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# DISCOURSED THE BASIC CONCEPT OF ENGAGEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON STIMULATING INNOVATION AMONG CUSTOMERS IN THE ORGANIZATION

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## Abstract

Customer engagement has been a hot issue for executives and consultants in several firms working in the field of marketing during the last few years. The current study examined the organizational capability of the company's stakeholders' participation, making that organizational capability the independent variable in the study. The value of services is not just applicable to the tertiary market but also to other industries, including manufacturing, where companies offer a variety of services in addition to their tangible products. For the majority of emerging economies, services are essential. Thus, improving services creates a demand and makes it possible to create a new and/or better offer, both of which will help the company rise to the top of its sector. Considering these This investigation would look at how customer interaction affects the inventiveness of the service. In order to achieve this, we investigate how the knowledge source (CPI) and co-developer (CCP) roles of the client might separately impact the creative service agility. We also look at how CPI and CCP affect innovation in services and procedures. Similar research was done on shared confidence as a possible example of consumer involvement. In this way, it offered a theoretical framework for understanding the findings and historical influences on innovation in the CPI and CCP. A sample of 25 service-oriented Iraqi businesses was used in the structural equation model to compare this model to the data. The CPI and CCP stimulate creative resilience, according to the results, and thus Confidence makes it easier to cooperate. Creative processes and services benefit from innovative adaptability as well. This essay makes an effort to fill that gap. Few papers have looked at this subject from a service perspective. It is important to emphasize that product innovation varies fundamentally from service innovation due to the intangible nature of the former, which is why the focus of our investigation was entirely on service organizations.

**Keywords** Engagement of customers, people management, Service sector, Iraq.

## INTRODUCTION

Since it must react to the ingoing changes in the market and the requirements of its clients, the firm is currently forced to be innovatively agile. As a result, any business that wants to remain competitive must constantly innovate and offer goods and services with a high perceived value (Xu,

et al. 2019). Customer focus is one of the main success factors for the innovation process, according to the literature. The primary goal of involving the client in these innovation processes is to develop a new offer or improve the current one based on the data supplied by the client

himself. There are several authors who claim that businesses should not only view their clients as users but also as subjects of. Despite the significance of services for the economy and business, research on consumer participation in innovation focuses mostly on physical items, leaving service innovation in a "unexplored" space. This concept benefits not just businesses in the service industry, but also businesses in other industries that provide a range of services to their customers. This essay's goal is to evaluate the value of customer participation in the development of services and to highlight two roles that customers play: customer engagement as an information source (CPI) and customer involvement as an information source (CCP). This entails including the customer in the process of creating new initiatives, exchanging and offering expertise and information that might affect the innovation capability of the business. In this collaborative approach, the organization will engage in the activities, tasks, and information flows required for conceptualization, development, evaluation, and planning (Sawhney et al., 2005); Ghouri and others (2010) a promotion that wasn't previously offered in it, changing or improving the service. All of this enables the business to produce agile innovation, which entails utilizing both internal and external capabilities or the creation of new ones in order to react swiftly to environmental changes. With this inventive agility, services may be replaced, expanded, or created, speeding up product development and market entry. Building a relationship built on trust will enhance the understanding and utilization of shared knowledge, which will make this cooperation effective and long-lasting (Anning-Dorson, 2018). Once the idea of participation is understood, it's critical to analyse the context in which it might take place. Estimation of the acceptance threshold. According to a variety of factors, including the service's culture, the consumer's current service situation, specific client characteristics, the client-company relationship domain, etc., the degree to which the client will accept an increase in participation in the service's production can vary greatly (Thakur, 2016); Jassem, Rahman, &

Ibrahim (2022).

