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**Customer Experience (CX), Employee Experience (EX), and Human Experience (HX):  
Introductions, Interactions, and Interdisciplinary Implications**

**Customer Experience (CX), Employee Experience (EX), and Human Experience (HX):  
Introductions, Interactions, and Interdisciplinary Implications**

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of what (service) experience is and examine it using three distinct perspectives: customer experience (CX), employee experience (EX), and human experience (HX).

**Design/methodology/approach.**

The present conceptualization blends the marketing and OB/HRM disciplines to clarify and reflect over the meaning of (service) experience. The marketing discipline illuminates the concept of CX, whereas the OB/HRM discipline illuminates the concept of EX. The concept of HX, which transcends CX and EX, is examined in light of its recent development in service research. For each of the three concepts, key themes are identified, and future research directions are proposed.

**Findings**

Because the goal that individuals seek to achieve depends on the role they are enacting, each of the three perspectives on experience (CX, EX, and HX) should have a different focal point. CX requires to focus on the process of solving customer goals. EX necessitates to think in terms of organizational context and job content that support employees. Finally, the focus of HX should be on well-being via enhanced gratification, and reduced violation, of basic human needs.

**Originality**

This paper offers an interdisciplinary perspective on (service) experience and simultaneously addresses CX, EX, and HX in order to reconcile the different perspectives on experience in service research.

**Keywords**

Customer experience; employee experience; human experience; customer journey.

**Type of paper**

Conceptual paper

## Introduction

The field of scholarly service research is experiencing a nostalgic "back to the future" revival, fueled by the dramatic increase in interest in the service experience. This resurgence is spearheaded by the profound exploration into customer experience (CX), as exemplified by Lemon and Verhoef (2016) and De Keyser *et al.* (2020), the burgeoning details of employee experience (EX) highlighted by Batat (2022) and Bowen's (2024) work, and the advent of human experience (HX) introduced by Fisk *et al.* (2020). Indeed, the foundational distinction between services and products established decades earlier by Grönroos (1988) was primarily anchored in the concept that services are inherently experiential rather than merely tangible. The innovative and modern methodology for interpreting experiences is distinguished by its substantial reliance on data, which is crucial for organizations in understanding and forecasting customer behaviors. Specifically, companies utilize these insights and predictions to deepen their comprehension and influence over CX, aiming to elevate customer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchasing behavior, consequently driving long-term profits.

It is commonly believed that experiences are sculpted at company-crafted touchpoints where customers engage with various stimuli (Becker and Jaakola, 2020) in an effort to co-create value (Grönroos, 2011). Interactions with other humans, whether customers or employees, have always been a significant type of stimuli at these touchpoints (Bitner, 1992). Although EX and employee behavior are critical to cultivating a positive interpersonal service interaction and, by extension, CX (Hogreve *et al.*, 2022), there is a notable lack of specificity and operationalization of EX as an independent construct, along with its precursors and outcomes, within previous service research literature.

Presently, CX is extensively researched (Becker and Jaakola, 2020; De Keyser *et al.*, 2020). Nonetheless, it remains one of the most elusive concepts to fully comprehend, as it

transpires within the human psyche and unfolds through interactions with a plethora of stimuli, such as products, employees, other customers, technology, and more. Additionally, even when two customers undergo the identical process, their individual perceptions can lead to vastly different experiences. Experiences are an inescapable part of our daily lives, with each of us continually striving to encounter positive ones and eschew the negative. This pursuit is universal, transcending our varying roles as customers or employees. Moreover, our concerns as humans striving for a fulfilling life surpass our concerns as customers. Therefore, it is essential to initially grasp the concept of 'experience' broadly before applying varied lenses to discern how experiences diverge based on the role being embraced: customer, employee, or human.

The objective of this research is to demystify the concept of 'experience' and to contextualize it within the present state of research on CX, EX, and HX. As indicated in Figure 1, we contend that each perspective on experience—CX, EX, and HX—should be centered around a distinct focal point, as the objectives individuals pursue are influenced by their specific roles (as customers, employees, and fundamentally as humans). From a CX standpoint, the importance is placed on the process (in contrast to the outcome) of achieving goals that customers aim for when interacting with a company's offerings. This process is significant, as service encounters accumulate to become customer journeys, which collectively inform overall evaluations that guide customers' future decisions. An EX standpoint acknowledges the significance of organizational context and job content. A robust service climate, comprehensive HRM systems, and favorable job content characteristics (e.g., skill variety, task significance) contribute to employees' well-being and performance.

Furthermore, an HX viewpoint explicitly recognizes that both employees and customers are humans with a universal set of basic needs that must be satisfied during their 'Moment of

Truth' interactions. Creating a positive HX fundamentally involves upholding justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) and fostering authenticity when serving others (Bowen, 2021). While CX and EX concentrate on the manner in which companies serve individuals, HX considers the broader context that encompasses not only personal relationships but also the societal support systems.

In this article, we commence by defining the concept of 'experience' and delineating how individuals process information to form perceptions of experiences and memories thereof. In essence, perceptions are generated through bottom-up processing, starting from sensory inputs, or top-down processing, which utilizes pre-existing knowledge and expectations to interpret new information. Moreover, memory plays a pivotal role in determining the remnants of past experiences, contributing to the subjective nature of experiences.

Subsequently, we give a new perspective of the concepts of (1) CX, which has been extensively discussed in recent service research literature (e.g., Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Becker and Jaakola, 2020; De Keyser *et al.*, 2020; Gahler *et al.*, 2023); (2) EX, which, while not as prevalent in academic literature, has begun to gain attention in practitioner-oriented publications; and (3) HX, as elaborated by Bowen (2021) and Fisk *et al.* (2020). We use the term 'introductions' to convey that we are not providing exhaustive reviews, but rather succinct overviews of CX, EX, and HX. Additionally, for each of the three concepts, we present several 'Key Themes' (Tables 1, 2, and 3) to aid in clarifying the essence of the experience. Finally, we discuss the implications of these explorations for service research and propose directions for future inquiry.

## Experience (X)

Experience constitutes the entirety of thoughts, emotions, sensations, perceptions, and interactions that define human existence (Lemke *et al.*, 2011). It embodies the rich tapestry of life's episodes, varying widely among individuals as they journey through life. Experience is inherently multifaceted; even identical events may be perceived distinctly by different people, influenced by their culture, values, past experiences, and context (De Keyser *et al.*, 2020). Thus, experience is profoundly subjective, and below we discuss two critical processes contributing to this subjectivity: the processing of sensory input and memory.

### *Processing of Sensory Input*

Experience originates from sensory input: what individuals see, hear, smell, touch, or taste. The brain then processes this input through bottom-up or top-down processing (Theeuwes, 2010). Bottom-up processing starts with the raw sensory input and works upwards to form a perception or understanding. It is reliant on the sensory data itself and is less influenced by prior knowledge or expectations, unlike top-down processing. Conversely, top-down processing leverages pre-existing knowledge, expectations, and context to interpret sensory information. It begins with our mental models and experiences, steering our perception and interpretation of incoming sensory data.

