

4th International Conference on Media, Economy, Communication and Intelligence Management (MECI 2026)

Article

The Spillover Effect of Psychological Ownership: How Customer Trust Strategies Reshape Employee Motivation Through Value Internalization

Xinyuan Zhao^{1,*}

¹ Taishan High School of Shandong Province, Tai'an, China

* Correspondence: Xinyuan Zhao, Taishan High School of Shandong Province, Tai'an, China

Abstract: Customer trust-building strategies are typically evaluated through customer satisfaction, loyalty, service quality, and financial performance, while their internal effects on employees receive less attention. This study examines how workplace-level customer trust practices influence employee motivation through ownership-enabling work experience and value internalization. Drawing on the structure and measures of the 2011 Workplace Employment Relations Study, the analysis applies a 2-1-1 multilevel serial-mediation model to 18,562 employees nested within 1,916 workplaces. Customer trust-building strategies are operationalized as a bundle of customer listening, satisfaction and quality targets, service training, monitoring, and external assurance practices. The results show that these practices are positively associated with employee motivation and that this relationship is partly transmitted through employee autonomy, voice, responsibility, participation, and organizational value internalization. Relational and customer-learning practices exhibit stronger motivational associations than assurance- and control-oriented practices. Monitoring and auditing are more positively related to motivation when employees also receive discretion and opportunities to participate. The study contributes primarily to service management, strategy implementation, and strategic human resource management by showing that customer-facing strategies depend on internal work design and value communication. Psychological ownership is treated as a supporting management-psychology mechanism rather than the main theoretical focus.

Keywords: Customer trust-building strategies; Strategy implementation; Employee motivation; Value internalization; Ownership-enabling work experience

Received: 21 June 2026

Revised: 13 August 2026

Accepted: 27 August 2026

Published: 30 August 2026



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

1.1. Customer Trust as a Strategy Implementation Issue

Customer trust underpins relationship quality in service firms, retailers, and other customer-oriented organizations [1]. To establish it, firms commonly use customer satisfaction targets, service-quality monitoring, complaint systems, employee training, and internal or external audits. These practices aim to improve the consistency, reliability, and responsiveness of customer-facing operations [2]. Their effectiveness, however, depends not only on formal policy design but also on how employees interpret and execute them.

Customer trust-building strategies therefore require the allocation of decision rights, responsibilities, information, and resources [3]. Customer feedback must reach operational units, quality targets must become task priorities, and employees need sufficient training and authority to address customer problems. When these elements are

poorly coordinated, customer-oriented policies may remain symbolic or detached from frontline operations. Customer trust is thus not only a marketing outcome, but also an issue of organizational design, strategic human resource management, and strategy implementation [4].

1.2. The External–Internal Strategy Paradox

Customer trust-building strategies can strengthen employee responsibility and strategic identification, but they can also become compliance-oriented controls that weaken autonomy and intrinsic effort. Customer feedback may reveal the value of employees' work, while service values connect daily tasks with broader market commitments [5]. Quality targets may also clarify responsibility boundaries and show how employee performance contributes to customer relationships.

However, intensive auditing, standardized scripts, continuous monitoring, and narrowly defined targets may communicate distrust toward employees [6]. Customer-oriented management may then be experienced as external control rather than meaningful participation. Its internal effects therefore depend on whether employees can exercise judgment, participate in decisions, assume responsibility, and understand the values behind service requirements. The central issue is whether customer-oriented practices are translated into ownership-enabling experiences and value-based motivation.

1.3. Research Gaps

Three gaps motivate this study. First, customer trust and employee management research remain partly separated. Existing studies mainly examine customer satisfaction, loyalty, repeat purchasing, relationship continuity, and firm performance, while giving less attention to the internal employee effects of trust-building strategies.

Second, the mechanism linking external customer strategy with internal motivation remains insufficiently specified. Customer orientation is often connected directly to employee performance or service outcomes, without explaining why employees convert customer commitments into autonomous effort.

Third, psychological ownership has rarely been examined within customer strategy implementation. Prior research commonly links ownership perceptions to job autonomy, formal ownership, leadership, or employee participation, but pays less attention to whether customer-facing systems create ownership-enabling experiences that strengthen responsibility and identification.