### **1.1 Innovation as a process**

According to Hidalgo Nuchera, the innovation component has evolved into a strategic vector that helps the firm to improve its competitive position because its absence results in a genuine insufficiency of the company in developing new items and services. In this environment, businesses should incorporate managing the so-called innovation processes into their strategy behaviour to increase flexibility and, more importantly, to foresee and even create breaches that will enable them, at the appropriate time, to rehabilitate their competitive advantages. There cannot be a product or service without a method. Similar to how there cannot be a technique without a good or service. Innovation is frequently thought to result from an epiphany experience or be the exclusive domain of the talented few. However, innovation is created in a variety of ways, such as the way a product may be marketed, how it is connected to other businesses (for example, through strategic partnerships), or how it might be supplied to the customer. However, development must also be cantered on implementing continual change in products or processes, which happens frequently and most commonly (Lin, et al. 2010).

### **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

Our work's primary goal is to investigate how the client's level of engagement in the business might influence its capacity for innovation, which in turn will influence the innovations the business makes in both its services and its operational procedures. At the same time, we aim to show that the amount of mutual trust acquired throughout the cooperation process between firm and customer may influence the degree of client engagement in the business.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The theoretical and empirical foundation that underpins our approach, which holds that consumer engagement enhances corporate innovation, is created by market orientation and new product development theories, reinforced by resource dependence theory (TDR). In reality, the TDR theory views businesses as open systems that

are reliant on the whims of their surrounding environment (Karam, 2018). Understanding, identifying, and serving the requirements and wishes of their clients are made possible by the information and expertise offered to help them get oriented to the market (Elbeltagi, 2014). This study examines and describes how consumer participation (CPI and CCP) influences innovation, in contrast to the great majority of works, which have mostly concentrated on physical items. efforts, concentrating solely on service innovation. Additionally, we investigate the trust variable in an effort to identify a component that influences this involvement and so completes our investigation of the customer's role in innovation.

## 2.1. TRUST AND ITS RELATION TO CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION IN THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION (CPI)

When one person has complete faith in the dependability and moral character of the other, trust develops, strengthening the bond between the two parties. Trust is a key aspect in a company's ability to succeed in its partnerships with other organizations, since it fosters cooperative behaviour (Courtright, 2009). Trust is the means through which businesses widen their networks of contacts. This environment of trust enables the business to work with its customers to innovate its offerings. In this way, the client may act as both a provider and a source of information in addition to being a consumer.

The two sorts of clients Alam, et al. (2013) use in this study are as an information consumer and as a both as a service provider (CPI) and a service co-developer (CCP). CPI plays a significant role in the success of innovation since it allows for a more

thorough and accurate evaluation of client demands. The success of businesses is greatly facilitated by this proactive mind set, which also plays a significant role in innovation by businesses. In order to receive better service, clients communicate their preferences and wants through contacts with the business, sharing information from their networks of distributors and merchants. As a result, consumers become important sources of information and ideas for the business, and by combining these resources, businesses co-create value with their clients. In this manner, the premise that follows is proven:

H1. Customer participation is preferred by trust as a source of data in the creation of the new assistance.

## 2.2. TRUST AND CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION AS A CO-DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW SERVICE (CCP)

The customer can take on the role of co-developer in addition to customer orientation, which aims to gather information and knowledge. The co-development of the new service refers to the degree of interaction between businesses and their present or future consumers throughout the development process, specifically the frequency of meetings, the degree of consultation, and the presence in the new service development team. (2012) Ghouri & Khan In order for a company to conceptualize, design, assess, and prepare new intangible values for the client, which are then translated into a new service and its subsequent market launch (Wagner, 2007), a number of interconnected activities and tasks are required (figure 1).



The customer can take on the role of co-developer in addition to customer orientation, which aims to gather information and knowledge. The degree of interaction between businesses and their present

or future clients throughout the creation of the new service is referred to as co-development.

Image 1. Phases of the process for developing new services

The concept that companies must view their customers as fully legitimate and participating customers who actively define the meaning of services and suggest further changes is emerging from the literature that examines customer involvement in the process of developing new services. According to Neuhofer (2016), "if a company involves its clients, it must integrate them into the operation and transform them." a member of the product development team or as an employee. The new position of the customer as a co-creator and resource when developing in services is the foundation for this innovation. In this instance, faith is a person who encourages this collaborative activity. The engagement of partners in group activities where both sides share a collective attitude is favored by trust. These reasons have inspired us to come up with the following proposition:

H2. Trust favours the client's involvement in the new service's co-development.