In reality, both top-down and bottom-up processing are continually active in our cognitive functions, often interacting and informing each other (Theeuwes, 2010). The prominence of one process over the other can vary depending on the task or situation at hand. For example, in routine tasks, top-down processing might be prevalent, while in novel or ambiguous scenarios, bottom-up processing might assume a larger role. When encountering a new word or concept, the brain may depend more on bottom-up processing to analyze its components for understanding. In

visual perception, top-down processing aids in recognizing objects under different conditions, whereas bottom-up processing is essential for detecting novel elements in our surroundings. Grasping the dynamics between these cognitive processes is vital in disciplines such as psychology and human-computer interaction, offering insights into how we perceive and engage with the world around us.

Sensory-driven, bottom-up processing is intrinsically linked to emotions, triggering rapid and automatic emotional and behavioral responses to sensory stimuli (Cupchik, 2003). These responses are often instinctive and influenced by evolutionary survival mechanisms. Although beneficial for swift reactions to potential dangers or rewards, they may not always correspond with our deliberate or conscious evaluations. Top-down processing, on the other hand, encompasses higher cognitive functions such as appraisal, regulation, and social influences. It refines emotional responses, rendering them more sophisticated and context-specific than purely bottom-up reactions.

### *Memory*

Individuals draw on past experiences to navigate the world and decide how to act in any given context. Given the information-dense world we inhabit, where we're exposed to thousands of advertisements and make numerous decisions daily (Hoomans, 2015), past experiences become indispensable for decision-making. Our brains, which are not equipped to process the entirety of available information (Gigerenzer and Brighton, 2009), rely heavily on memory to determine what endures from an experience and how it is interpreted (Puccinelli *et al.*, 2009). Memory involves encoding sensory and cognitive details, storing them in various forms, and retrieving them when necessary. Initially, information resides in short-term storage before



transferring to long-term storage. Retrieval from long-term memory entails accessing and bringing the event's details into consciousness, often triggered by cues or through cognitive effort (Shiffrin and Atkinson, 1969).

Owing to the nature of memory encoding, storage, and retrieval, it is improbable that individuals remember every aspect of a process or journey in its entirety. Instead, they tend to recall significant interactions or segments, often referred to as memorable moments (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). Therefore, exploring experience is complex, as the recollection of past events often diverges from what was experienced in real-time.

### **Customer Experience (CX)**

The study of experience in service research has focused almost exclusively on the customer perspective. This is little surprising given that service research tends to focus on the customer perspective (Kraak and Holmquist, 2017). What customers desire are not products or tangibles, but satisfying experiences (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Shostack (1977), in describing characteristics of services that set them apart from tangible products, emphasized that services can only be experienced, created, or participated in. We take it a step further and claim that, even for products, experiences play an important role; as Levitt (as cited in Christensen *et al.*, 2006) phrased it, “[p]eople don't want to buy a quarter-inch drill. They want a quarter-inch hole!”

#### *Interpreting CX*

There are two main, to some degree opposing, views on what CX is. The first one is more concerned with an overall evaluation of all experiences with a company (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). The second view considers that experience lies in every single encounter or interaction with the stimuli that a company has designed (Becker and Jaakola, 2020). Stimuli can be an

employee or a (physical or digital) touchpoint. The underlying idea is that experience consists of the spontaneous reaction (or change) that results from the interaction. This difference between the two views is well-known, as previous research has made the distinction between cumulative and transactional perspectives when measuring perceptions (Johnson and Gustafsson, 2006). The two views are not as different as they seem to be at first; rather, they can be viewed as building on each other. All single service encounters end up being part of a customer journey or a transaction with a firm, and transactions accumulate to become an overall evaluation of all interactions with a firm i.e., cumulative. Nevertheless, these two views do represent two rather distinct perspectives that contain different types of information. This is important to keep in mind given the existing critique of CX measurement (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

Furthermore, research suggests that CX encompasses multiple elements or dimensions: sensory (sense), affective (feel), cognitive (think), physical (act), and social-identity (relate) elements (Schmitt, 1999). What has been little discussed in the CX literature is that these elements are, to some degree, processed using different parts of the brain and interpreted based on who the customer is, what they have experienced previously, and the context they are presently in.

In sum, CX is both a holistic and a multidimensional construct, as well as a transactional and a cumulative evaluation of what has been experienced. For companies, understanding CX is thus a complex task, and research has not fully helped to make sense on how to measure an interpret what CX is (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). To remedy this, we propose to disentangle the various dimensions that compose an experience and more closely examine each of them and how they relate to one another.

### *Making sense of the elements of CX*

First, it should be noted that this section mostly relates to Becker and Jaakola (2020) where experience is viewed as the responses and reactions to stimuli. Second, it is important to state that the five dimensions (sense, feel, relate, think, and act) are not entirely separate streams of information; when they are interpreted by a human, they work in unison (Gentile *et al.*, 2007). Not only may the responses to cognitive, emotional, sensorial, behavioral, and social elements happen simultaneously (or at least in close proximity), but they also influence and build on one another during a process that can lead up to a new reaction. For instance, customers may use cognition to interpret the meaning of the sensory input and the resulting emotion, which turns into behavior. Furthermore, emotions also affect cognition and how we interpret a situation (Clore and Palmer, 2009). Customers will also behave differently depending on the social dimension, as they relate to various products, brands and situations in very different ways.

An important question then arises: given that CX is a complex phenomenon and largely differs from customer to customer, how can we make sense of it? We can start by saying that it is unlikely that we will ever have the complete picture of CX, because it comprises too many responses and reactions, many of which are path dependent. Next, we can say that it depends on what we want to know about CX and how we want to use such knowledge. We should also recognize that we need to go further than understanding cognition, as memory is selective and also, in some situations, individuals may end up using an automated response without engaging elaborate cognitive efforts (Cialdini, 2001). This is typically true in situations that build to a large degree on routinized behavior or when the senses play an important role in a decision-making process. Consequently, we need to understand that the elements of CX—sensory (sense), emotion (feel), cognitive (think), behavior (act), and social-identity (relate)—play very different

roles in shaping an experience. Importantly, they are not independent elements; rather, the various reactions and behaviors customers have when interacting with a company result from the interplay between these elements. Furthermore, the various elements vary in importance depending on the context and prior experience. We will explore this further.

The marketing literature has long agreed on the general importance of emotions for customer evaluations and behaviors (e.g., Richins, 1997; Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). Emotion is a multifaceted mental state that involves a range of feelings, thoughts, and physiological responses, resulting in various forms of behaviors (Bradley and Lang, 2000). Emotions are a fundamental aspect of human experience and play a crucial role in how human beings perceive and respond to the world around them. Emotions are triggered by both the bottom-up and the top-down processes mentioned previously. Again, CX is formed by the interplay between seemingly different streams of information, of which emotion and cognition are typical examples. Not only does cognition generate emotions, but emotion also guides decision-making and, more generally, behavior (Damasio, 1994).

