

Influence Mechanism of Leading Customer-Oriented Boundary-Spanning Behavior on Employee Service Performance

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Abstract

Appropriate leadership management could have a significant role in enhancing organizational capability of customers-oriented boundary spanning behaviors. While the leader plays a major role in ensuring that employees have sufficient intellectual capital to achieve their goals of delivering quality service to customers, there are still challenges. These include the need for resources to address environmental issues and handle difficult situations effectively. The lack of these resources can create a deficiency in the proper delivery of quality service. To address this competence gap, we investigated the perspective practices, factors influencing employee skills of customers-oriented boundary spanners and performance management systems. The results suggest that leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior may have a positive influence on employees concerning task-relevant experience, organizational commitment, reduction of work-related stressors and, most importantly, employees spouse the proactive ideas required to frontline employees in the exercise of quality service delivery. We also found that Ability Motivation and Opportunity mediate the relationship between leader customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior and service quality, thus helping to increase employees' possibilities to deploy their skills in the firm and to actively contribute to the organization's success. These results suggest resourcing policies and leadership management must be implemented as practices that are essential to the organizational culture in order to mitigate the vicissitudes of work and promote the well-being of employees.

Keywords

Leadership Customer-Oriented Boundary Spanning Behavior, Service Quality, Self-Efficacy, Cross-Boundary Belief, Support from the Leaders

1. Introduction

Effective managerial action is recognized as indispensable in the coordination of the tasks of customer-oriented boundary spanning behaviors, and the leader has moral imperatives to support business goal as well as practices resources allowing them to fulfill their role of frontliners. More recently, [Hensellek et al. \(2023\)](#) highlight the importance of having an effective leader who is able to motivate employees towards achieving common goals, as well as effectively influencing people's attitudes and behaviors by providing them with resources such as training programs and support. Consequently, the leader's contribution to the process of restructuring and connecting the tasks of employees is crucial to the performance of service quality ([Qiu et al., 2019](#)).

According to [Takanashi & Lee \(2019\)](#) and [Benoliel & Somech \(2015\)](#) leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior is a behavior to create alignment and commitment across organizational boundaries in order to achieve a higher vision or goal. It involves understanding and aligning diverging goals, managing tensions between different stakeholders involved in the collaboration, and mobilizing resources from both sides for successful knowledge acquisition.

[Ozturen \(2022\)](#) affirms that organizational most asset is when COBSBS scans business sphere's vision and shares it with outside stakeholders. Leader customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior is a type of leadership behavior that involves actively engaging with customers, understanding their needs and expectations, and bridging the gap between the organization and its customers. This type of behavior helps to create a strong customer-organization relationship, which can lead to increased customer loyalty and satisfaction. It also helps to ensure that customer needs are met in a timely manner and that customer feedback is taken into account when making decisions.

Perceived organizational support, such as supervisory support, internal communication and training, duty orientation can have a positive impact on customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors. For example, based on social exchange theory, [Wang et al. \(2022\)](#) indicated employees engage in behaviors when they expect to receive something of value from the interaction, and act according to their roles within an organization or group. Their study examined and revealed that organizational leadership can cultivate frontline employees' boundary-spanning behavior through job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The beneficial impact of leadership on employees includes Building Relationships (with customers by understanding their needs and providing solutions that meet those needs); Developing Strategies (develop strategies that are customer-oriented, such as developing customer loyalty programs or offering discounts for repeat purchases. This will help increase customer satisfaction and loyalty); Facilitating Communication (facilitate communication between customers and the organization, such as through surveys or focus groups, in order to gain feed-

back on products or services offered by the company); Managing Change (this will ensure that the organization is staying competitive in its market space and meeting customer expectations).

However, the frontline position and hostile environment that exposes these COSBS to all kinds of negation, conflict and tension (Singh et al., 2022) remains a challenge.

Commitment, perseverance and performance are essential links to the business goal, and the LCOBSB is the new paradigm that allows for the absorption of these demanding needs in a complex environment. Therefore, it is critical to investigate the tangible relationships between the functions of the leader customer-oriented boundary-spanning behavior and service quality.

According to Bayighomog and Arasli (2019), Customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors refer to the actions taken by frontline service employees that help build relationships with customers and create a positive customer experience. This could include things like being friendly, helpful, attentive and knowledgeable when interacting with customers. Specifically, Bettencourt et al. (2005) identified three distinct dimensions of customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors. These are external representation, internal influence and service delivery.

External Representation refers to the way in which frontline employees represent their organization externally by engaging with customers through various communication channels such as emails or phone calls. Internal Influence is related to how much power a frontline employee has within an organization when it comes to influencing decisions that affect customers' experiences positively or negatively. Finally, Service Delivery involves providing services directly to customers according to organizational standards and expectations for quality assurance purposes.

Given the considerable efforts in which job-demands constrain COBSBS at the level of internal forces (values, organizational commitment, direction, the intensity of work-overload), and external influences (customers' expectations of service quality as well as external market conditions such as competition or economic trends) entail that the involvement of the leader is sine qua non conditions to achieve high performance (Carter et al., 2020).

Several studies have found that LCOBSB has a significant impact on job performance. For example, Chien et al. (2021) showed that COBSBS s are positively affected by employee creativity, individual's well-being, thus leading them towards increased success as a leader within the organization. Similarly, Jung and Yoon (2020) pointed out that LCOBSBS S have a positive impact on employee psychological well-being by increasing job satisfaction, reducing stress levels, improving communication skills, and providing an opportunity for personal growth.

The leader's role in service quality performance is to provide guidance and support for the development of strategic indicators that measure the success or

failure of a particular program. Similarly, certain aspects of HRM such as ability, motivation and opportunity associated with leader's guidance allow the COBSBS to be competent in autonomy to face any eventuality.

Accordingly, we proceeded to introduce three contingents of AMO, which are respectively Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief and Leadership support. These three factors are necessary for an employee's performance at work. As demonstrated explicitly by [Mollahosseini et al. \(2012\)](#), AMO elements can be used as a measure of how well employees perform their customer-oriented tasks based on perceptions of justice within the organization they work in. Moreover, employees' abilities, motivation and opportunities largely contribute to improve service quality ([Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016](#)).

Currently, the intense competition within businesses makes service quality the fundamental building block of any strategy. Consistent with [Asante et al. \(2022\)](#) we consider that prosocial service behavior clearly improves the quality of a customer's service encounter. In particular, the proactive roles specific to COBSBS, i.e., being helpful, and courteous to customers, showing genuine interest in helping customers with their needs and concerns, taking the initiative without being asked, such as offering additional services that may be beneficial for the customer.

In high-contact service, COBSBS plays a key role in improving service performance ([Olorunsola et al., 2022](#)). Additionally, strategic HRM management associated with employee organizational and proactive behaviors further enhance the successful delivery of quality service. More recently, leader customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior has been found to have positive impacts on organizational outcomes like job satisfaction and productivity levels ([Song et al., 2023](#)). In industry where employees act as prosocial behaviors, it is imperative that leadership adopts strong technical functions and an ongoing strategy to ensure that organizational values and customers' needs are met. An overview of previous studies shows that the LCOBSBS improves employee's motivation, self-efficacy and performance, therefore quality service. ([Colman & Rouzies, 2019](#)) demonstrate that frontline customer-oriented boundary spanning's engagement contributes significantly to customer satisfaction and increase organizational performance. Particularly, as the leader approaches the environment problems, brings know-how, the employees become autonomous, which in perspective reinforces the organization's commitment and a feeling of well-being ([Guest, 2017](#); [Huettermann & Bruch, 2019](#); [Hauff et al., 2020](#); [Sallas-Vallina et al., 2020](#)). Increasingly, Service quality, in other hand depends on the ability, willingness and motivation of employees to fulfill their role ([Lin et al., 2021](#)).