### **2.3. CLIENT PARTICIPATION AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION (CPI) AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH INNOVATIVE AGILITY IN SERVICES**

The ability for businesses to react fast to change in a highly unstable environment is known as agility. The capacity to bring novel procedures, items, or concepts into an organization is referred to as innovation. The 2005 Oslo Manual defines innovation as the introduction of a new, or significantly improved, product (good or service), a process, a new marketing strategy, or a new organizational strategy in internal business procedures, workplace structure, or external relations. This definition is one of the most widely accepted in the literature. Innovative agility is "the introduction of new services to new or existing clients and/or the offer of existing services to new clients in an agile way to achieve a response to market," according to one definition. needs". Empirical study on the production of goods has grown significantly in recent years. This research examines how innovation and customer collaboration enable the acquisition, transfer, absorption, evaluation, and application of knowledge and information (Menguc, 2014). However, there are still few empirical

contributions in the context of services. This information prompts us to come up with the following hypothesis:

H3. The participation of the client as a source of information in the development of the new service positively affects the innovative agility of services.

### **2.4. THE CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION AS CO-DEVELOPER (CCP) OF THE NEW SERVICE AND INNOVATIVE AGILITY IN SERVICES**

Client innovation complements corporate innovation by reducing the knowledge imbalance between the firm and the consumer. As a result, the invention is considerably simpler to market because no time is wasted on market research. Thus, more effectively and efficiently is used in the development of new or upgraded services. By giving information on customer preferences at each step of development, interaction and communication with the consumer helps shorten the time it takes to establish a new service. This results in fewer adjustments being required, which saves time. Integration of the customer throughout the service innovation process enables a greater comprehension of the market's expectations and prospects, which adds to a more precise and prompt attention to the client's wants and demands (Roberts, 2017). It enables the generation of fresh ideas, cost savings, improved quality, design validation, and a higher propensity for market acceptability. This information prompts us to come up with the following hypothesis:

H4. Customer participation in the co-development of the new service positively affects the innovative agility of services.

### **2.5. INNOVATIVE AGILITY AND ITS EFFECT ON INNOVATION IN SERVICES**

Utilizing the company's internal and external resources or creating new ones is necessary for innovative agility, which is seen as a dynamic capability, in order to adapt fast to environmental changes (Rzepka, 2018). On the other hand, the company's attitude to encourage and foster experimentation as well as its receptivity to novel and unique ideas make up its inventive ability. The ability to innovate is the use of pertinent information to attain market goals.

The successful use of innovative ideas within a company adds value. Identifies an organization's capacity to integrate, expand, adapt, and reconfigure its endowment of resources and capabilities in response to environmental changes, enabling the development of new products that satisfy both present and future market demands. These factors prompt us to propose the following hypothesis:

H5. Agility in services that is innovative has a beneficial impact on services innovation.

## 2.6. INNOVATIVE AGILITY AND ITS EFFECT ON INNOVATION IN PROCESSES

Based on the aforementioned factors, innovation in services is seen as the introduction of a new product or service that benefits the client. On the other hand, innovation in processes include the use of fresh equipment, gadgets, and knowledge-sharing through technologies that serve as a middleman between inputs and outputs and permit the administration of operations and production.

According to the Oslo Manual, implementing new or considerably enhanced production or delivery

methods is regarded to be innovating in processes. This definition also includes the potential for major improvements in techniques, equipment, and/or software. The capacity of a business to implement changes and improvements in production processes, technology, or work structure is referred to as process innovation. This kind of creative ability gives the business new tools and knowledge contributions. that enable and assist in effectively utilizing its resources and capacities in order to increase output or focus it on originality. It helps a company achieve higher levels of flexibility by redesigning and streamlining its business processes, favoring adaptation or the introduction of innovation in the production process, and managing to respond quickly and accurately to any change in customer demand (Ravichandran, 2017). As a result, we suggest the following:

H6. Agility in services that is innovative has a beneficial impact on innovation in processes.