The last dimension of experience, which is probably the one that can be interpreted most widely, is social identity (De Keyser *et al.*, 2020). Verhoef *et al.* (2009) and Schmitt (1999) relate this to social context that reflects the momentary conditions created by a customer's social relationships, which could also include products or brands. In fact, Schmitt (1999) uses the term "relate" rather than "social". Furthermore, customers do not act in a social vacuum, but largely share reality with their surroundings and they are surrounded by a multitude of other entities. This social context activates social rules and norms, which may notably influence behavior. Another interpretation is that this dimension encompasses the social responses to other humans

(Becker and Jaakola, 2020), such as talking and other forms of interaction with others (e.g., eye contacts, smiles).

### *Goal as a modifier of CX*

Another important aspect of CX is that it is connected to goals or tasks that customers want to solve; customers do not interact with a company unless they have a goal to achieve (Bagozzi and Dhalokia, 1999). In a CX context, goals are to some degree captured by the notion of personas according to which different customer groups have different behaviors, but this is a rather crude concept. Understanding CX requires more than knowing which stimuli customers have encountered when interacting the company: it requires knowing what goal or task customers seek to solve, as this goal/task will have a major impact on the customer behavior. It should also be noted that a customer can be solving multiple goals at the same time. As such, customers engage in a series of interactions with a company and its complementary partners in order to achieve their goals (Becker *et al.*, 2020). These interactions are performed in touchpoints, and importantly, customers select the touchpoint that they think will best solve their goals (Bolton *et al.*, 2022). The current goals affect how customers perceive and respond to the stimuli they encounter (Puccinelli *et al.*, 2009): goals make certain cues more salient than others, and the same touchpoint may be perceived favorably or not depending on the customer's goal (Bolton *et al.*, 2022).

We can distinguish between two broad categories of goals: abstract (browse) and concrete (search) goals (Lemke *et al.*, 2011). A concrete goal is one where the customers look for specific product or service attributes (e.g., shopping for specific ingredients) whereas an abstract goal is one where the customers look for products or services from which they can derive value (e.g.,

looking at what is on sale). The goals that customers seek to achieve during a service encounter are often subordinate to higher-order goals such as life goals (Becker *et al.*, 2020). Importantly, customers evaluate their interactions with companies based on their contributions to the goal achievement (Lemke *et al.* 2011). Accordingly, when seeking to improve CX, companies need to take into consideration the goals their customers seek to achieve (Bolton *et al.*, 2022).

In fact, companies cannot control customer perceptions or their CX. This is because the true impact of the mental processing of stimuli (e.g., sound, colors, signs, scent) encountered at touchpoints is difficult to accurately estimate as it is an internal process. Furthermore, CX is also influenced by the order in which these stimuli are encountered as well as their interplay, but such order and interplay are difficult to accurately track. However, what companies can control and manage is the design of touchpoints and the scripts their employees use during any interaction. As the definition of CX indicates, experiences are created through interactions or encounters with stimuli (present at touchpoints), which companies can to a large extent exert control over. That is, CX can be viewed as a co-creation undertaken by the company (that designs touchpoints and manages employees) and by the customer who senses, perceives, and mentally processes the stimuli present at touchpoints.

### *Key themes of CX*

We have also explored the literature on CX and have identified six key themes, which strengthen what we have covered in the previous sections (see Table 1). One of these themes relates to the nature of CX: CX is subjective, multidimensional, holistic and detailed, and dynamic. CX is said to be subjective, which stems from the fact that CX is defined as the set of

the customer's responses to firm-related stimuli, and these responses are unique (i.e., personal) to the individual customer (Meyer and Schwager, 2007; Lemke *et al.*, 2011).

Early work on CX (Berry *et al.*, 2002) mentions only two dimensions (cognitive and emotional), whereas more recent conceptualizations (e.g., Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; De Keyser *et al.*, 2020) agree on five dimensions (cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensorial, and social). By acknowledging the multidimensionality of CX, researchers also acknowledge that CX cannot be reduced to what customers think about the firm. It also encompasses what they sense, what they feel, what they do, and how they interact with others. Importantly, the multiple types of responses (cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensorial, and social) that emerge when interacting with the firm's offering form a whole, which relates to the fact that CX is holistic (Gentile *et al.*, 2007; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). This suggests that though researchers distinguish different dimensions of CX, customers do not.

A second key theme in the CX literature is the antecedents of CX. The literature distinguishes between CX stimuli, which directly influence CX, and contingency factors, which modify how customers respond to these stimuli. Prior research has discussed firm-related stimuli that influence CX, such as atmospherics (Puccinelli *et al.*, 2009), employees (Berry *et al.*, 2002) and prices, assortment, or any brand-related elements (Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). Prior research has also largely argued that contingency factors modify how customers respond to these stimuli. At the individual level, the customer's consumption goals (Puccinelli *et al.*, 2009; Lenke *et al.*, 2011), budget (De Keyser *et al.*, 2020), and prior experiences (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020) are examples of such contingency factors. Examples of contingency factors at the social level include the social presence of others and the social role embraced by the customer (De Keyser *et al.*, 2015, 2020; Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). At the environmental level, contingency factors

such as the season (Verhoef *et al.*, 2009) or the weather (De Keyser *et al.*, 2015, 2020) have been discussed. All these contingency factors contribute to making CX highly subjective.

A third theme is the outcome of CX. It has been proposed that CX enhances customer loyalty (Berry *et al.*, 2002) as well as customer satisfaction and firm profits (Grewal *et al.*, 2009). This highlights the importance for firms to deliver favourable CX to achieve long-term success.

A fourth key theme in the CX literature relates to the customer journey and touchpoints. CX emerges only when the customer is exposed to the firm's offering, and such moments of exposure are referred to as touchpoints (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). Exposure can be actual or imagined (De Keyser *et al.*, 2020). Touchpoints outside the firm's control (e.g., social media) have been recognized to be as relevant as those controlled by the firm (e.g., a service encounter). The series of touchpoints encountered by the customer forms the customer journey, which has been delineated as starting before, and continuing after, the purchase (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Voorhees *et al.*, 2017). The customer journey keeps expanding with every additional touchpoint that the customer encounters, which explains why CX is dynamic.

A fifth theme relates to CX measurement. Well-established measures in service research such as satisfaction and NPS are viewed as too simplistic to fully capture CX, although they are often used by firms for that same reason (Meyer and Schwager, 2007; Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Scales developed to measure CX specifically (e.g., Klaus and Maklan, 2013; Kuppelwieser and Klaus, 2021; Gahler *et al.*, 2023) may be more appropriate, but the insights they provide are still limited. This is because CX is holistic and dynamic, which makes it challenging to capture all aspects of CX as a whole as well as changes in those. Therefore, CX researchers have called for the development of new measurement tools (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020; De Keyser *et al.*, 2020).