1.4. Research Questions and Contributions

This study addresses three questions:

RQ1: Do workplace-level customer trust-building strategies influence employee motivation?

RQ2: Does ownership-enabling work experience transmit customer trust strategies into the employee domain?

RQ3: Does value internalization explain how ownership-enabling experiences are converted into employee motivation?

The study makes three contributions. First, it extends customer trust strategy research from external customer outcomes to internal employee consequences. Second, it develops a cross-level mechanism linking workplace trust-building practices with employee motivation through ownership-enabling work design and value internalization. Third, it identifies employee empowerment and internal value communication as conditions for implementing customer trust strategies effectively.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

2.1. Customer Trust-Building Strategies as a Management Practice Bundle

Customer trust-building strategies are defined as a coordinated bundle of customer-listening, service-assurance, quality-control, and employee-development practices designed to increase the reliability and responsiveness of customer-facing operations [7].

Rather than constituting a single marketing activity, this bundle connects external customer commitments with internal operating arrangements.

Customer-listening practices, including surveys and complaint records, identify service failures and changing expectations [8]. Satisfaction and quality targets translate this information into operational priorities. Customer-service training develops the knowledge and skills needed to meet these priorities, while monitoring, auditing, and external assurance mechanisms assess whether service standards are consistently implemented. Together, these practices shape how customer information, managerial attention, decision authority, and training resources are distributed.

Customer trust-building practices therefore perform both market-facing and internal management functions [9]. They signal commitment to customers while structuring employee roles, performance expectations, and resource access. Customer-oriented strategies are more likely to influence outcomes when formal controls are aligned with empowerment, training, and employee role requirements.

H1: Customer trust-building strategies are positively associated with employee autonomous and extra-role motivation.

2.2. Internal Spillover and Strategy Implementation

Customer trust strategies affect employees because external market commitments must be converted into internal information, priorities, capabilities, and responsibilities [10]. Customer feedback changes the information available to employees by identifying recurring service problems and showing how customers evaluate performance. Satisfaction and quality targets direct attention toward reliability, responsiveness, and problem resolution. Training helps employees connect customer commitments with specific knowledge, routines, and expected behaviors.

Quality management also defines responsibility boundaries. Clear standards may help employees understand which customer problems they should address and how their work contributes to business objectives [11,12]. However, these practices may become restrictive when employees are evaluated through rigid scripts, narrow targets, or intensive monitoring without sufficient discretion.

The internal spillover of customer strategy therefore depends on implementation. Strategic human resource management aligns employee capabilities and behaviors with business priorities, while participation determines whether employees merely receive instructions or contribute to their interpretation and application. When employees have voice and problem-solving discretion, customer commitments may be understood as meaningful responsibilities [13]. Without such involvement, the same commitments may be experienced primarily as compliance demands. This distinction explains how an externally directed service strategy becomes embedded in employees' daily work.

2.3. Ownership-Enabling Work Experience

Psychological ownership describes a condition in which individuals experience a target as connected to themselves [14]. Its development is commonly associated with three routes: control over the target, intimate knowledge of it, and personal investment in it. These routes matter for strategy implementation because employees are more likely to assume responsibility for customer outcomes when they can influence work processes, understand operational problems, and contribute to improvement.

This study does not claim to measure possession-based psychological ownership directly because WERS lacks a complete established scale. Instead, it examines an ownership-enabling work experience, reflected in employee influence over work methods, pace, task order, and workplace decisions, together with managerial consultation and responsiveness. These arrangements create conditions through which control, knowledge, and self-investment may develop. Customer trust-building strategies may strengthen such experiences when customer information is shared and responsibility is accompanied by decision authority.

H2: Customer trust-building strategies are positively associated with employees' ownership-enabling work experiences.

2.4. Value Internalization

Value internalization is the process through which employees accept customer-oriented organizational values as personally meaningful standards for work-related decisions and effort. It differs from compliance, in which employees follow service requirements mainly to obtain rewards, avoid sanctions, or satisfy monitoring systems. Internalized behavior is more autonomous because employees recognize the importance of the organizational objective.

