seeking a job I would attempt to gain an interview with this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I was seeking a job I would actively pursue obtaining a position with this company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I was seeking a job I would seek this company out at a jobs fair	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 8. Reflecting on the firm, please rate how attractive you consider the organisation on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

	1 Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	7 Strongly Agree
This company would be a good company to work for	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would want a company like this in my community	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would like to work for the company	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This company cares about its employees	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I find the company very attractive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

*9. Please reflect on the firm and as best as you can indicate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) the extent to which you believe the organisation engages in the following practices

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
Ensures company policies and procedures don't cause problems for customers	○	○	○	○	○
Makes sure employees try their best to satisfy customers	○	○	○	○	○
Thinks of customers' points of view when making big decisions	○	○	○	○	○
Really wants to give good value to customers	○	○	○	○	○
Plans to keep ahead of competitors by understanding customer needs	○	○	○	○	○
Focus business objectives around customer satisfaction	○	○	○	○	○
Assesses/measures customer satisfaction regularly	○	○	○	○	○
Organises the business to serve the needs of customers	○	○	○	○	○

10

Company Attraction Survey

Evaluation Job & Organisation

* 10. Please rate the company's level of **customer orientation** or its focus on meeting customer needs?

1 Not very customer oriented	2	3	4	5 Very customer oriented
○	○	○	○	○

* 11. Do you think this job offers employees **A High Degree** of control or autonomy and decision-making authority?

1 Low control or autonomy	2	3	4	5 A lot of control or autonomy
○	○	○	○	○

* 12. Do you think this job offers employees a **HIGH** amount of customer contact?

1 Low amount of customer contact	2	3	4	5 High amount of customer contact
○	○	○	○	○

STUDY 3:

FICTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION: HIGH AUTONOMY HIGH CONTACT

A 25.0% HAHC_No1

Customer Service Opportunities

COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT

For us nothing matters more than our customers. We believe in always going the extra mile to deliver the best customer experience

This firm is seeking workers for customer service roles. They credit their success with hiring employees who can be trusted to take responsibility for tasks, make decisions and deliver excellent customer service. Employees are expected to work hard and will be rewarded with a competitive salary and generous bonus scheme.

Employees will have a High Degree of Control in their role

Employees will spend 80% of their time dealing with customers

RECRUITMENT GOALS

Recruit experienced, customer focused employees.

Positively empower staff to use their initiative and resourcefulness

Candidate Requirements

- **Ability to take responsibility and make decisions**
- **Proven experience**
- **Self-motivation and confidence**
- **Focus on delivering first class customer service**
- **Ability to work under pressure**
- **Focus on meeting goals**

HAHC

5

STUDY 3:

FICTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION: HIGH AUTONOMY LOW CONTACT

B 25.0% HALC_No2

Customer Service Opportunities

This firm is seeking workers for customer service roles. They credit their success with hiring employees who can be trusted to take responsibility for tasks, make decisions and deliver excellent customer service. Employees are expected to work hard and will be rewarded with a competitive salary and generous bonus scheme.

COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT

For us nothing matters more than our customers. We believe in always going the extra mile to deliver the best customer experience

Employees will have a High Degree of Control in their role

Employees will spend 20% of their time dealing with customers

RECRUITMENT GOALS

Recruit experienced, customer focused employees.

Positively empower staff to use their initiative and resourcefulness

Candidate Requirements

- **Ability to take responsibility and make decisions**
- **Proven experience**
- **Self-motivation and confidence**
- **Focus on delivering first class customer service**
- **Ability to work under pressure**
- **Focus on meeting goals**

HALC

6

STUDY 3:

FICTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION: LOW AUTONOMY HIGH CONTACT

C 25.0% LAHC_No3

Customer Service Opportunities

COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT

For us nothing matters more than our customers. We believe in always going the extra mile to deliver the best customer experience

This firm is seeking workers for customer service roles. They credit their success with hiring employees who can take and follow instructions and deliver excellent customer service. Employees are expected to work hard and will be rewarded with a competitive salary and generous bonus scheme.