Nowadays, the major workplace problem is the dual employee-organization mistrust. On the one hand, employees tend to have a preconceived sense of incompetence, lack of personal efficacy and a sense of exclusion from job opportunities and career advancement. This feeling of incompetence or better said,

disempowerment hinders the sharing of knowledge between colleagues, which is highly detrimental to collaborations in the delivery of quality service. On the other hand, the organization that believes that employees do not sufficiently embrace the core values on which pro-social service behavior is rooted. These values include discretionary actions that are intended to benefit customers and the organization, providing extra assistance or going beyond what is expected to ensure a positive customer experience.

These disagreements may cause intent to leave, or frustration among employees (Chien et al., 2021; Park & Min, 2020; Giao et al., 2020), hence the need to investigate and address this deficiency.

Referring to prior studies, the activities in which customer-oriented boundary spanners regularly perform are, among other things, information collection and knowledge exchange, relational activities, coordinating and negotiating with internal and external actors, and mediation and facilitating cooperation (Van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2017). As a result, when they actually do their job, they consecutively contribute to the success of their organization (Madera et al., 2017). Based on this approach, the literature has given an important place to theoretical and practical strategies in order to improve the services offered by companies and organizations. For better quality service to be delivered, employees must have increased performance at individual and collective level. For example (Schotter et al., 2017; Mortensen & Haas, 2018; Kim & Anand, 2018; Colman & Rouzies, 2019) have shown that customer-oriented boundary spanning in teams could be a propulsion to increase performance. Given the many challenges that customer-oriented boundary spanners face, leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior plays a key role in ensuring that employees can meet customer demands and requirements.

Based on social exchange theory, Resource-based theory (Barney, 1996) and Human capital management, this study aims to demystify appropriate practices that improve task efficiency and the elaboration of multidimensional prosocial behaviors that facilitate service delivery in an environment of high customer-employee proximity.

In our conceptual work, we seek to demonstrate a path by which leadership ethical dimension enable an individual to perform a task.

We also look at the contribution of the leader in providing resourcing services, promoting commitment and trust within the organization, thus fostering the convoy of service quality. Our approach is twofold: taking into account the satisfaction of service delivery for the customer, but also the job satisfaction perspective for the COBSBS.

Additional effects and certain mechanisms, we believe, would help us understand why organizations need to establish management skills that allow employees to be effective and to establish networks with the outside. The effect of contingent-resources learning and capability between the leader and the subordinate to carry out internal and external operations, is investigated in this study.

While studies show that boundary positions which are seen as fundamental in organizations need a leadership approach and AMO practices to operate successfully (Li et al., 2022) it was found that activities including leadership strategies and AMO mediators were not addressed, which has been found to be a key predictor of subordinate performance (McClellan & Collins, 2019). Because different situations call for different approaches, it is necessary to invest shift functions contributing to quality service on additive tasks.

The notion of Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) as a factor in perfecting the objectives of an organization (Rizvi & Garg, 2021) is a concept extensively studied by researchers to establish the bases of a behavior of elevation of employee's aptitude within an organization. Ability refers to the individual competence already acquired and the ease with which one correctly does one's task; Motivation affects psychic acceptance to engage in work with passion; Opportunity defines the natural inclination of the employee by a favorable environment which gives him the chance to exploit his potential. The model attempts to resolve the relationship that exists between LCOBSBSs and service quality, and the mediating effect of components of AMO which are Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, Leadership support. In doing so, we fill a gap that exists between leadership theory and mediators as influencing factors on performance.

We extend previous studies by incorporating social exchange theories and human capital management approaches, to show that the use of leader service-oriented will induce favorable employee behavior in terms of social behavior and quality of service.

Considerable existing research has tried to prove that the action of leadership, in particular the creation of opportunity, support from leader or even self-efficacy can trigger employees' involvement, which consequently leads to higher performance (Takanashi & Lee, 2019, Woodside, 2020; Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). For example, (Olorunsola et al., 2022) reveal that supportive leadership in the situation where the COBSBSs are aligned offers a beneficial and motivating factor to accomplish their task beyond the boundaries of the organization. Similarly (Lasisi et al., 2020) have pointed out that certain empowerment traits such as capacity building, knowledge acquisition must be a cultural practice within the company.

Also, it should be admitted that the output of the commendable synergy of action between the LCOBSBS and certain behavioral and learning provisions will be an enriching quality service. Similarly, when a positive energy exists for the function of leadership and personal effectiveness of employees within the organization, the business climate creates a perception of job satisfaction (Olorunsola et al., 2022), which systematically leads to improved service quality (Jones et al., 2019), beneficial not only to the organization but also which can bring customer satisfaction (Battisti et al., 2021).

Based on leadership approach and outcomes at organizational- and COBSBS employee-level, this study aims to bring a touch of more to certain neglected points prone to business success. Furthermore, we elucidate how and by what

means certain factors can be introduced to serve as mediators in the outcome of organizational performance. We aim to make two contributions to the burgeoning body of literature on customer-oriented boundary spanning leadership focused on cognitive and behavioral aspects. The primary contribution would be the compensation of a leadership behavior tempering the shortcomings and enhancing the existing abilities. The second contribution is to examine organizational capital methods associated with human resource management practices serving contingents to reinforce the mastery of tasks of COBSBSs. Using the results of a survey of a hospitality service comprising leadership staff and COBSBS employees, we offer ourselves the perspective of further understanding the relationships of empowerment and interaction reacting to the organizational environment. By understanding this, we offer a unique opportunity to restructure and assess organizational transformation, thereby acquiring a solid foundation for an organization's survival.

We develop a conceptual model in **Figure 1** which establishes the relationship between the independent variable which is LCOBSBS and the dependent variable Service quality mediated by three contingents namely Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief and Leadership support.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Leadership Customer-Oriented Boundary Spanning Behavior and Service Quality

We use the actor-centered approach to examine the behavior of a leader, which is a flexible structure, which fluctuates from day to day. We acknowledge that the behavior of individuals' customer-oriented boundaries spanning can vary between people and may influence the behavior of individuals across different domains. Recent research has highlighted that COBSBS frontline service employees face frustration at work (De Clercq et al., 2019), emotional exhaustion (Yusuf et al., 2020), role-stressors (Chien et al., 2021). Strategies and management implications for alleviating these role-hindrances lie with leadership. Generally speaking, leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning is a concept that refers to the ability of project leaders in firms to effectively manage internal and external collaborations to accomplish organizational goals (Takanashi & Lee, 2019). Given the immeasurable influx of writings on leadership identity and personality in the literature, the notion of leadership follows an extrapolative line and is constantly regenerating. Likewise, the difference of opinion that has haunted people's minds for decades as to whether one was born a leader or one becomes one is useless to address it in this research. And the reason is very simple: the social sciences, like the exact sciences, no longer bother to find out how a concept is made, but rather how this concept could contribute to the field in which it is used. Therefore, it is appropriate to affirm that one is neither born nor becomes a leader. Leadership is a process of learning and transformation aimed at self-transcendence, impacting others in order to achieve the implementation of specific and general objectives.