Figure 2 displays the collection of hypotheses that were created. In the next part, an empirical analysis of the conceptual model will be done.

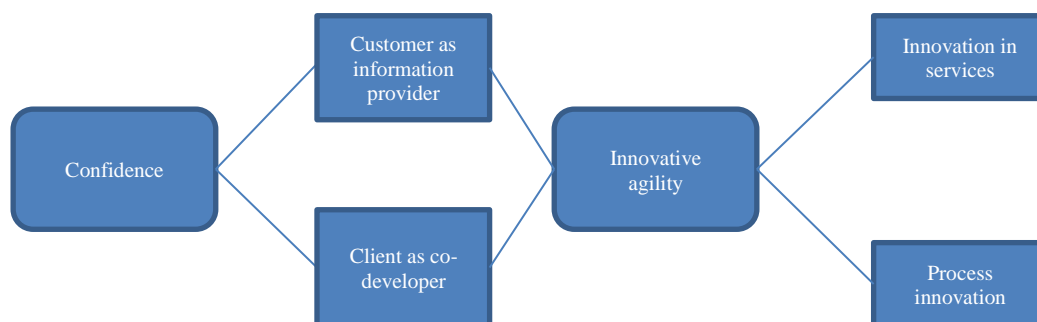


Figure 2. Conceptual framework

## 3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### 3.1. DATA

We conducted an empirical investigation to compare the various theories. For information, we began with data provided by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), which they considered to be the main sources of information for the

development of its services, both the information generated internally and that generated in the market, with more than 100 companies. The CSO data was provided on the number of companies in the service sector in Iraq with activities for technological innovation in 2020.

25 businesses make up the sample under investigation. We now have access to the



information and connections of the firms under investigation thanks to the CSO Database. This enabled us to submit the questionnaires to the company directors and/or individuals in charge of the operations and design area, which contained details about the study's objectives. 18% of people responded. With a 95% confidence level and a 6.3% margin of sampling error.

### 3.2. EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

With the exception of inventive agility, which was scored on a seven-point Likert scale with 1 signifying complete disagreement and 7 signifying complete agreement, all variables in this study were measured using scales of multiple items. The appendix contains a list of the scales' specifics.

The Lin and Huang scale (2013), which gauges the amount of information that consumers share with the company, was used to assess customer engagement in the information transfer process. The Alam scale (Khatab, 2019), which gauges consumer involvement at various phases of new service development, was employed to assess customer involvement in the co-creation of the new service. The Chu et al., (2012) scale was modified to determine the level of trust. Which

quantifies the level of trust between a business and its clients? The scale developed by Najafi Tavani et al. (2014) was modified to assess the innovative agility of the company's new service offerings. By modifying the scales developed by Camisón and Villar (2010), which assess, respectively, a company's capacity to generate new or significantly changed goods or processes, innovation in services as well as innovation in processes were measured.

### 3.3. DATA TREATMENT

To ascertain the internal consistency, reliability, and convergent validity of the measuring scales, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. The degree of individual dependability was confirmed to be higher than the advised 0.5. This scale was greater than 0.7, which ensures the scale's reliability. The reliability of each scale was determined using Cronbach's Alpha. It was also determined that the scale is reliable if the mean variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) values are both larger than 0.5. It may be said that the observed variable is reflective of the latent construct because both individual and compound reliability surpass the predetermined minimums.

**Table 1. shows shared variance, mean variance extracted, and composite reliability.**

Parameters	C.R	A.V.E	M.S.V	A.S.V	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Innovation in processes	0.84	0.53	0.39	0.22	0.73					
2.CCP	0.95	0.71	0.15	0.09	0.25	0.84				
3.CPI	0.81	0.51	0.27	0.18	0.47	0.37	0.72			
4. Confidence	0.8	0.5	0.28	0.13	0.26	0.18	0.53	0.72		
5. Innovative agility	0.93	0.7	0.49	0.25	0.61	0.33	0.42	0.26	0.86	
6.Innovation in services	0.85	0.51	0.47	0.26	0.61	0.4	0.38	0.39	0.68	0.74