A sixth theme in the CX literature relates to CX management. There is great discussion regarding the extent to which CX can be managed by the firm. Some scholars propose that CX can be engineered (Grewal *et al.*, 2009; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009) and discuss how firms can manage stimuli in the touchpoints they control (Puccinelli *et al.*, 2009) and create seamless CX across touchpoints (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Homburg *et al.*, 2017). CX management is then viewed as a collective effort from different functions within the organization (Meyer and Schwager, 2007). Other scholars argue that companies cannot exert direct control over CX because of the subjective nature of CX (Lemke *et al.*, 2011; Becker and Jaakkola, 2020): companies can to some degree influence what customers think, feel, and sense, but they cannot fully control it. Having this limitation in mind, these scholars propose that companies put their efforts into getting a better understanding of the CX that customers have and desire (De Keyser *et al.* 2015).

### **Employee Experience (EX)**

The conceptualization of Employee Experience (EX) has not progressed as swiftly as Customer Experience (CX) within the service research domain. This delay may reflect the stance of Kraak and Holmquist (2017), who observed that service research predominantly concentrates on the customer's perspective during employee-customer interactions. This section seeks to refine the specification of the EX construct by initially examining how EX is treated in practitioner-focused Human Resources Management (HRM) publications, such as those by Tucker (2020), which precede the service research literature in conceptualizing EX. Subsequently, we utilize organizational behavior (OB)/HRM research, including contributions from Bowen (2024), to identify key service organizational context and job content attributes that enhance our comprehension of EX.

### *Practitioner-Focused Human Resources Perspectives on EX*

In the applied HRM discourse, EX has gained prominence in journals like *Strategic HR Review* and corporate publications. Tucker (2020) explains that the term 'employee experience' is adapted from the consumer and IT sectors. Within HR, it encapsulates the entirety of an employee's emotional journey through interactions with their employer. The applied HR narrative now portrays EX as the contemporary employee value proposition (Panneerselvam and Balaraman, 2022), suggesting that a positive EX leads to heightened employee engagement, potentially initiating a virtuous cycle of cultural positivity, increased engagement, and improved organizational performance.

Plaskoff (2017) characterizes EX as a novel HR management paradigm. Transitioning from traditional, transactional HR to a strategic, value-driven process that engages employees through meaning and value, it facilitates the empowerment and engagement essential for organizations. "Employee experience can be defined as the employee's holistic perceptions of the relationship with his/her employer, shaped by all encounters at various touchpoints throughout the employee's journey" (Plaskoff, 2017, p. 137).

EX reflects how employees internalize and make sense of their interactions with their organization, including the underlying context. It is important to note that, unlike customers, employees spend a considerable portion of their active hours within an organization, engaging with different customers, reflecting on and discussing work-related events with colleagues, or supporting other employees from a back-office position, ultimately staging CX initiatives.

The practitioner-oriented discussion around EX underscores its integral role in companies' employee engagement strategies (Tucker, 2020) and advocates for managing it with the same rigor as CX.

### *OB/HRM Discipline Perspective on EX*

Batat (2022) advanced HRM literature by defining employee experience as "employees' subjective and evolving perceptions of their cognitive, behavioral, and emotional state, complemented by social interactions within the employing organization and its related social actors, both internal (e.g., coworkers) and external (e.g., suppliers and clients). These perceptions are influenced by numerous encounters that affect employees' well-being and their perceived value throughout their experiential journeys within the organization" (p. 996). This aligns with an overall or cumulative evaluation approach, focusing on well-being and organizational support rather than addressing specific employee goals. It is also acknowledged that the term 'employee experience' was initially introduced in more practical terms by Abhari *et al.* (2008), with its conceptual relation to OB and HR emerging from Morgan (2017).

Next, we will delve into the OB/HRM literature to pinpoint essential attributes of organizations—namely, organizational context and job content—that consistently shape employees' experiences through ongoing interactions or touchpoints within their organizational journey.

### **OB/HRM perspectives on EX: Organizational Context**

#### *Organizational Climate for Service*

Climate *for* indicates a climate for a particular strategic focus, e.g. innovation, growth—or, here, service. Climate for service is employees' collective perception of the service-quality focused policies, practices, and procedures they experience, along with the emphasis on service quality they observe in the behaviors that are rewarded, supported, and expected (Schneider *et*

*al.*, 1998; Bowen and Schneider, 2014). Additionally, the visible organizational climate rests upon the invisible organizational culture of shared assumptions and values and together the two shape employee experiences.

The service climate as organizational context for employees should be both strong and positive. “Strong” is when there is low variance in employee perceptions of what the climate truly is. “Positive”, also termed climate level, is when there is a high items’ mean on employee perceptions of the antecedents of service climate---HRM, leadership, marketing, operations management and IT practices that create the climate. Significant empirical relationships exist between positive employee perceptions/experiences of the service climate and positive customer experiences—e.g., their perceptions of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bowen and Schneider, 2014).

Human resources management (HRM) practices in particular, play a critical role in creating and maintaining a service climate (Schneider and Bowen, 1993). The “strength of the HRM system” construct (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Ostroff and Bowen, 2016), asserts that an aggregate of HRM practices collectively possessing three meta-features (distinctiveness, consistency, consensus) can help meld disparate individual psychological climates into a strong organizational climate (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), e.g. a climate for service.

Moreover, establishing a climate for service is facilitated by fostering a climate for employee well-being (Schneider and Bowen, 1993; Schneider *et al.*, 2011; Bowen, 2024). Employee engagement in the service climate framework (e.g. Bowen and Schneider, 2014) weaves the two foci, employee well -being and service quality to customers, together.

A strong and positive service climate is most likely to exist when employees are engaged in their work. Kahn (1990) pioneered the concept of employee engagement, advocating for

holistic involvement at work—commitment, involvement, and progression of work. Schneider *et al.* (2009) characterized employee engagement as being deeply absorbed in work, finding purpose and challenge in one's role, and eagerness to work. A service climate benefits from engaged employees, who contribute both mental and physical energy. Employee engagement, transcending mere job satisfaction, is a crucial driver of EX and a foundation upon which a service climate can be constructed; it is not merely an outcome of the service climate (Bowen and Schneider, 2022).

### *High Involvement Work Organizations*

Disseminating power, information, knowledge, and rewards throughout the organization, particularly to front-line positions, cultivates an organizational environment where employees experience increased autonomy over their tasks, a heightened understanding of business and strategic imperatives, and heightened responsibility for performance results. This organizational atmosphere and employee mindset yield positive outcomes for employees, customers, and the organization (Bowen and Lawler, 1992, 1995).

An employee empowered state of mind is proposed as a possible cornerstone for a favourable EX (Bowen, 2024). Advancing conceptualization of “empowering” service employees, (Bowen and Lawler, 1995) also suggested that complex, non-routine service technologies warrant an employee empowerment approach rather than a production-line approach; and employees with high growth need strength respond more positively to a high-involvement work context (Bowen and Lawler, 1995). Furthermore, Konrad (2006) posited that high involvement work practices are conducive to a high degree of employee engagement, which benefits both employees and customers, as previously discussed in the context of service climate.