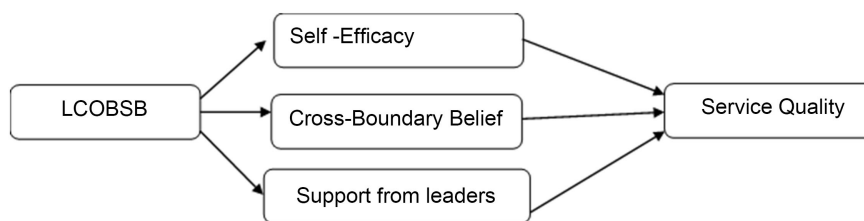


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

The leader's primary responsibility is interaction supervision and provision of job-related resources. For example, transformational leadership, which is a type of leadership style that focuses on motivating and inspiring employees to achieve higher levels of performance (Berkovich & Eyal, 2021), changes the nonchalant disposition of employees into one of model employees full of vigor, which creates well-being (Arnold, 2017) and a citizen behavior organization (Mi et al., 2019). Transformational leaders also emphasize the importance of developing relationships with their followers in order to create trust and loyalty among them. This kind of leader typically has strong communication skills which they use effectively when interacting with others in order to build consensus around ideas or decisions being made within the organization. Effective leaders provoke a desire enabling employees to have strong internal-external nexus of ties for job-fulfillment (Baroudi et al., 2022). Furthermore, if the forms of leadership are multiple, so are the leading styles, task and goal orientations, dependent on situations and organizational perception. For example, Servant leadership, which focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong, is essentially based on socialization that gives the employee an ease of knowledge sharing and self-development. Authentic leadership which refers to the concept that focuses on the leader's self-awareness and understanding of how they derive meaning from their environment. (Gardner et al., 2021) fosters moral responsibility to lead alongside a focus on employee self-regulation. Typically, influential leadership, which is based on a type of leadership that has the ability to influence and motivate people (Ly, 2020), will facilitate the greatest orientation of distribution of responsibility to enable employees to weave external networks. It involves inspiring, motivating, guiding and directing others in order to achieve desired goals or objectives.

The leader could show the way forward, forge the mindset of employees so that they have an active position with a view to including a multiple approach (Wickson et al., 2006), this implies task-oriented activities, scouting, empowering, encourages the degree of self-efficacy (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Maddux & Gosselin, 2012), and intrinsic motivation, Cross-boundary behavior (Sliwinski et al., 2018; Locke et al., 1981) and support from leader (Scott, 2020). In doing so, customers value increases (Chavez et al., 2016).

However, to accomplish these role and extra-role behavior in an organization, it is imperative to hire prosocial employees called COBSBS. In this case, what do we mean by Leadership Customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior?

The main characteristics of customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior include: being proactive in anticipating and responding to customers' needs; demonstrating empathy towards customers by understanding their feelings, concerns, and motivations; showing respect for the individual differences among customers while providing consistent service standards across all interactions; taking ownership over resolving any issues that arise during a customer interaction or transaction quickly and efficiently without passing blame onto others (Bayighomog & Araslı, 2019). Accordingly, leader customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior appropriate management improves frontline service employees' performances and recommendable behaviors. This means providing COBSBS with adequate training, so they are able to provide excellent customer experiences, as well as ensuring there is a good working environment where employees feel motivated and valued. Additionally, leaders need to demonstrate the right behavior when interacting with customers in order for their team members to follow suit, such as being proactive in order to satisfy customer's needs. It should also be added that it is a rational influence and power relationship exerted on the COBSBSs in order to maximize the quality-of-service delivery. Leadership's performing delivery approach will create a transformative behavior since the role of COBSBSs relies primarily on service delivery, internal influence, and external representation behaviors (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Chien et al., 2021). The first option which is service delivery concerns serving customers in a flexible, courteous, conscientious and responsive manner. Internal influence responds to a showing initiative communicating to the firm and co-workers to improve service delivery. As for the third dimension which could be very important, it is aimed at advocating to outsiders the organization's image, goods and services (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Bettencourt et al., 2005). LCOBSBS foster behavior for learning, enable employees to gain knowledge through training, inculcate them to acquire and accept cross-functional behavior which gives them further confidence and contribute to a mastery of relational collaboration with customers.

Based on reinforcement theory (Estes, 1969), behaviors are strengthened when they lead to positive outcomes, such as receiving praise or reward, while negative consequences like punishment will reduce the likelihood of repeating those same behaviors in the future. In LCOBSBS context, this theory not only allows employees to focus on duty orientation, but also to avoid behaviors that are detrimental to the reputation of the organization. In addition, in order to effectively coordinate and reconcile external and internal actors, leaders must continuously exert great effort to coordinate the different objectives, tasks and timeline of each party, while ensuring that all relevant rules are taken into account and that potential customers are expected to meet their expectations (Van Meerkerk & Edelenbes, 2020), which will considerably improve the perception of service quality, given that employees by perpetuating this action of the leader will be up to their task. Furthermore, Cognitive learning theory illustrates on what basis

people acquire, store and use knowledge. Cognitive learning theory refers to the idea that humans learn by observing others' behavior or through direct instruction from an authority figure such as a teacher or parent or supervisor (Nabi & Prestin, 2017). Correspondingly, in line with this theory, the leader customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior provides direction to followers by setting goals, providing feedback on performance, modeling desired behavior and offering rewards for successful completion of tasks. In turn, with the employees' willingness to align under the leader's directives, an impression of improved service quality will be felt at the customer level.

The COBSBS s perform several activities, namely sales person interaction with customers, external business negotiators, marketing operation, marketing and popularization of new-products developed, organization and customer supplier relationship, etc. Because they occupy a centric-position halfway between the organization and the stockholders (Gao & Li, 2021), and that the supervision of the leader will have a positive impact and facilitate service orientation, the implementation of LCOBSBS will encourage service-oriented citizenship behaviors (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020), resulting in service quality (Qiu et al., 2019). The increased competitiveness in which organizations fight mercilessly pushes us to take an interest in quality of service in order to understand performance. Service quality is the ability to provide courteous and responsible responses in accordance with customer expectations. An organization by implementing service quality as its warhorse to promote its products will have an asset of visibility with customers. The COBSBS s by getting involved in a line of quality service improvement will have to contribute to customer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2021; Jung & Yoon, 2020) and repeat purchase intentions (Wilson et al., 2008).

Service quality is also the satisfaction of user needs following the various services provided by the company. According to numerous studies, the improvement of service quality is dependent on many behavioral and operational aspects (Ju et al., 2019; Alikaj et al., 2021), namely employees well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018), leadership's influence and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Qiu et al., 2019), work engagement (Wang & Tseng, 2019), job demands resources (Kaiser et al., 2020). Given that COBSBS s operate in an environment of in-role behavior and extra-role behavior (Schepers & Van der Borgh, 2020), it is essential that there is a transformative process by which the leader draws on to reinvigorate, support the employees.

In this context-fitting where the leader relies on his influence to combine motivation and performance, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Leadership Customer-oriented BSBs has a significant impact on Service quality.

2.2. The Mediating Effects of Self-Efficacy, Cross-Boundary Belief and Leadership Support

2.2.1. Self-Efficacy

Management practices include the transmission of knowledge, sharing of new

knowledge, and team collaboration. Many studies have found that the acquisition of new skills is beneficial for the organization, since it grows quickly, adapts to difficulties, and increased productivity emerges (Batt, 2002; Combs et al., 2006; Gardner et al., 2011; Jiang et al., 2012; Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Lepak et al., 2006; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Among the most successful companies in the field of knowledge-acquisition management, research has shown that it is generally organizations that are able to attract quality talent will undoubtedly generate a good income. In recent years, many studies have recommended that different organizations implement employees with the qualities of customer-oriented boundary spanners (Kane & Levina, 2017). They are the exposed showcases of their organization, since their employee functions within the company allow them to represent its values and objectives to external parties. They pick up on the criticisms and suggestions made by customers. They receive information from clients and pass it on to the organization (Korschun, 2015). This constitutes a considerable boon for the company to rely on them to improve the level of service and gain in efficiency. (Rafi & Saeed, 2019; Hon & Lui, 2016) stated that when customer-oriented boundary spanners are interacting with customers with diverse needs, the attitude of the service employee is likely to be an important determinant affecting service performance.

Consequently, the tools to be used by the leader, how and when to use them to increase autonomy, responsibility and knowledge practices may have determined the success or failure of some companies. When the aspects of wanting to guide, act on employees are well identified and put to good use the expected result will be materialized by a palpable performance. Orientation and efficiency are part of the integral system of task performance (Zhang et al., 2022; Hulshof et al., 2020). This strategy to implement ability is logically associated with the notion of self-efficacy.