Organizational conditions that support autonomy and meaningful participation are more likely to facilitate internalization than those based mainly on pressure and control. Ownership-enabling experiences should therefore help employees connect customer-oriented values with their own judgment and contribution. Employees who influence service delivery are more likely to view customer commitments as values to enact rather than instructions to obey.

H3: Ownership-enabling work experience is positively associated with employee value internalization.

2.5. Employee Motivation and Sequential Mediation

Employee motivation is reflected in the willingness to solve problems proactively, assume responsibilities beyond formal requirements, invest discretionary effort, and derive achievement from initiative [15]. Customer-oriented values should support such motivation when employees perceive them as meaningful rather than externally imposed.

The proposed mechanism is sequential. Customer trust-building strategies first shape whether employees receive voice, discretion, and responsibility. These ownership-enabling conditions then help employees internalize customer-oriented values, which subsequently support autonomous and prosocial effort.

H4: Value internalization is positively associated with autonomous and prosocial employee motivation.

H5: Ownership-enabling work experience and value internalization sequentially mediate the relationship between customer trust-building strategies and employee motivation.

Figure 1 summarizes the proposed cross-level framework.

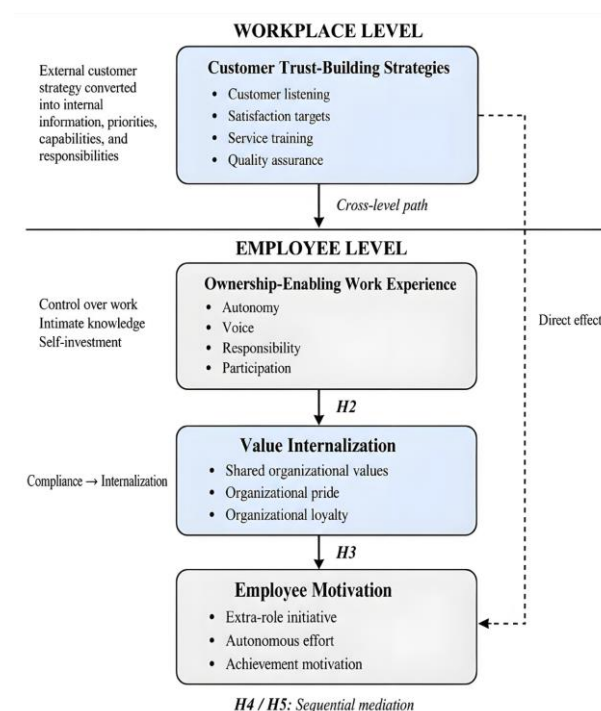


Figure 1. Cross-Level Conceptual Framework of the Internal Spillover of Customer Trust-Building Strategies

3. Data and Methodology

3.1. Data Source and Sample

This study draws on the 2011 Workplace Employment Relations Study (WERS 2011), which covers British workplaces with at least five employees operating in Sections C–S of the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification. WERS combines a face-to-face Management Questionnaire with a self-completion Survey of Employees, enabling workplace-level management practices to be examined alongside employee experiences through the common workplace identifier serno.

The documented survey sample includes 2,680 management interviews and 21,981 employee questionnaires. Employee sampling was permitted in 2,170 workplaces, of which 1,923 returned at least one employee questionnaire. These documented sample characteristics and questionnaire structures provided the basis for the analytical design adopted in this study. The relevant survey materials and general-use documentation are available through the UK Data Service under its standard research-access conditions.

Responses corresponding to refusal, “don’t know,” non-applicability, or invalid multiple coding were treated as missing in accordance with the WERS coding conventions. Cases with missing values on variables required by a given model were excluded from that estimation, and continuous focal variables were standardized before analysis.

3.2. Variable Construction

Customer trust-building strategies were measured at the workplace level using seven binary indicators from the Management Questionnaire. Three indicators identified records of faults, complaints, or customer feedback; customer surveys; and external audits, third-party inspections, or mystery shoppers as principal quality-monitoring methods. A fourth captured quality monitoring by individual employees. Two indicators recorded workplace targets for product or service quality and customer or client satisfaction. The final indicator identified customer service or liaison as a subject covered by training for the largest non-managerial occupational group. These items are explicitly included in the WERS quality-monitoring, target-setting, and training questions.