### *Internal Service Quality*

The way employees interact, and the support given to those performing their duties are just as critical as the external service quality delivered directly to customers in predicting customer loyalty and overall efficacy (Hogreve *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, Schneider and Bowen (2019) highlighted the importance of delving into organizational behavior (OB) literature for insights into the drivers of internal service quality, particularly studies on organizational climate. To enhance the service-profit chain, it is proposed to approach internal service quality as systematic HRM practices rather than as isolated actions. An intriguing avenue for further research is examining the intricate dynamics between internal and external marketing and their implications for service outcomes (Hogreve *et al.*, 2022).

### **OB/HRM perspectives on EX: Job Content**

The Job Characteristics Theory, advanced by Hackman and Oldham (1975) and further explored by Oldham and Hackman (2010), offers a detailed understanding of how the nature of a job influences employee outcomes, including motivation and job satisfaction. The model pinpoints five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job-based feedback. These factors collectively foster three psychological states in employees—meaningfulness of work, responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of results—which in turn inspire EX-relevant internal motivation to perform effectively. The model included two individual difference variables, growth need strength and job-relevant knowledge and skill, which moderate how positively employees may respond to enriched, more challenging job content. Also, job satisfaction was subsequently added as a third moderator.

Oldham and Hackman (2010) re-examined their model, incorporating insights such as how team-based work and cross-cultural dynamics, have impacted job content design. Organizations

have increasingly empowered employees to adapt their roles and responsibilities, a process known as job crafting.

### *Organizational Context and Job Content Interaction*

A key interaction between organizational context and job content is reflected in the organization's reward system, which classifies rewards into three categories: economic, e.g. pay and benefits; prestige, e.g. job titles--and job content characteristics as detailed above. This dual impact on employees' attitudes and performance can be assessed using the Expectancy Theory of Motivation (e.g., Porter and Lawler, 1968) which offered that employees' motivation to perform is influenced by: Expectancy: effort—performance; Instrumentality: performance—outcomes; and Valence: desirability of the outcomes. If organizational HRM practices, such as selection and training, are not established to create a strong and positive service climate, employees may lack the competencies to deliver quality service, compromising their effort- performance expectancy. Similarly, if service performance appraisal is flawed, it can impact whether employee performance levels will actually lead to outcomes (Instrumentality) they value (Valence)—outcomes ideally being a diversified mix of economic, prestige, and job content rewards to enhance EX.

### *Key themes of EX*

Employee Experience (EX) is fundamentally distinct from Customer Experience (CX), focusing not on short-term interactions but on the extensive involvement that employment entails in one's life. The essence of EX is intricately linked to the way an organization shapes its context and job content, signaling the behaviors it anticipates, enables, and rewards.

In Table 2, the emerging literature on EX per se, which is almost all practitioner applied, is summarized using a framework similar to that for CX, addressing six key themes: the subjective nature of EX, its antecedents, its outcomes, the employee journey, how EX is measured, and how it is managed. This includes acknowledging EX as a personal and holistic experience that evolves over time, shaped by tangible stimuli like digital platforms and intangible factors such as workplace culture and HR practices.

EX leads to positive outcomes like employee engagement well-being, and performance. The journey of EX, though recognized as a series of interactions over time, is not as extensively explored as the customer journey in CX literature. Measurement of EX is also less developed, with some existing tools like the IBM Workforce Institute EX index and scales proposed by researchers. However, there is a caution against relying solely on surveys, which may only provide a superficial understanding of EX.

EX management is predominantly addressed in terms of designing optimal touchpoints, informed by deep employee understanding and tools like design thinking and journey mapping. The nascent stage of EX literature reflects a lack of discussion on contingency factors that influence how employees respond to EX stimuli, such as individual growth need strength and the nature of the organization's external environment.

The employee journey in EX literature is not as detailed as in CX literature, suggesting that concepts like "realistic job preview" (Wanous, 1973, 1992) could enrich the pre-employment understanding. Finally, EX management involves viewing HRM practices as a collection of touchpoints that must be consistently implemented to convey strong HRM messages, ultimately fostering a positive EX.



## **Human Experience (HX)**

Research on Human Experience (HX) using a Customer Experience (CX) framework is indeed sparse. HX is a multifaceted and subjective concept encompassing the entirety of an individual's existence, including consciousness, growth, relationships, meaning, and creativity. It is critical to recognize that individuals are humans first—before being customers or employees. Our roles as customers or employees are merely facets of our lives, driven by necessity or choice. The fulfilment or infringement of fundamental human needs, such as security, justice, self-esteem, and authenticity, can significantly enhance or diminish both CX and EX (Bowen, 2024).

Consequently, CX and EX are conceptualizations of the roles individuals assume as customers and employees at specific times, rather than representing the whole of their life experiences as humans. Some advocate expanding beyond CX to encompass HX, suggesting a shift from "customer touchpoints" to "human touchpoints," and from "customer intelligence" to "human intelligence," advocating for a value creation deeply rooted in human experiences (Solnet *et al.*, 2019).

The boundaries between CX, EX, and HX are becoming increasingly blurred. Companies are becoming more entrenched in customers' personal lives, particularly through social media, and often regard customers as part-time employees (Bowen, 1986). The dichotomy between personal and work life is fading as employees increasingly work from home and remain connected to work outside traditional hours, highlighting the continuous and integrated roles of customer and employee within human lives.

Initiatives like Responsible Research in Business & Management (RRBM), Better Marketing for a Better World (Chandy *et al.*, 2021), and Transformative Service Research (Fisk, 2022) reflect a shift towards prioritizing human well-being in research and business practices.

HX can also serve as a lens to examine the underserved populations globally, focusing on how service systems support individuals in meeting their basic human needs, such as security and justice, across various life touchpoints (Fisk *et al.*, 2020; Bowen, 2021). These needs are rooted in fundamental concepts like Maslow (1943)'s hierarchy and the long-standing moral principle of justice.

Discussing HX necessitates considering the societal context, as humans live and interact within societal structures that influence well-being and quality of life. Successful societal and governmental policies in countries with high well-being levels illustrate how such frameworks can enhance the overall quality of life, including healthcare, education, and social safety nets. Companies contribute to society by generating economic resources, providing employment, and supplying goods and services, playing a significant role in the tapestry that forms HX.

### *Key Themes of HX*

While research on Human Experience (HX) within a service context remains relatively undeveloped, the concept itself is significant. HX seeks to understand and enhance the broader spectrum of life, incorporating elements such as dignity, hope, and authenticity (Ostrom *et al.*, 2021). HX is an expansive concept that goes beyond the roles of customer and employee, extending into the pursuit of a better life. Thus, HX requires a distinct conceptual framework.

The existing literature on HX, though limited, can be summarized into four key themes: its definition, antecedents, outcomes, and management strategies. These themes, while bearing similarities to those in CX and EX, differ fundamentally in their propositions, emphasizing the various roles humans occupy, such as being a parent, citizen, customer, or employee. The primary objective of HX is to enhance overall well-being and minimize human suffering, reflecting a holistic approach to understanding human interactions within service ecosystems.