Many previous studies have found that the acquisition and reinforcement of skills is beneficial for the organization (Cayır & Ulupınar, 2021). Self-efficacy is defined as “*beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations or action*” (Bandura, 1995: p. 2). Self-efficacy is a combination of learning engagement, competence-enhancement, cognitive behavior, and performance attainment. Reviewing research literature on social cognitive theory developed by Bandura & Adam (1977), social learning theory Rotter (1954) and Conservation of Resource (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), Self-efficacy is a performance-enhancing which include psychological and behavioral factors influencing variable outcome. According to the social cognitive theory of (Bandura, 1993), two essential points characterize the concept of self-efficacy: outcome expectancy (to achieve successfully a task) and self-efficacy expectancy (behavioral skills and capabilities). By referring to the theory of Conservation of Resource (which is defined as based on the tenet that individuals are motivated to protect their current resources and acquire new resources Halbesleben et al., 2014), self-efficacy is an important element of psychological

capital (a set of resources a person can use to help improve their performance on the job and their success) allowing the employee to maintain a dynamic of confidence and of capability (Raub & Liao, 2012). Because employees, and more specifically COBSBSs, by naturally fulfilling their role, are subject to loss of resources (stress, anxieties, bad-mouth, burnout, etc.) (Akinola et al., 2019), COR has demonstrated that a resource investment is essential to compensate for this loss of emotion labor. Moreover, an involvement of leadership practices would be more productive for the mastery of business environment. Leadership management in self-efficacy is based on the employees self-enhancing performance mechanism (De Clercq et al., 2018). Consistent with the idea that the work environment is responsible for employment conditions, to mobilize cognitive resources with special tasks in order to reinforce driving motivation from self-efficacy, leadership situational approach will have a positive impact on workplace and job outcome (Shamim et al., 2019).

Several studies have recently focused on the notion of self-efficacy in leadership context (Şahin & Gülşen, 2022; Maenhout et al., 2021). Bush et al. (2021), for example, mentions that the managerial participation of leadership bringing personal pursuit development and mastery accomplishment are valuable for the organization. However, there has been little discussion about self-efficacy enhancement in COBSBS context, especially since the environment and the situational nature of their job require great task competence and expertise in order to improve the customer service (Wu et al., 2021). One of the bases on which this research is based to include self-efficacy in the COBSBS context is that by acquiring several tools (mastery of their function, customer segmentation need, conversation flow, leadership supportive empowerment, learning opportunity and compensation scale), firstly COBSBSs morally accept their role which is to weave and reinforce ties between their organization and external stakeholders (Bayighomog & Araslı, 2019), generate better well-being and citizenship behaviors (Schepers & Van der Borgh, 2020). Secondly, they will voluntarily engage in creating tips and ideas enabling a positive display of attitude and emotion behavior towards customers, thereby conducive to the environment service quality delivery. Third, by gaining a solid foundation of skill in their responsibility, a psychological arousal of inspirational influence manifests in their inclination. This inspirational influence means they personally commit for the popularization of the core ideas of their organization with the stakeholders, putting forward first the interests of their organization before their personal interests. Conversely, COBSBSs may be motivated by the perceived ability to perform (Zhao & Qin, 2021), therefore maintaining all the situational specific resources and psychological behavioral provided, there would be factors elements influencing positive outcome in regarding service quality delivery.

2.2.2. Cross-Boundary Belief

The function of LCOBSBSs is strategically linked to that of instilling certain

principles of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCBB). By having a willingness to engage in the cross-boundary belief process COBSBSs will not only increase their level of empowerment, autonomy and competence, but also maximizes the productivity of their service.

By understanding the values, the bases on which their organization operates, employees inevitably embark on a path of cross boundary belief, given that they have already formed themselves as COBSBS. This involvement of LCOBSBS on the cross-boundary belief initiative engagement can turn challenges into opportunity. Thus, these employees get involved in the cause of the organization (Wu et al., 2021; Schepers & Van der Borgh, 2020).

In a working environment characterized by the beneficial contribution of customer-oriented boundary spanners, being up to the task or capable is sometimes not enough, practical reality recommends having the full support of the superior, since COBSBSs act as the interface between the organization and external clients, and often experience frustration (De Clercq et al., 2019). Leadership's support could be defined as *being employee's global beliefs concerning the extent to which the supervisor values their contribution and cares about their well-being* (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988).

COBSBSs have the advantage of having access to internal and external information of the organization, which allows them to be permeable and bridge ties easily. Essentially, this implication of linking with the outside would be more effective if they adopt an attitude of cross-boundary belief. Literally, cross-boundary belief is both the acceptance and the manifestation of offering the services of the organization beyond the circumscribed limits of its tasks. At the same time Wieseke et al. (2007) emphasizes the degree of identification of COBSBSs will determine the willingness to venture into a process of collaboration and outsourcing in order to achieve a higher vision. This concept of cross-boundary belief is reinforced by the idea that companies are not enough on their own, so an agent is needed who could have the will to provide a production of external network, information, insights into how service quality could be further improved. This task consists of creating a communication network, collaborating with customers by involving them in the process of improving service quality, and being ambassadors of the organization. In this sense, the COBSBSs are becoming key players in the user contribution system. A user contribution system is a mechanism of aggregating people's contributions or behaviors in ways that are beneficial to the company.

If we refer to Commitment System Theory (CST) (Klein et al., 2022), the cross-boundary belief could be articulated around three aspects, namely affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. The first is the emotional attachment to doing actions that can facilitate customer's adherence on behalf of the organization. The second is a conviction of moral obligation to continue to perform one's task. As for the third, it depends on the responsibility of the organization to provide job-resources and supportive leader-

ship for a better dynamism of boundary scanning orientation. Furthermore, COBSBSs by learning about customer needs, will feed power conditions to demand requirements, which could contribute to the service improvement process (Chen, 2016). Several leadership practices can reinforce the cross-boundary belief such as perceived employee well-being, organizational citizen behaviors, perceived leadership support. According to social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), employees pay back the same ransom depending on whether it is perceived as an advantage or a disadvantage. So, their dimensions of engagement in the cross-boundary belief also reflect their satisfaction and the quality of work conditions (Kara et al., 2018). From the perspective of social identity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000), and social capital, the cross-boundary belief involves social interactions, development of relationships in order to bring suggestions to mind for organizational consideration. In this, the COBSBS creates a bridge of alliance between the customers and the company (Collins & Butler, 2020). The diversity of contacts allows them seizing opportunities to acquire transparent information in order to achieve organizational objectives.

2.2.3. Support from the Leader

Leadership's support is a determining psychological factor influencing organizational performance (Li et al., 2011). Leadership or supervisor support describes the degree to which individuals perceive that their supervisor voluntarily provides resources and assistance (Perrot et al., 2014). Perceived support from leader is a psychological behavior assisting positive psychological development and well-being, thus facilitating the behavior response of employees in the sales operation process (Schwepker & Ingram, 2016). Considering that our study is part of a perspective within global leadership approach, we consider it essential to demonstrate the competition of supervisory support climate (Tang & Tsaun 2016) on customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior. In their job-related aspiration, employees are in constant pursuit of care, knowledge, skills, and motivational states, meaning (Inceoglu et al., 2018), therefore an organization establishing a leadership vocation of welfare and leadership's support will contribute to employees' prosocial and organizational citizenship behaviors (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019), a prerequisite for service quality performance (Park, 2018). Responding to calls for the clarification of the validity of perceived supervisor support (Park & Jang, 2017; Zhang et al., 2014), this study is based on the social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) and state as feedback system theory (Nifadkar et al., 2012), to advance the concept of the relationship between leadership's support and COBSBS in service quality achievement.