Because these practices represent complementary managerial arrangements rather than interchangeable reflections of one latent attitude, they were treated as a formative bundle. Each indicator was coded 1 when reported and 0 otherwise. Their equal-weight mean was standardized for the main analysis. Robustness tests divided the index into relational/customer-learning practices, feedback records, surveys, satisfaction targets, and customer-service training, and assurance/control practices, employee quality monitoring, quality targets, and external assurance.

Ownership-enabling work experience was measured at the employee level. The job-control subscale covered influence over tasks, work pace, work methods, and task order. The participative-voice subscale covered managers seeking employee views, responding to suggestions, allowing employees to influence final decisions, and satisfaction with involvement in workplace decision-making. These items correspond directly to Questions A6, B6, and B7 of the employee questionnaire. Items were recoded so that higher values indicated greater control or participation, standardized, averaged within each subscale, and then combined with equal subscale weights.

Value internalization was measured primarily through agreement with the statement, “I share many of the values of my organisation.” A broader robustness measure averaged this item with organizational loyalty and pride. Employee motivation combined the extra-role initiative item, undertaking tasks beyond formal requirements using one’s own initiative, with satisfaction regarding achievement and scope for initiative. The extra-role item and the two autonomous-motivation indicators were also examined separately.

3.3. Control Variables

Employee-level controls included age, gender, educational attainment, workplace tenure, occupation, contract type, full-time status, pay band, and perceived job security. Workplace-level controls included employment size, industry, public or private

ownership, union recognition, perceived financial performance relative to the industry, workforce training intensity, and establishment age. These controls account for workforce composition, employment conditions, and organizational characteristics that may influence both management practices and employee motivation.

3.4. Analytical Strategy

The hypotheses were tested using a 2-1-1 multilevel serial-mediation model. Customer trust-building strategies were specified at Level 2, while ownership-enabling experience, value internalization, and employee motivation were specified at Level 1. An unconditional random-intercept model was first estimated for each employee-level construct, and intraclass correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the proportion of variance located between workplaces.

The subsequent models estimated the total association between customer trust-building strategies and employee motivation, followed by the paths from trust-building strategies to ownership-enabling experience, from ownership-enabling experience to value internalization, and from value internalization to motivation. Level 1 mediators were separated into workplace means and employee-level deviations to avoid conflating between-workplace and within-workplace relationships. The complete model retained the direct strategy-motivation path, permitting the sequential indirect effect to be distinguished from the remaining direct association.

Indirect effects were evaluated using 20,000 Monte Carlo draws from the estimated coefficient covariance matrix, with significance assessed through 95% confidence intervals. The combined employee weight was decomposed into separate Level 1 and Level 2 weights following the WERS multilevel-weighting procedure. This adjustment is necessary because the original employee weight incorporates selection at both the workplace and employee levels. Standard errors also accounted for employees clustered within workplaces, consistent with the WERS guidance for employee-level modelling. Robustness analyses compared the relational and assurance/control subindices, the separate motivation outcomes, and the broader value-internalization measure.

Table 1. Construct Operationalization and WERS 2011 Sample Characteristics

Panel a. Construct Operationalization			
Construct	Level	WERS indicators	Operationalization
Customer trust-building strategies	Work place	Feedback records, customer surveys, individual quality monitoring, external assurance, quality targets, satisfaction targets, customer-service training	Standardized formative index of seven binary practices
Ownership-enabling work experience	Empl oyee	Influence over tasks, pace, methods and task order; managerial consultation, response, decision influence and involvement	Equal-weight combination of standardized job-control and participative-voice subscales
Value internalization	Empl oyee	Shared organizational values; loyalty and pride in the extended measure	Standardized core item; three-item composite for robustness
Employee motivation	Empl oyee	Extra-role initiative, achievement satisfaction and scope for initiative	Standardized composite; extra-role and autonomous outcomes tested separately
Panel B. Documented Source-Sample Characteristics			
Characteristic			WERS 2011 value
Productive management interviews			2,680 workplaces
Employee questionnaires returned			21,981 employees
Workplaces permitting employee sampling			2,170
Workplaces with at least one employee response			1,923

