

Too Much of a Good Thing? Customer Participation and Supplier Commitment in a Project Business Context

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Abstract

Customer participation has gained increasing attention in recent years but its effects on relational outcomes have displayed mixed findings. This research forwards a conceptual framework that relates customer participation to an important, and underexplored, outcome of relationships between customers and their suppliers in a project marketing context - the commitment of the supplier to the customer in response to customer participation. We empirically test our theoretical contentions with a sample of 105 project managers in Austria and demonstrate that increasing customer participation adversely effects the supplier's affective and calculative commitment to the customer. Additionally, relationship performance significantly and positively moderates the negative effects of customer participation on calculative commitment.