Social exchange theory posits that one party exerts in ways that are beneficial to another party and creates a relationship for future reciprocity of implicit obligation (Chen & Wu, 2020). Accordingly, by providing a work environment full of vitality, caring, and organizational justice, leadership satisfies certain socio-economic needs of employees (Kraimer et al., 2011), which obliges them to reci-

procate this effect received on customers (Wang et al., 2021). Noting the crucial role of COBSBS in-role behavior and extra-role behavior, seeking information, it is necessary to provide social support to employees, especially in this post-Covid period where research has identified a high number of stress levels among employees (Yang et al., 2021). While Social exchange theory replicates the same effect on customers, state as feedback system theory helps shape employee moods. State as feedback system theory posits that individuals' affective experiences can influence and shape their subsequent behaviors and attitudes as they actually experience the emotions (Hutcherson et al., 2008; Nifadkar et al., 2012). Indeed, when the COBSBS s face role-hindrances like such as stress and burnout, they fall into depletion. It is by perceiving psychological and mental support that they cooperate and agree to react appropriately and display positive emotions. The State as feedback system is like a circuit system between Supervisor-employee-customer: the first provides an emotional dimension and a base of mental security, which allows the second to be flexible and to anticipate in order to present a positive emotion to the customer.

Limited attempts have been made in the past to uncover the existing relationship between leadership's support and COBSBS with a view to service quality delivery. The relevant literature focused on topics such as leadership's role of compassion (Farrell et al., 2009) leadership's spiritual well-being (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2022) perceived supervisor support (Chen & Wu, 2020). Leadership's support is identifying among others important factors contributing to employees' well-being and organizational citizenship behavior engagement (Paredes et al., 2021).

The theory of leadership on the enrichment of quality service has given birth to different forms of leadership (Yukl et al., 2002) to be adopted when faced with a given situation, among which serving leadership and empowering leadership (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Van Dierendonck, 2011); transformational and charismatic leadership (Fry, 2003) and others. For instance, transformational leadership, as opposed to transactional leadership, which is part of a cognitive approach orients employees strategically to acquire knowledge, facilitate the sharing of experiences and guide them towards the accomplishment of a collective task (Aryee et al., 2012; Demir, 2008).

Curiously, how to ensure that the leader by adopting for example a transformational posture contributes to the profitability of the performance (Reza, 2019; Yammarino et al., 1993) becomes ipso facto the requirements of research studies for the improvement of performance of service quality. This view leads us to take an interest in the theory of leadership focused on the LCOBSBs as a factor that generates performance, because taking an interest in quality service is important to improve and boost performance (Augustyn et al., 2021).

Today, in many organizations, we find COBSBSs (Schotter et al., 2017). COBSBSs are employees who engage in a relationship of communication, exchange, and interaction between their organization and customers in order to

ensure customer satisfaction. The network they weave allows them to obtain a source of information that will be beneficial for the company. Traditionally, COBSBSs are associated with three types of functions: service delivery, internal Influence, and external representation (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Bettencourt et al., 2005). Their function, which places them at the forefront of the customer universe, means that they are confronted with many challenges, which leads us to focus on leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior. LCOBSBSs balances difficulties and strategies for the employee to be able to respond to customer satisfaction, such as responsiveness and empathy (e.g., Pakurár et al., 2019; Howcroft, 1991), which normally performs a function in performance (Vora et al., 2007).

Therefore, it is obvious to agree that the quality service must be at the center of the preoccupations of all the organizations, since the manner in which it is rendered can be an asset or an obstacle to the development of the company.

As the main task is to increase the productivity of its employees, the leader must also create an environment of collaboration not only between the different employees but also between the different units of the teams. This view will create an interaction allowing to obtain a perception of competence sharing, which will give a clear improvement of the quality of the service. Since the value that customers place on service is based on the courtesy, personal attentiveness, responses and keeping promises (Yarimoglu, 2014; Schneider & Bowen, 1985), clear evidence has been shown that the employees responsible for delivering these kinds of service should need for motivational influence in order to carry out their mission, especially in our case of customer-oriented boundary spanners who are on the front line in the sales or the conversation process. A leader who has a sense of social representation or social facilitation will transmit this passion for influence to groups, which in turn will produce emulators within them. Therefore, the power of emulation is only the direct or indirect effect of the motivational stimulus. Thus, the motivation-oriented leadership orientation becomes a performance driver among employees who are customer-oriented boundary spanners (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019).

In line with this idea, we believe that within the framework of LCOBSBSs, this support is decisive in the efficiency of the quality service. Numerous studies have repeatedly confirmed the positive correlation that exists between leadership's support and the strengthening of COBSBSs (Farmanesh et al., 2021; Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019), however, including leadership's support as a mediating variable in the cases of LCOBSBSs remain rare. It is because the COBSBSs are the actors of the emergence of a visibility of the company that it is imperative that they obtain the support of the leadership for not only their own job satisfaction (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2001; Kim et al., 2009; Paulin et al., 2006) but also for the performance of quality service. LCOBSBSs reconcile customer expectations with employee professionalism by helping employees not to push back against unfortunate circumstances, but to tame them and advise them on future chal-

lenges. By strengthening their ability to socialize with customers, their level of emotional and communicational resilience, the LCOBSBSs will instinctively generate a kind of support among his or her employees that will be beneficial for performance (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). LCOBSBSs affect the employee's personality to be able to cope with certain difficulties and at the same time can be reciprocal (Wang et al., 2005). In this case the counseling, the sharing of feelings of intimacy, sympathy and especially coaching on the adaptability of such a situation will be determining for the perspective of performance. By evaluating the well-being of this psychological need (Wang et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2011) showed that the quality of this relational support can anticipate to minimize the difficulties encountered and could be a lever to obtain a better result at work. Based on these empirically proven evidences, we propose:

Hypothesis 2a: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between LCOBSBSs and service quality.

Hypothesis 2b: Cross-boundary belief mediates the relationship between LCOBSBSs and service quality.

Hypothesis 2c: Support from the leader mediates the relationship between LCOBSBSs and service quality.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants and Procedures

Each year approximately 62.9 million visitors come to Beijing, but due to the pandemic, this number has dropped by 3.2 million in 2020 (source Travel visa). Beijing is the second largest in China, after Shanghai in terms of population, accounting for most of the 5-star hotels. This visibility gives credit to our study. Moreover, we set our sights on 5-star hotels, since they often include managers-leaders, frontline COBSBS employees, then the number of staff that these hotels employ is significant, therefore reflecting an image representative of our study. For the protection of employees' rights and personal health information, we proceeded for Ethics Review Committee, an equivalent of Research Ethics Board (REB), approval and informed consent for the study before we started recruiting participating organizations and inviting their employees to participate. As a result, data collection began after Ethics Review Committee permission and informed consent. Participants were recruited from 5-star grand hotels in Beijing, covering three types of Customer-oriented boundary spanning positions: external representation, internal influence and service delivery. Our hotels' management has given us permission to collect data from their Supervision and Frontline Customer-oriented Boundary Sensors. Two weeks apart, time I and time II, self-administered questionnaires were distributed. To match the time I and time II surveys, each responder was given a code. Key decision-makers (such as unit directors, human resources directors, and chief operating officers) were contacted and asked for help in identifying and recruiting leader-subordinate relationships within organizations. Following the identification of volunteers, a pro-

cedure of connecting leaders with willing subordinates was carried out. When several subordinates were matched with a leader, only one was chosen to participate in the study. COBSBS scale and demographic profile components were included in the period I instrumented. The leadership scale included in the Time II instrument managed three dimensions: self-efficacy, cross-boundary belief, and leadership support. According to Podsakoff et al. (2003), such techniques should be implemented to mitigate the risk of common method bias. Two subject-matter expert academicians proficient in both languages translated the instruments from English to Chinese and back to English (Sperber, 2004). Data from 183 independent leader subordinate dyads was collected as a result of these processes. Firstly, we sent questionnaire to 252 peoples. We received back 183. 68 responses are outlier and not properly filled. Total response rate is 72%. Sample size was taken from the past studies (Martins et al., 2023). The rate of engagement of leaders ranged from 42 to 95 percent among the seven organizations from which data was obtained, with an average of 61 percent participation from the ranks of leadership. The average age of the leaders was 46, and 68% of them were female. 19% said they worked in “executive/upper management”, 40% in “middle management”, and 31% in “lower level/supervisory” positions. They had an average of 8.67 years at the company. The average age of the subordinates was 44, with 77% of them being female. The average duration of subordinates in the organization was 8.45 years, with an average of 4.33 years working for their current boss.