## Interdisciplinary Implications

As Figure 1 implies, experience, when viewed through different lenses, takes on varying meanings and objectives. From the Customer Experience (CX) standpoint, the journey towards achieving a goal or outcome is emphasized. Companies conceptualize this journey as a series of customer touchpoints, while customers engage with companies to accomplish specific tasks (Christensen *et al.*, 2016). The process of achieving these goals significantly shapes CX, which is influenced by an overall evaluation of past customer experiences and helps in determining the best company to fulfil their needs.

Customers utilize both bottom-up (sensory) and top-down (cognitive) processes to interpret the stimuli provided by companies. Depending on the situation, either process may prevail; bottom-up processes are dominant in unfamiliar situations, while top-down processes take precedence in more routine circumstances. The perception of these stimuli triggers emotions and thoughts, influencing customer behavior.

A major challenge in CX is the inherent difficulty for companies (or researchers) to fully comprehend what constitutes an experience, as individuals do not consciously process or remember every detail of a consumption process. This makes it challenging to predict customer behavior. Oliver *et al.* (1997) suggest that current customer satisfaction metrics are more effective than customer experience measurements (also supported by Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). However, these measurements do not capture the full spectrum of experiences, such as the sensory processing and emotions that can influence behavior without conscious awareness. Therefore, companies are encouraged to experiment to better understand what affects customer behavior.

The context and conceptualization of Employee Experience (EX) differ significantly. Employees spend a considerable part of their lives at work, which contrasts with the transient interactions customers have with companies. Employees create value for the company and its customers, which can sometimes conflict with their own interests. Changes in the service environment may create uncertainty for customers, potentially diminishing their short-term experience, while for employees, such changes might represent a refreshing break from routine and an enhanced workplace.

*Enhancing both CX and EX simultaneously: Three Insights.* There is a concern that companies may prioritize CX over EX, but it is essential to recognize that improving EX can also benefit CX. Schneider (2020) and Bowen and Schneider (2022) discuss the reciprocal effects between EX and CX, which can create a "success spiral with people." Salanova *et al.* (2005) highlighted that employee engagement is crucial for a positive service climate and affects customer experiences. Kumar and Pansari (2016) found that customer engagement is a more significant predictor of firm performance than employee engagement, underscoring the importance of studying service engagement behaviors in both employees and customers (Liang *et al.*, 2020).

Second, in their research on the influence of organizational climates on organizational effectiveness in the service sector, Chuang and Liao (2010) examined two types of strategically targeted organizational climate: A climate of concern *for* customers and a climate of concern *for* employees. They found that the HRM practices of high-performance work systems in a service setting may facilitate both climates simultaneously.

Third, in a “back to the future” perspective on “EX” and “CX” there is linkage research (Schneider *et al.* 1980; Schneider and Bowen, 1985) on the branch-level correlations between employee and customer perceptions of service-related variables in banks and overall service quality. For example, a significant relationship between employees’ perception of branch management and customer perceptions of employee morale; replication of the strong correlation between employees’ ratings of how customers rate service quality at the branch and how customers do rate service quality, etc. In both articles, the authors emphasized this linkage research would promote an integration of OB and Marketing.

In terms of Human Experience (HX), the focus shifts again; it is about considering entire service systems, including relationships, networks, and society at large. While CX concentrates on achieving goals and EX on the organizational culture that fosters employee engagement, HX is concerned with the broader context that supports human life and improves quality of life. Companies aiming to enhance HX must adopt a holistic view, understanding customers' life situations, needs, and how they can support them, even in crisis situations, to create a better world. For instance, car companies offering pick-up and delivery services post-maintenance can reduce customer stress, and banks setting up emergency health plans in case of a stroke for instance and can thus provide critical support when needed.

### **Future Research Directions**

#### *Directions for future research on CX*

Experience is an intricate concept, shaped by individual events and their lasting impressions on the human mind and body (Verhulst *et al.*, 2019). Although the cognitive dimension (think) of Customer Experience (CX) can be measured, further refinement in this area

is unlikely to yield significant advances in knowledge. Traditional variables like customer satisfaction and loyalty continue to dominate CX scales, suggesting a stagnation in the field's development. While we have a good grasp on the drivers of these traditional measures (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016), understanding the measurement of the consumption process, particularly how sensory information contributes to CX and influences behavior, remains a complex challenge, perhaps addressable only through experimental methods based on bottom-up processing.

A range of methods, including neuroscientific tools and affective computing (Caruelle *et al.*, 2022), offer insights into the decision-making process and the bottom-up information customers use. Techniques like eye-tracking, electrodermal activity (EDA) measurement, and facial expression analysis provide continuous measurement of observable behavior or physiological changes. With technological advancements, these methods are becoming more accessible, such as EDA integration into smartwatches and eye-tracking via webcams.

These methods resonate with the model proposed by Becker and Jaakola (2020), which states that CX reflects changes in five elements—sensory, emotion, cognition, social, and behavior—when encountering a stimulus. The challenge lies in interpreting the data these methods generate, such as determining the positive or negative valence of emotional arousal indicated by EDA. Future research should focus on developing and validating procedures to accurately measure CX throughout the customer journey.

CX is acknowledged to consist of five dimensions, yet discourse on how they collectively contribute to CX is limited. These dimensions are not uniformly significant across all stages of the customer journey and play varying roles. For instance, the sensory (bottom-up) and cognitive (top-down) processes work concurrently, with the former being more critical in novel situations

and the latter in routine or online environments. Bolton *et al.* (2022) illustrate that customers prioritize different aspects in physical versus online settings—relying more on sensory information in the former and cognition in the latter.

### *Directions for future research on EX*

In service research, there's a notable emphasis on the customer's perspective, often overlooking the full spectrum of Employee Experience (EX). Consequently, significant gaps remain in our understanding of EX, particularly concerning employees who do not directly interact with customers, such as back-office staff, and notably, managers. Managers, as employees, are pivotal in coordinating the complex interplay between human and technological systems within service delivery, and their experience remains underexamined (Bowen, 2024). Addressing the status of managers' experiences in service roles is a crucial area for further research.

The integration of technology in service delivery is rapidly advancing, yet certain front-line roles remain inherently human and irreplaceable by technology. These roles often serve as a "differentiator" through human touch or as an "enabler" aiding customers in their participation in the service process (Bowen, 2016, 2024). Nonetheless, technology is replacing many traditional employee functions, and the possibility of such displacement can impact EX negatively (Bowen, 2024).

Future research should focus on developing robust methods for measuring EX. A composite measure could incorporate employees' perceptions of the service climate, acknowledging the relationship between EX and the service climate. Furthermore, while job satisfaction, employee engagement, and turnover intentions might serve as apparent indicators of

EX, they fall short of encompassing the totality of EX; employee organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), that go “above and beyond” formal job requirements (Organ *et al.*, 2006) might be another indicator of EX. An interesting insight on EX-CX relevant here was that Schneider and Bowen (1985) found that the relationship between customer attitudes and employee turnover intentions was stronger than the relationship between employee attitudes and customer turnover intentions. It appears negative EX employees are more constrained in showing that than are negative CX customers. Overall, more comprehensive measures are necessary to capture the essence of EX within service sectors.