These are supporting roles with a low degree of control and decision-making authority

Employees will spend 80% of their time working with customers

RECRUITMENT GOALS

Recruit hard-working customer-focused workers, who are team players and will work in a supporting role

Candidate Requirements

- **Ability to take and follow instructions**
- **Work in a manager-lead team environment**
- **Proven experience**
- **Focus on delivering first class customer service**

7

STUDY 3:

FICTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION: LOW AUTONOMY LOW CONTACT

D 25.0% LALC_No4

Customer Service Opportunities

COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT

For us nothing matters more than our customers. We believe in always going the extra mile to deliver the best customer experience

This firm is seeking workers for customer service roles. They credit their success with hiring employees who can take and follow instructions and deliver excellent customer service. Employees are expected to work hard and will be rewarded with a competitive salary and generous bonus scheme.

These are supporting roles with a low degree of control and decision-making authority

Employees will spend 20% of their time working with customers

RECRUITMENT GOALS

Recruit hard-working customer-focused workers, who are team players and will work in a supporting role

Candidate Requirements

- **Ability to take and follow instructions**
- **Work in a manager-lead team environment**
- **Proven experience**
- **Focus on delivering first class customer service**

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8

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D:

- Participating organisations (Study 1);
- Measurement scales used in Studies 2 and 3 listing all items
- Measures used in experimental studies; Studies 2 and 3.

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS (IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS - STUDY 1)

Profiles of the participating organisations in Study 1 are presented in Table 87.

TABLE 87 ORGANISATION PROFILE OF PARTICIPATING COMPANIES

Company	Sector	Company Overview
Bank of Ireland	Financial Services	Employing 11,255, BOI is a diversified financial services group and Ireland's leading business lender. It positions itself primarily as a relationship driven retail and commercial bank operating across sectors including retail, insurance, corporate and commercial.
Bearing Point	Professional Services Consultancy	Management and IT consulting firm headquartered in Holland. With offices in 20 countries and 3,350 staff, it is one of Europe's largest consultancy firms. Offers solutions across life sciences, consumer markets, manufacturing. Operating in Ireland for 40 years; clients include government, public services agencies, mortgage/insurance providers, telecoms firms.
Chevron Training	Professional Services Training & Recruitment	Based in Wexford since 2005 with 17 staff, the firm is an employment agency providing Level 5 and 6 QQI programmes and delivers face-to-face training in Ireland, UK, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia with online students in 39 countries.
DoneDeal	Professional Services	Ireland's biggest classified advertisement website employing 35 staff. Since 2005 the website has grown an average of 10-15pc in traffic and ad placements per month. In 2014 turnover reached over €8million with 230,000 ads. Voted Best Mobile Service at the Net Visionary Awards in 2012 and won 'Ireland's Most Useful Website' at Irish Web Awards.
Eir	Telecoms	Ireland's principal provider of fixed-line telecoms services with circa 2.6million fixed-line telephone channels, and mobile divisions. Previously state-owned, Eir is now in private ownership and employs 3,633.

Company	Sector	Company Overview
Ericsson	Professional Services Electronic Engineering	Leader in communications technology specialising in equipment, software, consultancy. Over 40% of global mobile traffic passes through its networks and it is the world's fifth largest software development company. Headquartered in Stockholm, it employs 117K. Ericsson Ireland is based in Dublin and Westmeath and employs 1,400. The company regularly features in Grad Ireland's Top 100 Graduate Employers.
Meteor (now Eir Mobile)	Telecoms (Mobile)	Established in 1998 and purchased by Eir in 2005. In 2013, it was the first Irish mobile operator to launch a high speed 4G network. It offers 96% 4G and 99% 3G coverage and has 30% of the Irish market.
Monart Destination SPA	Hospitality	Opened in 2006 by the Griffin Group, Monart is a world-renowned spa retreat achieving numerous accolades including runner up in the category of best spa retreat in the world (Conde Nast Traveller, 2010).
Sam McCauley Chemists	Retail	Established in 1953 with 28 stores and 570 staff and an annual turnover in excess of €80M. Also sells online in a partnership with buy4now.