3.2. Measurements

LCOBSBS

Leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behaviors scale was adopted from Sperber (2004) and includes 26 items nested into five subscales and assessed using 5-point Likert-type anchors (strongly disagree to strongly agree). In previous studies (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019; Usman et al., 2021), this instrument has shown high psychometric features and has been widely used to measure leadership by approach. We collected data on LCOBSBS from supervisors to produce a more rigorous test of our hypothesized model, thereby testing an evaluation of their interaction relationship. It will be divided into four different parts. The first part will solicit relevant personal information, such as participants' age, gender, job tenure. The second part will measure participants' perceptions and expectations of leadership management on service quality. This step assesses the attitudes and relationships characterizing the leader and employees. “I lend my skills to the self-efficacy of self-enforcement of personnel devoted to my organization's service excellence,” for example. I'm in charge of my staff, manage their boundary-spanning activities, and truly care about and support them in their task-delivery. Cronbach's alphas for each dimension were 0.91, 0.86, and 0.85, respectively/df = 1.68, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97, IFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.054 and SRMR = 0.045) and met convergent and discriminant va-

lidity requirements (**Table 2**), which provided identical fit indices as the first-order model. We used the data imputation function in AMOS (v.26) to produce the first-order factor scores, which we employed in accordance with earlier research (Usman et al., 2021). This will be according to Likert scale a five-point scale range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to be selected as their responses.

COBSBS

Bettencourt et al. (2005) 13-item's scale was used to assess staff COBSBS. This scale was recently verified in the hospitality industry and captures both task and extra-role performance for service organization employees (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019). "I'm actively engaged in our values organization, which includes images such as serving clients in a responsive manner and striving to deliver good services" (service delivery), "I take the initiative to communicate with the company and coworkers in order to improve service delivery performance." (Internalized influence), and "I freely undertake to gather first-hand information, discover specific consumer demands, solicit their feedback, and compel them to adhere to our organization's principles." (Representation from the outside).

Service quality:

A single question from the 2001 VA employee survey was used to gauge an employee's perception of service quality. The psychometric features of single-item measures for measuring overall quality ratings have been demonstrated (Harter et al., 2002). In the 2001 employee survey, there was only one question: Overall, how would you rank my ability to provide high-quality services to customers? (5 = Excellent; 4 = Very Good; 3 = Good; 2 = Fair; 1 = Poor). The alpha coefficient for this scale was 0.90.

Self-efficacy

More elements that potentially predict self-efficacy (mastery-related goals, training, mastery of one's surroundings trading, linguistic persuasion) had been introduced. Riggs et al. (1994) developed a 10-item scale to assess self-efficacy. "I have all of the abilities needed to carry out my job extremely well," "I am an expert at my profession," and "Most people in my field of work can accomplish this job better than I can," were some of the statements. Cronbach's internal consistency was 0.76.

Cross-boundary belief

Participants in this study were asked to express their degree of belief in where cross-boundary will push them, namely their level of collaboration and commitment within the organization. Then the efforts deployed to reinforce their level of customer-oriented OCB, beneficial partnerships for the organization but also for the customers. "Often I invest myself in my role is no longer required", "my boundary position requires me to be an ambassador for my organization with customers" were some of the statements. Cronbach's internal consistency was 0.76.

Leadership's support

To examine the extent to which employees perceive that leadership helps them emotionally and professionally, we used a nine-item scale established by Ladd and Henry (2000) with 7-point Likert anchors. “It provides me comfort and tempers my moods when I’m on the verge of tiredness,” said one sample item. “My supervisor is concerned about my well-being,” and “My supervisor is willing to support me in dealing with service quality delivery, particularly during challenging times.”

(The Cronbach’s alpha value is 0.75.)

Variables under control

In line with previous research (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019; Darvishmotevali et al., 2018), we adjusted for gender, education, age, and organizational tenure. Regardless of whether these variables were included or not, the overall results remained significant, indicating that the findings were relatively robust.

4. Results

In order to analyze Multiple Regression Analysis, SPSS software was employed to test the proposed hypotheses. Hypothesis1 positively predicts that Leadership Customer-oriented BSBs has a significant impact on Service quality. The results of this analysis show that Leadership Customer-oriented BSB positively influences Service quality $F(0.246)$, $p < 0.00$, this result clearly direct the positive effect of LC-BSB, since the coefficient is significant.

Then we notice that the independent variable L-COBSB has a significant impact on mediating variable AMO, the latter is presented in the form of Cross-border efficacy, cross-boundary belief, support from leadership. The unstandardized coefficient, B_1 , for L-COBSBS is equal to 0.1139, which can be interpret as a contributor to a positive influence on boundary-spanners and could counter-balance their lack of experience dealing with unexpected situations.

The link between the mediator variable AMO and the dependent variable Service Quality is significant. When performing a service quality regression analysis on both AMO and L-COBSBS, we notice that the coefficient between L-COBSBS AMO and Service Quality remains significant, $F(0.246)$, $p < 0.00$.

Finally, the approach of Baron and Kenny (1986) makes it possible to verify the partial or complete nature of the mediation by examining the significance of the direct links between the independent variable L-COBSBS and the independent one Service quality. Using the Sobel test also noticed the significance of the mediating effect. The results of this analysis are presented in the figure. The figure shows that the link between LCOBSBS and service quality is more significant after the introduction of the AMO mediator variable, whereas it was during the first step in Kenny and Baron’s approach. The mediation by self-efficacy, cross-boundary belief, leadership support, is therefore complete between L-COBSB and Service quality. Mediation effect explains in **Table 1**.

In order to show that the addition of the moderating effect improves the predictive validity of the model (Aiken et al., 1991), we carried out the PROCESS

Table 1. Test of mediation effects.

	Bootstrapping estimate	Percentile 95% CI
*Total indirect effects	0.13	[0.76, 0.46]
*Total indirect via L-COBSBS	0.009	[0.002, 0.025]
*Total indirect via Cross-boundary efficacy	0.212	[0.170, 0.259]
*indirect effects via cross-border belief	0.216	[0.173, 0.262]
*indirect effects via leadership support	0.101	[0.071, 0.137]
*indirect effects via Service quality	0.010	[0.002, 0.029]

Macro regression developed by (Hayes, 2018) to demonstrate the statistical significance of the model. The analysis result show in the table shows that self-efficacy, cross-boundary belief, leadership support (the point estimate = 0.212 95% CI = [0.002, 0.025], 216 95% CI = [0.173, 0.262], 101 95% CI = [0.072, 0.137], marginally significant) and L-COBS (the point estimate = 0.010, 95% CI = [0.002, 0.029] influence service quality. The measure for the indirect effect of L-COBSBS on service quality is significant. In this case the effect size was 0.1324 with a 95% confidence interval which did not include zero; that is to say the effect was significantly greater than zero at $\alpha = 0.05$.

The model provided mediated support stating that AMO is a predictor of moderator service quality.

We perform a secondary analysis using correlation matrix (including means standards deviations and correlations) to confirm the study's result (Zientek & Thomson, 2009). Conducting multiple tests gives us a solid foundation and increased probability and at the same time comforts us in the hypothesis of our assertion, hence we conducting matrix analyses to enhance our findings.