Maximum employees sampled per workplace	25
Employee questionnaire response rate	50%
Fieldwork period	March 2011–June 2012
Target population	British workplaces with ≥ 5 employees, SIC 2007 Sections C–S

4. Results

4.1. Measurement and Preliminary Results

After applying the specified missing-data and listwise-deletion rules, the analytical sample contained 18,562 employees nested within 1,916 workplaces. Table 1 presents the operationalization and documented sample characteristics of the principal constructs. The descriptive statistics and diagnostic results are reported below. The customer trust-building index averaged 0.503 ($SD = 0.241$) on its 0–1 scale. Ownership-enabling work experience averaged 2.998 ($SD = 0.917$), value internalization 3.001 ($SD = 1.319$), and employee motivation 2.995 ($SD = 1.039$). Cronbach's alpha was 0.861 for ownership-enabling experience, 0.758 for the extended value-internalization measure, and 0.740 for motivation. Correlations among the focal constructs ranged from 0.159 to 0.327. The ICCs were 0.143 for ownership experience, 0.093 for value internalization, and 0.115 for motivation. The highest predictor VIF was 1.18, indicating no material multicollinearity.

4.2. Main Cross-Level Effects

Model 1 included employee- and workplace-level controls only. Adding customer trust-building strategies in Model 2 produced a positive association with employee motivation ($\beta = 0.175$, $SE = 0.010$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. The inclusion of the strategy index reduced the estimated workplace-level random-intercept variance from 0.112 to 0.083, accounting for 26.2% of the residual between-workplace variance after the controls were included.

Model 3 added ownership-enabling work experience, which was positively related to motivation ($\beta = 0.292$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.001$), while the strategy coefficient declined to 0.107. In Model 4, value internalization was also positively related to motivation ($\beta = 0.273$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.001$), and the strategy coefficient declined to 0.132. In the complete Model 5, ownership-enabling experience ($\beta = 0.236$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.001$) and value internalization ($\beta = 0.215$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.001$) remained significant. The direct strategy effect decreased to 0.086, indicating partial rather than complete mediation.

4.3. Sequential Mediation Results

The total standardized association between customer trust-building strategies and employee motivation was 0.175 ($SE = 0.010$, 95% CI [0.155, 0.194]). After both mediators were included, the direct association declined to 0.086 ($SE = 0.009$, 95% CI [0.068, 0.105]). All three indirect effects were positive and their confidence intervals excluded zero.

The indirect effect through ownership-enabling work experience was 0.055 ($SE = 0.003$, 95% CI [0.049, 0.061]). The separate indirect path through value internalization was smaller but remained statistically distinguishable from zero ($\beta = 0.020$, $SE = 0.002$, 95% CI [0.017, 0.024]). Most importantly, the sequential path from customer trust-building strategies through ownership-enabling experience and value internalization was 0.013 ($SE = 0.001$, 95% CI [0.012, 0.015]). This result supports H5 and the proposed cross-level transmission mechanism.

4.4. Strategy Decomposition and Robustness

Relational and customer-learning practices showed a substantially stronger association with employee motivation ($\beta = 0.184$, $SE = 0.010$, $p < 0.001$) than assurance and control practices ($\beta = 0.024$, $SE = 0.010$, $p = 0.018$). When employee participation was incorporated, the main assurance effect became nonsignificant ($\beta = 0.006$, $p = 0.553$), whereas its interaction with ownership-enabling experience was positive ($\beta = 0.044$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.001$). Monitoring and auditing were therefore positively associated with motivation primarily when accompanied by employee discretion and participation.