MEASUREMENT SCALES USED IN STUDIES 2 & 3 LISTING ALL ITEMS

Customer Orientation Scale (Brown et al., 2002), 12 -item cale used in both studies Enjoyment dimension (nine-point, "strongly disagree"/ "strongly agree")

1. I find it easy to smile at each of my customers.
2. I enjoy remembering my customers' names. I
3. t comes naturally to have empathy for my customers.
4. I enjoy responding quickly to my customers' requests.
5. I get satisfaction from making my customers happy.
6. I really enjoy serving my customers.

Needs dimension (nine-point, "strongly disagree"/ "strongly agree)

1. I try to help customers achieve their goals.
2. I achieve my own goals by satisfying customers.
3. I get customers to talk about their service needs with me.
4. I take a problem-solving approach with my customers.
5. I keep the best interests of the customer in mind.
6. I am able to answer a customer's questions correctly.

Job and Organisational Attributes (Powell and Goulet, 1996) original 12 item scale used in Study 3, 3 new items in Study 2 (highlighted in red). Five-point, "very unimportant"/"very important". This measure was only used in S2H7 and S3H14.

1. Opportunity to learn.
2. Opportunity to use my abilities.
3. Variety of activities.
4. Opportunity for rapid advancement.
5. Salary.
6. Challenging and interesting work.
7. Frequent customer contact.
8. Competent and sociable co-workers.
9. Opportunity to show effective performance.
10. Job security.
11. Decision-making authority in the job.
12. Location.
13. Reputation of the company.
14. Training programmes.
15. Company's level of customer orientation or customer focus.

PJ Fit Scale (Brown et al. 2004), original three-item scale used in Study 2, this was not used in Study 3. Nine-point, "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree"

1. My skills and abilities perfectly match what this job demands.
2. My personal likes and dislikes match perfectly what this job demands.
3. There is a good fit between this job and me.

Role Autonomy Scale (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006). Five-point, "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree". This measure was only used in Study 2. Two of the nine original items were omitted, as they were addressed by other items. These included; 'the job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work'., and 'the job allows me to decide on my own how to go about doing my job'.

1. The job will allow me to make my own decisions about how to schedule my work.
2. The job will allow me to decide on the order in which tasks are done.
3. The job will allow me to plan how I do my work.

4. The job will give me a chance to use my initiative or judgement in doing the work.
5. The job will give me a chance to make a lot of decision on my own.
6. The job provides me with significant autonomy in making decisions.
7. The job will allow me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in my work.

Job Skill Complexity Scale (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006). Nine-item, five point scale "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree". This measure was only used in Study 2.

1. The job requires me to analyse a lot of information.
2. The job requires me to keep track of more than one thing at a time.
3. The job requires that I engage in a large amount of thinking.
4. The job requires me to be creative.
5. The job involves dealing with problems that I have not met before.
6. The job involves solving problems that have not obvious correct answer.
7. The job requires a variety of skills.
8. The job requires a depth of knowledge or experience.
9. The job requires me to use a number of complex or high level skills.

Organisational Attraction (Aiman-Smith, 2001). Five-item, seven point scale "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree". This measure was used in both studies (2 & 3).

1. This company would be a good company to work for.
2. I would want a company like this in my community.
3. I would like to work for the company.
4. This company cares about its employees.
5. I find the company very attractive.

Job Pursuit (Aiman-Smith, 2001). Seven-item, seven point scale "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree". This measure was used in both studies (2 & 3). In Study 3, one item was omitted, as it was not relevant to a sample of workers; 'if this company visited campus I would want to speak to a representative'.

1. I would accept a job offer from this company.
2. I would request more information about this company.
3. I would attempt to gain an interview with this company.
4. I would actively pursue obtaining a position with this company.
5. If this company was at a job fair, I would seek out their booth.

Organisational Customer Orientation (Grizzle et al., 2009). Ten-item, five-point scale, only used in Study 3. Two items were omitted, as they were not applicable; 'pay close attention to our customers after their orders have been delivered', and 'really care about customers, even after their orders have been delivered'.