Our results were consistent with the theory of (Chang & Chen, 2011) assuming that employee work-related skills and competences are the main determinant of employee productivity through leadership's encouragement. The result shows a significant positive and strong relationship between L-COBSBS, Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, Support from leader and Service quality. The mean value of L-COBSBS, Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, Support from leader and Service quality, Age, Gender, Education, Tenure and Dyadic tenure are respectively mean = 4.0355 with SD = 0.58; mean = 3.9733 with SD = 0.58973; mean = 3.9215 with SD = 0.66394; mean = 3.6921 with SD = 0.73165; mean = 4.386 with SD = 0.5062; mean = 28.5 with SD = 9.347; mean = 1.6 with SD = 0.491; mean = 2.18 with SD = 0.888; mean = 50.47 with SD = 85.751; mean = 27.25 with SD = 44.637. The differences in the means between L-COBSBS, Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, Support from leader and Service quality were about 1.5 with small effect size. Another remark is that age, gender, level of education, and tenure more or less impact the correlation link that exists between the variables, which will result in a considerable effect on the result of the performance, for example the greater the tenure's level of responsibility, the greater the level of

mastery and individual performance. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels.

Next, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in AMOS 26 to test the construct validity. We use a baseline model that included the key five constructs namely LCOBSBS, Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, support from Leadership and Service quality. The results show that the baseline model fit the data well: ($\chi^2 = 661.432$, $df = 367$, $CFI = 0.922$, $TLI = 0.914$, $RMSEA = 0.048$, $SRMR = 0.048$). Note that $CFI \geq 0.90$; $RMSEA \leq 0.08$ (Froehlich et al., 2016). Hence, the entire factors loadings were significant, demonstrating convergent validity is acceptable. All details of CFA in **Table 2**.

Table 3 shows Results for Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis. As a rule, although theorists claim that the chi-square (χ^2) test should not be significant, it does shed some light on the overview of analysis and the normal distribution. The improvement in goodness of fit that the CFI has on the model is 0.922. (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011) believe that a good fit is indicated by a value greater than 0.95. So, we could argue that the fit is acceptable. After that we have the TLI which is 0.914. A value of 0.95 indicates good model fit Tucker-Lewis Index (Lewis et al., 1973). For the $SRMR = 0.048$. According to previous studies, a value less than 0.05 assumes a good fit of the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Finally, with the RMSEA which is 0.048, we can confirm the suitability of the model. Since a value less than 0.05 shows an excellent fit of the model (Hooper et al., 2008). **Table 4** shows the regression analysis results.

5. Discussion

5.1. Theoretical Implications

The contribution of this present study is significant in many aspects and will undoubtedly contribute to the influence of the literature on customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior. We had combined research on leadership and positive attitudes which will influence the improvement of the quality of service, then introducing three contingents of AMO as mediating effects. The results not only showed that the LCOBSBS has a positive impact on the quality of service

Table 2. Results for the confirmatory factor analysis.

Models	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2 (\Delta df)$	TLI	CFI	$RMSEA$	$SRMR$
Model 1: LCOBSBS; SE; BE; SUP; SQ	661.432	367	—	0.914	0.922	0.048	0.048
Model 2: LCOBSBS + SE; BE; SUP; SQ	851.203	371	189.771(4)	0.861	0.873	0.061	0.059
Model 3: LCOBSBS + SE + BE; SUP; SQ	984.359	374	322.927(7)	0.825	0.838	0.068	0.065
Model 4: LCOBSBS + SE + BE + SUP; SQ	1455.905	376	794.473(9)	0.691	0.714	0.09	0.094
Model 5: LCOBSBS + SE + BE + SUP + SQ	1885.113	377	1223.681(10)	0.57	0.601	0.107	0.113

Note: All alternative models were compared with the hypothesized model (i.e. Model 1). LCOBSBS = Leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior, SE = Self efficacy, BE = Belief, SUP = Support, SQ = Service quality. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 3. Results for descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Leadership customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior	4.0355	0.58773	—									
2. Self-efficacy	3.9733	0.58973	0.405**	—								
3. Belief	3.9215	0.66394	0.515**	0.383**	—							
4. Support	3.6921	0.73165	0.342**	0.225**	0.314**	—						
5. Service quality	4.386	0.5062	0.333**	0.249**	0.243**	0.264**	—					
6. Age	28.5	9.347	-0.042	-0.02	-0.008	0.021	-0.057	—				
7. Gender	1.6	0.491	0.103	0.013	0.124*	0.097	0.165**	0.120*	—			
8. Education	2.18	0.888	-0.03	0.044	-0.033	0.131*	-0.019	-0.130*	-0.063	—		
9. Tenure	50.47	85.751	-0.046	0.025	0.004	0.035	-0.009	0.664**	0.117*	0.007	—	
10. Dyadic tenure	27.25	44.637	-0.004	0.023	-0.014	0.051	0.021	0.577**	0.074	0.005	0.622**	—

Note: ** $p < 0.01$ * $p < 0.05$.

Table 4. Regression and hypotheses results.

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	p-value	Hypotheses supported
H1	LCOBSB → Service quality	0.246	0.000	yes
H2a	Self-efficacy → LCOBSBSm → service quality	0.328	0.002	yes
H2b	Cross-boundary → LCOBSBS → service quality	0.287	0.014	yes
H2c	Support from the leader → LCOBSBSs → service quality	0.421	0.000	yes
R²	0.50			
F	15.788			

All hypotheses are accepted in **Table 4**. As our study significant level is less than 0.05. All results are significant.

but also that Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief, Support from leader significantly mediate LCOBSBS and service quality, hence the validity of empowerment and charismatic leadership on employees within a cross-border organization is no longer to be demonstrated (Knipfer et al., 2018; Chuang et al., 2016). This research is consistent with previous studies which combine leadership function with quality service through AMO (Salas-Vallina et al., 2021) or AMO as mediator functions (Demortier et al., 2014). Whether it is oriented towards religion (Manurung et al., 2019), spirituality (Farmanesh et al., 2021) or even with a simple vocation to contribute to the performance of COBSBS, leadership is more and more implanted within organizations, especially in the tourism and hotel industry (Chien et al., 2021; Farmanesh et al., 2021). In view of this tangible reality, we believe that COBSBS s will need a leader capable to reduce the burden of job stressors they face (Wang et al., 2021), orient them through coaching sessions to better adapt to clients' needs. Likewise, the three components of

the AMO which are Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief and Support from leader reinforce the leader's actions by strengthening the capacities of the COBSBS s in terms of aptitude to be able to manage their task of communication interaction and resilience in the work place. Traditionally, service quality is identified with customer satisfaction (Afthanorhan et al., 2019), which can be biased since many of the latent factors can be at the base of this performance, for example the role training (e.g., Woodside, 2020). So, by pushing our field of research, we thus discover another dimension to bear fruit in the performance of the quality of service. Summarizing, all three contingents of the AMO mediate the enhancement of service quality. Self-efficacy gives individual responsibility to being able to design and practice knowledge relating to the required task and relational skills. Cross-boundary belief comforts COBSBS s in their role by keeping them in a working position consistent with their vocation. And finally, Support from leader adjusts the work environment to the mental and psychological health of the employee by providing relief from the tribulations linked to the risks of the function of customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior. By sketching out this model, this research will make a further contribution in the vast ocean of LCOBSBS on the one hand, and on the other hand will strengthen our knowledge on possible performance of the quality of service.