The composite reliability indicators, average

variance extracted, maximum shared variance squared (maximum shared squared variance -

MSV), and average shared variance squared (average shared squared variance - ASV) were used to create it, as shown in Table 1. The proposed criteria for assessing discriminant validity are MSV is lower than AVE and ASV is lower than AVE, while the suggested criteria for evaluating convergent validity are CR is greater than AVE and AVE is higher than 0.5. 2019 (Khatib). Similar to factor loadings, which can only be regarded significant if their value is lower than 0.40 (corresponding to  $N = 200$ ), factor loadings were also computed. As seen in Table 1, the extracted variance is always higher than the 0.5 threshold, and all factor loadings are higher than the 0.40 threshold, with which it can be used to confirm the scales' convergence validity. Notably, the square root of the AVE has been shown in the diagonals in place of the traditional value of 1. According to Table 1's diagonal, which denotes discriminant validity, the square root of the AVE must be bigger than the correlations between the constructs. In addition, Table 1 shows that the correlations among the various components of the model are not more than 0.8. The research shows that the scales are one-dimensional and have sufficient reliability and validity.

#### 4. RESULTS

An examination of the structural equation model contrasts the suggested theoretical model. It was decided to employ SEM (Structural Equation

Models), a multivariate statistical model that allows calculating the impact and linkages between various variables and, consequently, contrasting the suggested associations. Verifying whether variable plays an antecedent or consequential function, as well as the direct and indirect impacts between variables, are the goals of the analysis. Software such as LISREL (Linear Structural Relations), EQS (Abbreviation for Equations), or AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) in version 18 are available for estimating this sort of model. The goodness of fit of the suggested model was examined to assess its quality. Table 2 demonstrates that the modification A good fit is indicated by indicators of the Chi-square ratio model ( $2 / df$ ) being between 1 and 2, as well as by the CFI (Comparative fit index), GFI (Goodness of fit index), IFI (incremental fit index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis index), and SRMR being below 0.08. The sample utilized in this study has 200 observations, significantly more than the AMOS software's minimal requirement of 100 observations. The collected findings offer proof that the put forth theories are correct. Taking into view that the cut off for accepting or rejecting a suggested hypothesis is CR 1, 96, the p-value range between 0.001 and 0.01 is considered. The ratio is significant at 1.96 when the critical ratio (CR) is greater. the threshold of 0.05 or above, as seen in Table 2. Table 2. Results of the analysis of the structural model

Parameters			Estimated regression coefficient	SE	CR	Hypothesis
CPI	←	Confidence	1	0.197	5.63	H <sub>1</sub> Accepted
CCP	←	Confidence	0.547	0.198	2.76	H <sub>2</sub> Accepted
Innovative agility	←	CPI	0.303	0.065	4.75	H <sub>3</sub> Accepted
Innovative agility	←	CCP	0.145	0.046	2.86	H <sub>4</sub> Accepted
Innovation in services	←	Innovative agility	0.59	0.072	7.70	H <sub>5</sub> Accepted
Process innovation	←	Innovative agility	0.493	0.062	7.74	H <sub>6</sub> Accepted

Accordingly, trust has a positive and substantial impact on client engagement as a source of information (C.R = 5.54; = 1.901 and p 0.001). The first hypothesis, H1, could not be rejected (C.R =

5.54; = 1.901 and p 0.001). The same was true for H2 (C.R = 5.54; = 0.55 and p 0.01). H2 could not be excluded. This demonstrates how trust influences the client's willingness to contribute to the development of the new service. The hypotheses

about the beneficial benefits of customer engagement on inventive agility as a source of knowledge (H3) and as a co-developer (H4) both received empirical support (C.R = 4.55; = 0.31; p 0.001 and (C.R = 2.97; = 0.145; p 0.001, respectively). The empirical evidence for hypotheses H5 and H6 was found to be positive (C.R = 7.99; = 0.57; p 0.001) and negative (C.R = 7.85; = 0.501; p 0.001), respectively.