#### *Directions for future research on HX*

The exploration of what it means to be human has long fascinated us, and the recent emphasis on the Human Experience (HX) in the context of Customer Experience (CX) and Employee Experience (EX) is an important evolution of this curiosity. While the focus on HX is not novel, the integration of HX with CX and EX represents a fresh and necessary direction for research, motivated by the significant time we spend as consumers and employees, and the deep connection we have with these roles. In today’s world, we are continually linked to company platforms or workplace updates, which underscores the need for a holistic view when considering consumption and work. Additionally, current societal and research trends towards sustainability and ESG emphasize individual well-being.

Although research on HX within CX or EX frameworks is scarce, with Becker *et al.* (2020) being a rare example, there is ample opportunity to investigate HX with a focus on outcomes such as well-being, quality of life, or life satisfaction, rather than transactional satisfaction. This approach could enable companies to better support their customers and could lead to richer CX frameworks and deeper conceptual understanding.



Fisk *et al.* (2020) present another avenue for HX research, centered on enhancing human life and alleviating suffering. This perspective prioritizes social quality and benefits for society, including the inclusion of people who may not typically be viewed as desirable customers or employees, necessitating different services and approaches.

### **Managerial Implications**

As mentioned in the introduction, the objective of this research was to demystify the concept of 'experience' and to contextualize it within the present state of research on CX, EX, and HX. Research on EX and HX is very limited so, to some degree, we are trying to establish these concepts in literature. This while CX is well established, what we highlight is that most research seem to focus on the outcome (vs process), which in turn implies relying on top-down processing (cognition) rather than bottom-up (senses). Also, we tend to ignore the fact that all dimensions of CX (eg. emotions, senses, cognition, social, and behaviour) interact and build on each other rather than as separate streams of information. Emotions are very important in this context since much of the information is interpreted using emotions.

Furthermore, CX, EX, and HX—should be centered around a distinct focal point, as the objectives individuals pursue are influenced by their specific roles (as customers, employees, and fundamentally as humans). CX is about solving a goal/fulfilling a need/carrying out a job, while the focus of EX evolves around a company culture that supports employees, and in a HX context we are more occupied with leading a good life. The latter means that the society is more important and that the role of a firm is to support us as humans to lead a good life.

Next we highlight some of the major implications that can be drawn based on the article in each area.

### *Customer Experience (CX)*

Research on CX is extensive as can be seen from Table 1. Yet the main dependent variables across studies is customer satisfaction and loyalty. Research on understanding customer is even more extensive and consequently, we do know how to measure and understand what satisfies customers. Satisfaction remains a very important metric, however, new approaches may be more beneficial from a competitive standpoint. We would like to encourage managers to explore more about the process perspective and understand how touchpoints and interactions affect other outcomes that satisfaction. Consumption is a process meaning that the order of things matter as well as the intention and knowledge a customer enters the process with. The focus in understanding CX has been and still is on the top-down processes (eg. cognition) little attention has been paid to the bottom-up processes (eg. senses). As these are complex processes that are difficult to observe, this means that firms need to experiment.

### *Employee Experience (EX)*

Although the OB/HRM literature is extensive, we have paid less attention to EX. Research and companies are obsessed by understanding customers from every perspective there is. There is nothing wrong in understanding customers, but some attention should be spent on the employee side too. The core of any service is interaction with touchpoints and/or employees. Employees will have a profound impact on CX not only through the direct interaction with customers, but also by establishing a service organizational climate. Consequently, we call on service firms to acknowledge this fact and be as obsessed with EX as you are with CX.

### *Human Experience (HX)*

Here we share with management the insights of Bowen (2020), who drew upon the work of early management thinkers like McGregor and Bennis. These scholars advocated for recognizing

employees not merely as workers, but as human beings who contribute to companies and society at large. They deserve appreciation and care, beyond mere economic considerations and should not be seen as disposable in the face of technological advancement. It is a call for businesses and society to value and nurture human contributions and well-being in the broader context of service and work and the very human customers served.

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Table 1. Key themes of CX – authors’ creation

Key themes	Sub-themes	Key propositions or findings in the CX literature
1. CX definition	<p>Core definition of CX</p> <p>Characteristics of CX</p>	<p>CX is the set of customer’s responses to a firm's offering, which are nondeliberate and spontaneous (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). These responses can be active or passive depending on the level of participation of the customer (De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</p> <p>CX is multidimensional: cognitive, emotional, physical, sensorial, and social (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).</p> <p>CX is holistic (Gentile <i>et al.</i>, 2007; Verhoef <i>et al.</i>, 2009).</p> <p>CX is subjective and thus unique for every customer (Meyer and Schwager 2007; Lemke <i>et al.</i>, 2011).</p> <p>CX is dynamic: the customer’s responses keep evolving over time (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).</p>
2. Antecedents of CX	<p>CX stimuli</p> <p>Contingency factors</p>	<p>CX stimuli are "anything than can be perceived or sensed by the customer" when interacting with the firm’s offering (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020, p. 639).</p> <p>CX stimuli are perceived as a whole, not in isolation from one another (Gentile <i>et al.</i>, 2007).</p> <p>Contingency factors shape how customers respond to CX stimuli.</p> <p>Contingency factors at the individual level include, among others, the customer's personality, mood, physical condition, resources, expectations, goals, and motivations (Puccinelli <i>et al.</i>, 2009; Verhoef <i>et al.</i>, 2009; Becker and Jaakkola, 2020; De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</p> <p>Contingency factors at the social level include the presence and behavior of other customers as well as the social roles that customers embrace and the social norms and rules they follow (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020; De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</p> <p>Contingency factors at the environmental level can be natural (e.g., weather), economic (e.g., state of the overall economy at the country or global level), public (e.g., road infrastructure), or political (De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</p>
3. Outcomes of CX		<p>CX likely enhances customer loyalty (Berry <i>et al.</i>, 2002), customer satisfaction and firm profits (Grewal <i>et al.</i>, 2009).</p>
4. Customer journey	<p>Touchpoints</p> <p>Stages of the customer journey</p>	<p>The customer journey is composed of touchpoints, which are moments when customers interact with the firm’s offering (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). The interaction is either actual or imagined, such as when customers anticipate future service encounters (De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</p> <p>Touchpoints can be under the direct control of the firm (e.g., service encounter) or outside of it (e.g., an interaction with a firm’s partner) (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).</p> <p>Touchpoints can be online (e.g., website visits) or offline (Gahler <i>et al.</i>, 2023).</p> <p>The customer journey encompasses three stages: pre-purchase (e.g., information search), purchase (e.g., core service encounter), and post-purchase stages (e.g., writing a review) (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Voorhees <i>et al.</i>, 2017).</p>
5. CX measurement	Scale development	<p>CX can be measured with the help of dedicated scales, such as the customer experience quality scale (Klaus and Maklan, 2013; Kuppelwieser and Klaus, 2021) or the customer experience scale (Gahler <i>et al.</i>, 2023).</p>