The complete-model strategy coefficient remained positive in the service-sector subsample ($\beta = 0.084$), when extra-role motivation was used as the outcome ($\beta = 0.069$), and when autonomous motivation was examined separately ($\beta = 0.082$). Replacing the single shared-values item with the extended value-internalization composite produced a similar direct effect ($\beta = 0.077$). Excluding workplaces with five or fewer sampled employees also left the estimate nearly unchanged ($\beta = 0.087$). Figure 2 compares the total, direct, indirect, and decomposed strategy effects (As shown in Table 2).

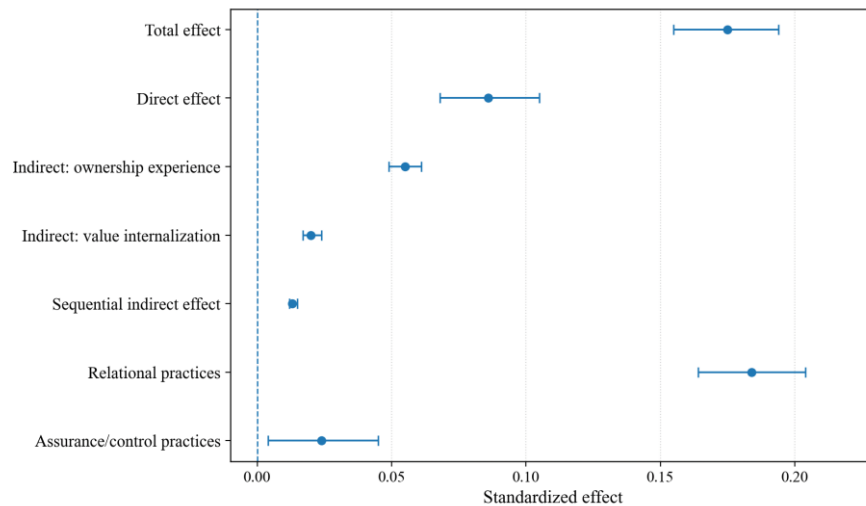


Figure 2. Standardized Effects of Customer Trust-Building Strategies on Employee Motivation

Table 2. Multilevel Estimates and Sequential Mediation Effects

Panel a. Multilevel Main-Effect Models					
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Customer trust-building strategies	—	0.175*** (0.010)	0.107*** (0.010)	0.132*** (0.010)	0.086*** (0.009)
Ownership-enabling work experience	—	—	0.292*** (0.007)	—	0.236*** (0.007)
Value internalization	—	—	—	0.273*** (0.007)	0.215*** (0.007)
Employee-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Workplace-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employees	18,562	18,562	18,562	18,562	18,562
Workplaces	1,916	1,916	1,916	1,916	1,916
Panel B. Direct and Indirect Effects					
Effect	Standardized coefficient		SE	95% CI	
Total effect	0.175		0.010	[0.155, 0.194]	
Direct effect	0.086		0.009	[0.068, 0.105]	
Indirect effect through ownership experience	0.055		0.003	[0.049, 0.061]	
Indirect effect through value internalization	0.020		0.002	[0.017, 0.024]	
Sequential indirect effect	0.013		0.001	[0.012, 0.015]	
Panel C. Robustness and Strategy Decomposition					
Test	Standardized coefficient		SE	95% CI	
Relational/customer-learning practices	0.184***		0.010	[0.164, 0.204]	
Assurance/control practices	0.024*		0.010	[0.004, 0.045]	
Assurance × ownership experience	0.044***		0.007	[0.030, 0.057]	
Service-sector subsample	0.084***		0.011	[0.062, 0.106]	
Extra-role motivation outcome	0.069***		0.009	[0.051, 0.086]	

Autonomous motivation outcome	0.082***	0.009	[0.064, 0.100]
Extended value-internalization measure	0.077***	0.009	[0.059, 0.096]

Notes: Standardized coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses. $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$. Indirect-effect intervals were estimated using 20,000 Monte Carlo draws.

5. Discussion and Managerial Implications

5.1. Interpretation of the Main Findings

The analysis indicates that customer trust-building strategies can produce internal effects beyond their market-facing purpose. Practices used to collect customer information, define service expectations, and assure quality were associated with stronger employee motivation when they also increased employee participation and discretion. Customer trust is therefore implemented not only through targets and controls but also through how firms distribute information, authority, and responsibility.