## **DISCUSSION**

We have made an effort to show in this work that the client's involvement and collaboration will influence the inventive agility. For this reason, we went beyond the current works that have mostly concentrated on physical objects and considered innovation in services as a distinct issue. It should be remembered that agile innovation in services is dependent on both the client's engagement as a source of information (CPI) and the client's participation as a co-developer (CCP). These findings are consistent with earlier research on the client's partition (Ogiemwonyi, 2020), which found that customer orientation has a significant impact on an individual's potential for creativity. This is as a result of the client actively transferring the information as a source. Information collected from the company's suppliers and distributors, who regularly provide information on emerging trends and on their own requirements. The customer may also be included as a team member in the process of creating a new service, participating in all stages and enhancing the efficacy and efficiency of the innovation outcomes. By incorporating resources discovered in partnership with the client, the organization co-creates value (Khatab, 2019). With this study, we have also demonstrated how consumer collaboration affects the level of uniqueness of the services provided by the business as well as the rate at which new services are developed. The findings of this study support earlier research that suggests that such teamwork enables the business to continually innovate and to think creatively, resulting in a plan that can support the business's long-term success. Similar to this, working closely with customers speeds up the introduction of new services by getting them on the market first. In this instance, a company's ability to innovate depends

on its agility and capacity to respond quickly to changes in the market or the environment in order to create new products and services (Olorunniwo, 2006).

The corporation may develop in services thanks to this nimble innovation, replacing outmoded ones and broadening its selection. You'll be able to shorten the development process and time to market while also improving the design. Agile innovation will also enabling businesses to continually create strategies to lower manufacturing costs and efficiently arrange their output, which results in more innovation in the process. All of this enables businesses to raise customer satisfaction levels by seizing market opportunities and utilizing their understanding of the wants and needs of their clients. For instance, prior research indicates that innovation results in the discovery, production, or collection of resources that enable the business to innovate successfully and/or generate value-added market offerings, attaining competitive advantages and superior performance.

The work supports the aforementioned claims: the inventive agility attained with customer involvement enables innovation in both services and procedures. Involving the customer does, in fact, provide for a greater comprehension of market expectations and prospects, which helps to a more accurate and quick reaction to client needs and demands. Clients who are close to the company can overcome their commitment by conducting activities in an efficient manner in addition to providing valuable information. Clients can also start this involvement themselves by talking with staff, criticizing the current level of service, discussing new service ideas with the sales team, or making other uninvited suggestions. This study adds to the effort to identify the predisposing elements of involvement and demonstrates that cooperative conduct is encouraged by an atmosphere of trust. The findings demonstrate that a high degree of trust increases customer security, allowing for the sharing of information, assets, and skills required for service innovation. This result is consistent. fits the current research and demonstrates how trust is a crucial component of organizational cooperation and is thought to make



it easier for clients to co-create value. This work therefore demonstrates the need for a trust-based connection between the firm and its clients in order to develop a successful partnership with clients that generates innovative value. Client transactions do not need to be closely monitored. Customers are true, truthful, and consistently show their dedication to the business in this way (Anning-Dorson, 2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

Innovation now influences performance across many businesses and is prioritized in the service sector (Cui et al., 2018). Organizations must now focus on open models rather than traditional ones if they want to innovate. The corporation will benefit from external sources of collaboration as it pursues innovation. In light of the findings of this study, innovation in services will be dependent on the client's involvement in the innovation processes, either as an information source (CPI) or an active member of the business as a co-developer (CCP). All of this affects the company's ability for innovation and enables it to create new offers more rapidly or enhance old ones using data supplied by the client. This cutting-edge agility shortens the time between development and market launch. Similarly, the outcomes confirm that the relationship between the business and its clients will determine the effectiveness of this involvement. For the latter to benefit the CCP and CPI, it would have to be founded on shared trust. Following research lines might simply concentrate on service innovation in manufacturing companies that provide services alongside their physical products as they are largely focused on the services market. It should be mentioned that the company collaborates with a variety of partners, such as competing companies, academic institutions, and governmental organizations whose research may be valuable.

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