	Specificities of CX measurement	Given its dynamic and multidimensional nature, CX needs to be measured in real time and over time (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020) and preferably with the help of a multi-method approach (De Keyser <i>et al.</i> , 2020), which is exemplified in the method developed by McColl-Kennedy <i>et al.</i> (2019) or by Baxendale <i>et al.</i> (2015).
	Measurement by proxies	Practitioners tend to measure CX through proxies such as NPS and satisfaction scales, though academics warn against such simplified measures (Homburg <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Meyer and Schwager, 2007; Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).
	Call for developing new measurement tools	There is a need to develop new measurement tools such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-adaptive scales that would allow customers to focus on the touchpoints that they find relevant to their CX (Becker and Jaakkola 2020).</li> <li>• An all-encompassing measurement tool that would capture CX holistically (De Keyser <i>et al.</i>, 2020)</li> </ul>
6. CX management	CX management as engineering	CX management is a strategy that consists in engineering CX to create value for both the firm and the customer (Grewal <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Verhoef <i>et al.</i> , 2009). CX management should notably create seamless CX, i.e., seamless transitions between touchpoints (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Homburg <i>et al.</i> , 2017).
	CX management as facilitation	A firm's ability to manage CX is limited due to the contingency factors that influence how customers respond to CX stimuli (Lemke <i>et al.</i> , 2011; De Keyser <i>et al.</i> , 2015). CX management is thus limited to facilitating the co-creation of the intended CX (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020).

Table 2 Key themes of EX – authors’ creation

Key themes	Sub-themes	Key propositions or findings in the EX literature
1. EX definition	Core definition of EX Characteristics of EX	EX is the employee’s perceptions of the relationship to the employing organization (Plaskoff, 2017). EX is subjective (Yadav and Vihari, 2021). EX is multilevel: it is the employees’ perceptions of what they encounter at the personal, social, and cultural levels in their interactions with the organization (Batat, 2022). EX is holistic (Plaskoff, 2017). EX is evolving (Batat, 2022).
2. Antecedents of EX	EX stimuli	Tangible stimuli include the physical environment (Batat, 2022) and technologies (Malik <i>et al.</i> , 2023). Intangible stimuli include the work itself (i.e., job tasks), workplace culture, HR practices, and leadership (Panneerselvam and Balaraman, 2022) as well as how the work fits in the employee’s life (e.g., alignment between the employee’s goals and those of the organization, work-life balance) (Pangallo <i>et al.</i> , 2022). An employee empowered “state of mind” emerging from high-involvement work practices may drive EX (Bowen, 2024).
3. Outcomes of EX		EX likely enhances employee satisfaction, engagement, commitment, and performance (Plaskoff, 2017) as well as employee well-being (Batat, 2022).
4. Employee journey	Touchpoints  Stages of the employee journey	The employee journey is composed of touchpoints, which can be interactions with the organization itself or interactions related to the organization but with outside sources (e.g., media reports about the organization) (Plaskoff, 2017).  The employee journey encompasses three phases: pre-employment (e.g., job search and application), employment, and post-employment (i.e., after the employee quits) (Plaskoff, 2017).
5. EX measurement	Scale development	EX can be measured with the help of dedicated scales, developed by academics (e.g., Yadav and Vihari, 2021) or by practitioners (e.g., IBM’s Workforce Institute EX index).
6. EX management	EX management as design	EX management starts with understanding employees’ needs and then designing touchpoints accordingly (Tucker, 2020; Yadav and Vihari, 2021). Design thinking and journey mapping can be used to gain a deep understanding of employees’ needs (Plaskoff, 2017; Tucker, 2020). EX can be enhanced by empowering employees and fostering employee engagement (Bowen 2021, 2024), whereas the use of technologies as substitutes for human labor (e.g., robots) may damage EX (Bowen, 2024).

Table 3 Key Themes of HX – authors’ creation

Key themes	Sub-themes	Key propositions or findings in the HX literature
1. HX definition	Core definition of HX	HX is defined as “the totality of each person’s experience with service systems as they seek to meet their basic human needs across their life journey” (Fisk <i>et al.</i> , 2020, p. 616).
	Characteristics of HX	HX encompasses all the different roles that humans may have: parents, citizens, customers, employees, etc. (Fisk <i>et al.</i> , 2020).
2. Antecedents of HX	HX stimuli	The authenticity and fairness of processes and practices, such as authentic and just leadership as well as fair HRM practices, are identified as drivers of HX (Bowen, 2021).
3. Outcomes of HX		It is posited that satisfying HX improves human well-being and reduces human suffering (Fisk <i>et al.</i> , 2020).
4. HX management	HX management to serve humanity	Elevating HX can be achieved by satisfying basic human needs such as the needs for security, esteem, and justice (Fisk <i>et al.</i> , 2020).

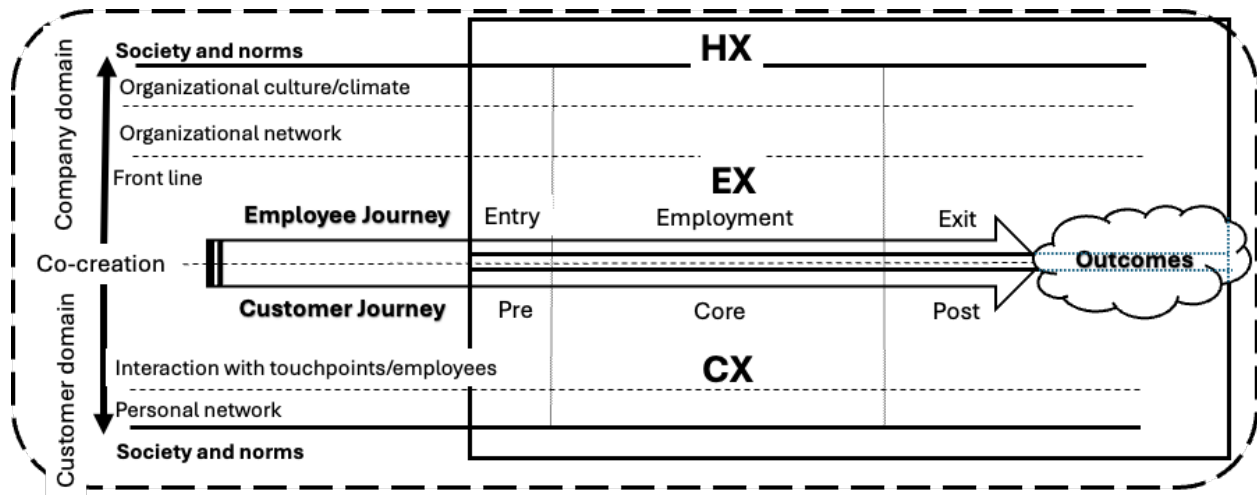


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of CX, EX, and HX (figure by authors)