1. Ensures store policies and procedures don't cause problems for customers.
2. Makes sure employees try their best to satisfy customers.
3. thinks of customer's point of view when making big decisions.
4. Really want to give good value to customers.
5. Plans to keep ahead of our competitors by understanding customers' needs.
6. Focus business objectives around customer satisfaction.
7. Assess customer satisfaction regularly.
8. Organise the business to serve the needs of customers.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES VARIABLES - STUDY 2

Categorical, continuous and interval variables were measured in the study, where possible, efforts were made to ensure the measurement scales employed were taken from previous research and have been widely cited and employed by practitioners in subsequent research.

TABLE 88 STUDY 2: ADDITIONAL MEASURES

Variable	Details
Customer Contact Time	Interval, 11-point measure ranging from 0% to 100% in 10% increments. Customer contact time is the direct interaction between the customer and the service worker and has been widely identified as important (Brown et al., 2002; Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Zablah et al., 2012). It is expected respondents' perceptions of customer contact time will influence their perceptions of organisational attraction and job pursuit intentions.
Interest in a Job and Interest in a Career	These factors are considered behavioural intentions and are measured using single item categorical or dichotomous measures. Such items are commonly measured in this way (e.g., Cable and Turban, 2003).
Acceptable Salary	This behavioural measure was informed by measures of the importance of salary (e.g., Bretz et al., 1989; Mitchell and Mickel, 1999) and is measured using an interval scale. Appropriate salary levels were established using 2015 and 2016 graduate salary data for Irish graduates (Brightwater, 2015; PWC, 2016; McKinleyMorgan, 2015). The objective was to establish the salary parameters that respondents perceive as appropriate and fair for the role and examine variances for high and low customer oriented respondents.
Organisational Customer Orientation (OCO)	This is a global measure of OCO (informed by Grizzle et al. (2009) organisational customer orientation scale). It was not possible to use the scale as designed by Grizzle et al. (2009) as the measure pre-supposes the respondents are employees of the organisation in question. This is a single item, 5-point scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).
Opportunity to use Skills and Knowledge	This is a single item measure on a 5-point scale from 1 (low opportunity) to 5 (high opportunity). The objective is to establish whether subjects in the different manipulations (i.e., high role autonomy, low role autonomy) perceive a difference in the opportunity to use skills and knowledge.
Influence Role Autonomy over Behaviour	Categorical measure of behaviour; the objective is to establish whether there is a difference in the answers of (high; low CO) respondents in the two conditions (i.e., if level of personal decision-making in the job influences decision to apply for the role).

Variable	Details
Importance of Role Autonomy	Continuous measure of attitude the objective is to establish whether there is a difference in the answers of (high; low CO) respondents on the importance of autonomy in a customer facing role.
Manipulated Variable (Role Autonomy)	Role autonomy was manipulated in two ways in the fictional job advertisements (i.e., high and low role autonomy) and empirically tested. Measured using a single question and a five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, a measure of autonomy was separately obtained using a Likert-type scale measure (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006).
Control Measures	A control or covariate is a variable which is held constant in order to assess or clarify the relationship between the other variables in the study. During experiments, control variables must be isolated, as inadequate monitoring may lead to serious errors including confounding variables potentially affecting the integrity of the study.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES VARIABLES - STUDY 3

As for Study 2, categorical, continuous and interval variables were measured in the study, the measures were taken from previous research and have been widely cited and employed by practitioners in subsequent research (presented in Table 88).

TABLE 89 STUDY 3: ADDITIONAL MEASURES

Variable	**Details**
Organisational Customer Orientation	A second global measure of respondents' perceptions of organisational climate is obtained using a single item measure of attitude using a 5-point scale from 1 (not very customer oriented) to 5 (very customer oriented). The objective is to establish whether subjects who received the different treatments perceive a difference in the level of customer organisational climate based on the manipulations of role autonomy and level of customer contact (high; low).
Manipulated Variable (Autonomy)	Autonomy was manipulated in the quantitative study (i.e., high autonomy and low autonomy) and was empirically tested. Autonomy was measured using a single question and a five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
Manipulated Variable (Customer Contact)	Customer contact was manipulated in the quantitative study (i.e., high/low customer contact) and was empirically tested. It was measured using a single question and five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).