5.2. Managerial Implications

In the present study, showing the correlation existing between LCOBSBS and service quality is of great importance for the practical implication. First, leader by engaging in customer-oriented BSB will play a crucial role in the action of employees to be able to play their role which is to serve customers for the benefit of the organization (Pryor & Henley, 2018). In addition, COBSBS with their role of ambassadors between the parent organization and to clients, these three elements of Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief and Support from leader can increase their autonomy of interaction. Therefore, the application of this study will have a considerable impact in solving the problems that employees often face. In the vast flood of literature on leadership emphasizing the conditions to facilitate the accomplishment of individual, and especially collective, tasks (Cullen-Lester, Maupin, & Carter, 2017), the prospect of combining cross-boundary behavior and efficiency remains a major issue for companies. Similarly, the leader's cognitive capacity to capture the insufficiencies linked to interactional tasks (for example lack of communication, absence of will, confusion on which task to concentrate) must be inherent in his vocation. Then detecting the COBSBS s who are adept at committing individually or as a team depending on the performance of their position would be critical in the practice of quality of service. The novices who would have felt disoriented in this new environment will absolutely need the support of the leadership to have a little openness in order to take their first step. So, permeability, whether individual or between different cross-boundary teams (Benoliel & Somech, 2015) will jumpstart the organizational objective. For

practical and technical managerial involvement in an organization where certain employees provide COBSBS, we recommend a leadership based on three pillars to optimize the performance of the quality service:

5.2.1. Business Case for Diversity

This notion is based on the idea that having a diverse workforce of all categories can bring many benefits to an organization. This includes increased creativity, better problem-solving skills, improved customer service and more effective decision making.

This is especially important. Based on Social Identification Theory, some social groups are particularly attracted by their likelihood to interact for the first time, since they feel that they will not have to face rejection, stigmatization, negative stereotyping or even neglect (e.g., elderly, disabled, gender or ethnic minority). Thus, having COBSBSs of all classifications in a structure is beneficial for the growth of the organization.

Diversity within COBSBSs also helps organizations attract top talent from different backgrounds and cultures which leads to greater innovation in products or services offered by the company. Additionally, it allows companies to tap into new markets with their offerings as well as create opportunities for growth through collaboration between employees of various backgrounds. Moreover, the leaders' customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior practical understanding must include the assessment of the practices, the decisions of the personnel, distributive and language justice, which include diversity and inclusion at the internal and external level of the organization.

5.2.2. A Friendly Environment

Given that the COBSBSs are in a high-contact environment, it is very likely that some employees invest in energy beyond their limit to satisfy the service quality. Therefore, a recognition, a reward would be heartwarming for their praiseworthy effort. This approach will have a great advantage if it is accompanied by leadership support, because as demonstrated in Hypothesis 2c, support from leader has a positive effect on the service quality.

5.2.3. The Right Employee at the Right Place

This study found a significant impact of cross-boundary belief on the delivery of service quality. Therefore, the COBSBSs, with the vocation of cross-boundary behavior should successfully fulfill their role of mediator between the organization and the outside. However, some previous and recent studies have shown that COBSBSs are not free from stress and role-overload related to their role (Wang et al., 2021; Chien et al., 2021). From this situation, the leader's assistance must be to sort out the employees who would be better able to concede the pressures, to resist deviant customers in order to perpetuate the culture of welcome and hospitality in the organization, especially that cross-boundary behavior is decisive for job performance (van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2020).

5.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Our model is based on a conceptualization of LCOBSBS providing employees with human and strategic resources to better engage in the process of delivering service quality. Our objective is to find mediating elements which will be beneficial not only for the quality of the performance related to the tasks but also for a harmony of cohesion between the expectations of the customers and the job satisfaction. Firstly, the strong correlation which exists between LCOBSBS and service quality corroborates the validity of our model. Then, the result of the multiple regression confirms our choice of the application of the three mediating contingents. However, some limitations of this research should be noticed. First, our model was regressed through multiple mediation analyzes (macro-PROCESS by Hayes, 2018). Future research should be conducted to take the investigations further, for example by including structured models such as SEM. Second, using two “programs” (SPSS and AMOS), we performed two correlation analyzes to verify the relevance of the regression. Assuming that there may be errors or biased results, additional analyses using others software to see the degrees of estimation will need to be performed. Thirdly, we had tested the three mediators of the AMO in a context of capacity building of the COBSBSs within an organization. Recourse to the choice of Self-efficacy, Cross-boundary belief and Support from leader is deliberate and depends on a judicious selection of variables when we know that the roles of COBSBS often revolve around these three elements. Further study with another dimension of organization and employees in different positions to corroborate or limit our result is therefore recommended. The mediating variables of AMO in a leadership context are decisive for a good achievement of performance. Beyond the very beneficial aspect of the delivery of quality of service, it is a whole mechanism of transformation and enhancement of skills that it germinates in the COBSBSs and which can be perpetuated in the long term. So, by placing an emphasis on these human resources practices, organizations can fill certain gaps observed in their functioning, especially in this new era of intense competition between companies. Another aspect is that COBSBSs mostly operate in the tourism and hotel industry (Taheri et al., 2019; Bayighomog & Arasli, 2019; Jung & Yoon, 2020; Farmanesh et al., 2021) and that research continues to stick on them a label of employees of hospitality. Today, with the increasingly changing work environment, this could be subject to value judgment, as COBSBSs are in many organizations in different positions. Therefore, future studies should focus on demonstrating another side of leadership customer-oriented, boundary spanning behavior, but one of which COBSBSs escape the traditionally culture of employees occupying places at the frontline of hotels and places of tourism for a comparative study, like for example in government institutions or private companies.

Finally, this study was carried out in China. Although there is a strong syncretism of labor codes and local culture with the rest of the world, especially with the West, the work ethic governing some organizations here might not be the

same in other countries and vice versa. Future research could be considered on a study of LCOBSBS in two organizations from different countries with dissimilar or heterogeneous cultures.

6. Conclusion

Many organizations develop strategic methods for their employees to be competitive, but this is often doomed to failure because the right person is lacking to coordinate and lead towards the goal. The LCOBSBS within a company combines situational responsibility and operational capacities intended to enhance their interaction skills for the benefit of a vitality of quality of service. This article, by digging in depth in a completely different direction from that of the previous studies, matures the facilitating aspects, the crucial practices incumbent on the leader as well as the regulatory representations of interpersonal negotiation leading to the outcome of a service quality expected by the organization. Thus, we dare to hope that this present study will have contributed to the emergence of a behavioral and cognitive practice aimed at preparing the employees for the current challenges of the clientele.

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Ethics Statements

This research study was conducted according to the Declaration of Helsinki guidelines. The Ethics Committee of the Beijing University of Technology has approved (protocol code 413-9 on 23 February 2023). The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Informed Consent

We have informed all consent before collection of data.

Data Availability Statement

Data can be obtained upon reasonable request.

Purpose

The COBSBSs play the role of prosocial employees, which constitute, among other things, a constant interaction between the organization and the outsider, information collection, relational activities and provide a high-quality service and serving customer in courteous manner. Likewise, the action of the leadership on the COBSBSs will guarantee an effective facility to be able to offer a quality service at the level of expectation. The aim of this study is the investigation of the contribution of the LCOBSBS on the quality of service and the mediating role of the AMO, in particular through three selective elements which are

Self-efficacy, Cross boundary belief, Support from leader.

Design/Methodology/Approach

Adopting a quantitative method, this study uses a sample of 183 independent leader frontline employees in the hospitality industry.

Findings

The research supported the mediating role of the three forms of AMO contingents, and the use of leadership impact on employees within a cross-boundary organization, beneficial for service quality performance.

Research Limitations/Implications

We use multiple mediations analyses to conduct our regression. Future research should be conducted to take the investigations further by including structured models such as SEM.

Practical Implications

An important implication of our study results suggests that organizations should place an emphasis on human resources and leadership practices to equip COBSBSs with the cognitive and behavioral capabilities in their role as frontline employees.

Originality/Value

These findings add to our understanding of the attitude that a leader should adopt in order to influence COBSBSs to improve their performance.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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