Ownership-enabling work experience formed an important part of this process. Employees were more likely to display autonomous and extra-role motivation when they could influence work methods, participate in decisions, and observe managerial responses to their views. These conditions appear to transform customer strategy from an external requirement into a responsibility employees can partly treat as their own. Value internalization further explains why participation matters: employees who regard customer-oriented values as personally meaningful are more willing to invest discretionary effort than those who merely comply with formal requirements.

The strategy decomposition also suggests that customer-facing practices are not equivalent. Relational practices, including customer listening, feedback use, and service training, were more strongly associated with motivation than assurance-oriented practices. Control-oriented assurance practices may communicate customer importance, but they do not necessarily create autonomous motivation unless employees also receive voice and discretion. Monitoring can support reliability, but its motivational effects depend on the surrounding work design.

5.2. Contributions to Business and Management Research

The first contribution concerns customer trust and service management. Customer trust-building strategies are usually evaluated through satisfaction, loyalty, service quality, repeat purchasing, or financial performance. This study extends that perspective by treating customer strategy as an internal management system that also shapes employee experiences. Customer listening, training, target-setting, and assurance practices influence how responsibilities, information, and resources are organized within the workplace.

Second, the study contributes to strategy implementation and strategic human resource management. External market strategies do not automatically generate aligned employee behavior. They must be translated through work design, employee participation, managerial communication, and decision authority. The proposed mechanism explains why customer priorities may remain symbolic when employees lack the capacity to interpret and apply them. It also shows why customer-management and human resource practices should be aligned rather than designed separately.

Third, psychological ownership is positioned as a limited transmission mechanism. The study does not claim a comprehensive extension of psychological ownership theory. Instead, it shows how control, participation, responsibility, and self-investment may create ownership-enabling conditions linking customer strategy with employee motivation.

5.3. Managerial Implications

First, firms should combine customer metrics with employee discretion. Satisfaction and quality targets can clarify priorities, but employees also need authority to diagnose customer problems, adapt routine procedures, and select appropriate responses. Targets without discretion may increase compliance while weakening initiative.

Second, organizations should convert customer feedback into participatory improvement. Complaints, survey results, and service-failure records should be discussed in employee-involvement meetings and operational reviews. Employees should be able to interpret recurring problems, recommend changes, and receive feedback on whether their suggestions were adopted.

Third, managers should explain the value behind service standards. Training should not be limited to scripts, response times, or procedures. It should clarify how service requirements protect customer interests, support long-term relationships, and contribute to competitive performance. This can help employees understand why the standards matter and facilitate value internalization.

Fourth, assurance systems should be balanced with ownership-enabling practices. Audits, monitoring, and mystery shopping may improve consistency, but they should be accompanied by employee voice, problem-reporting channels, and opportunities to recommend process improvements. Stronger monitoring should not be assumed to strengthen motivation independently.

5.4. Limitations and Future Research

The principal limitation is that the analysis follows the documented WERS sample characteristics and questionnaire structure. The findings should therefore be interpreted within the stated analytical design rather than as direct population estimates. The analysis demonstrates the feasibility and internal consistency of the model but does not reproduce population estimates. Future research should validate the framework using accessible workplace-level microdata.

The cross-sectional design also prevents strict causal inference and cannot establish the temporal order of strategy adoption, ownership-enabling experience, value internalization, and motivation. The customer strategy index measures trust-building practices rather than customers' actual trust. Ownership-enabling work experience is a proxy for conditions associated with psychological ownership, not a complete ownership scale. Employee motivation is partly represented through extra-role initiative and evaluations of achievement and discretion. The WERS framework also reflects a specific British institutional and historical context.

Future studies should use matched firm–employee–customer data, longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs, direct psychological ownership measures, and repeated customer outcomes. They should also compare the long-term effects of relational and assurance-oriented strategies.

6. Conclusion

Customer trust-building strategies are associated with employee motivation not only through direct workplace requirements but also through ownership-enabling and value-internalization processes. The proposed framework suggests that customer surveys, satisfaction targets, service training, quality monitoring, and assurance systems affect employees partly by changing how information, responsibility, and decision authority are distributed. Employees are more likely to invest autonomous and prosocial effort when they can participate in decisions, exercise discretion, and connect customer commitments with meaningful organizational values.

The main managerial implication is that customer trust strategies should not be designed separately from work organization and human resource management. Customer-facing requirements are more likely to motivate employees when accompanied by voice, problem-solving authority, responsive management, and clear explanations of service values. Relational and learning-oriented practices appear especially compatible with this process, whereas monitoring and auditing require participation mechanisms to avoid becoming purely compliance-oriented controls.

These conclusions are associational and remain bounded by the analytical design and construct operationalization. Ownership-enabling experience is not equivalent to directly measured psychological ownership, and not every quality-control or customer-

monitoring practice will automatically improve motivation. The framework instead identifies conditions under which external customer commitments may be translated into internally supported employee effort.

References

1. L. Sihombing and H. Dinus, "Analysis of business development strategies in increasing customer trust," *Journal on Economics, Management and Business Technology*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 84–92, 2024.
2. N. Rosyada, R. Windyaningrum, and E. T. Irianingsih, "Customer Service Communication Strategies of Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI) in Building Customer Trust in Banking Products," *IKOMIK: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi dan Informasi*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 51–66, 2026.
3. A. Y. B. Ahmad, M. Allahham, W. I. Almajali, F. T. Ayasrah, and S. Sabra, "Building trust: The role of strategic decision-making in digital market confidence," in *2024 25th International Arab Conference on Information Technology (ACIT)*, Dec. 2024, pp. 1–6.
4. V. Nivedha, T. C. Thomas, K. P. Thote, D. Mohapatro, and T. Akhter, "AI in FinTech: Redefining Customer Trust and Personalization in Digital Finance," *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 2, no. 5, 2025.
5. I. L. Putra, C. Triesti, P. Puspitasari, and Y. S. Oktora, "Strategic Compensation Design And Marketing Success: An Empirical Study Of Facilitative Employee Allowances," *Reviu Accounting, Business & Organizations*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 155–167, 2025.
6. V. Badrinarayanan, "Trust building strategies for virtual leaders in the post pandemic era," *Project Leadership and Society*, vol. 5, p. 100126, 2024.
7. A. Weibel, S. Schafheitle, and L. Van der Werff, "Smart tech is all around us—bridging employee vulnerability with organizational active trust-building," *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 62, no. 5, pp. 1914–1944, 2025.
8. D. E. Bowen, "An organizational behavior/human resource management perspective on the roles of people in a service organization context: frameworks and themes," *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 1–21, 2024.
9. D. Kossyva, G. Theriou, V. Aggelidis, and L. Sarigiannidis, "Retaining talent in knowledge-intensive services: enhancing employee engagement through human resource, knowledge and change management," *Journal of Knowledge Management*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 409–439, 2024.
10. G. Giallourous et al., "Enhancing employee engagement through integrating leadership and employee job resources: evidence from a public healthcare setting," *International Public Management Journal*, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 533–558, 2024.
11. H. Kim, J. Li, and K. K. F. So, "Psychological ownership research in business: a bibliometric overview and future research directions," *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 174, p. 114502, 2024.
12. Y. T. Lin and J. T. Chang, "A psychological ownership perspective on the HR system–LGBT voice relationship: the role of espousal and enactment of inclusion matters," *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 61, no. 8, pp. 3717–3753, 2024.
13. C. G. Holm, L. Kringelum, and A. Anand, "Creating effective strategy implementation: a systematic review of managerial and organizational levers," *Review of Managerial Science*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 673–705, 2026.
14. L. Wu, Y. Chen, and X. Huang, "The process and motivations of individual values internalization: A qualitative study," *BMC Psychology*, vol. 13, no. 1, p. 1036, 2025.
15. P. Tiong, Y. Adi, and A. Irwan, "Agile leadership, digital transformation, and employee performance: The role of work engagement," *Jurnal Manajemen dan Bisnis*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 600–623, 2025.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Publisher and/or the editor(s). Publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.