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Chapter 7.

General Discussion

7.1. Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to gain insights into, and to offer practitioners clear guidance on the content and the implementation of a public service guarantee. To do so, first the content of a public service guarantee, and specifically the compensation as a part of this content, was systematically researched. Second, the enablers for the effective implementation of a service guarantee in a single organisation and in a service delivery network were studied. To do so I conducted five experiments involving a total of 2.441 Dutch students and (mainly) US-citizens. Moreover, I conducted three studies using qualitative research among public service guarantee experts and managers responsible for implementing a service guarantee. In this General Discussion I give an overview of the main findings, contributions to theory, suggestions for further research and managerial implications.

7.2. The study of the content of a public service guarantee

The design of a service guarantee consists of three design elements: the scope, the compensation and the payout process. In studies for the Chapters 2, 3 and 4 the service guarantee characteristics of these three design elements were researched in order to find answers on the first research question: *What should be the characteristics of a public service guarantee?* (RQ1). And more in detail concerning the compensation: *Does promising and offering a monetary service guarantee compensation in a public setting lead to increased customers' evaluations?* (RQ2) and *What are the signalling and perceived justice effects of prosocial compensation?* (RQ3).

Main findings

To answer the first question, research involving public service guarantee experts was conducted. These experts determined the importance of characteristics of the three design elements and four additional characteristics. Concerning the *scope*, my research reveals that a multi attribute-specific type of guarantee (see Section 2.3.) is preferred above an unconditional satisfaction guarantee. This result is coherent with research conducted in private settings among customers (McDougall *et al.*, 1998) and among Australian private organisations using service guarantees (McColl and Mattsson, 2011). This preference could be driven by the fact that an attribute-specific guarantee explicitly spells out for customers what is being covered. It helps customers in making the service failure verification process efficient by providing clear standards for identifying whether a failure has occurred (Meyer *et al.*, 2014). The important characteristics of the scope of being easy to understand by

customers and employees and the scope addressing the most important aspects of the service for customers are also generally mentioned in marketing and services management literature (e.g. Fabien, 1997, 2005; Kandampully, 2001). The consequence is that the scope should be developed in close cooperation with customers.

In the research for the Chapters 2, 3 and 4 I studied aspects of the compensation. My research among public experts (Chapter 2) showed two interesting differences with marketing and services management research in private sector settings. The first is that this stream of literature (e.g. Fabien, 2005; Hart, 1988; Hogreve and Gremler, 2009) states that compensation should be explicitly promised within a service guarantee and offered to customers. But the majority of the public experts (60 percent) indicated that offering compensation in case of a service guarantee violation was not desirable. The second difference is that marketing and services management literature (e.g. Fabien, 2005; Hart, 1988) states that the amount of compensation should be considerable. Among the public experts however there was a strong consensus that the compensation should be limited in terms of financial value. These two differences between private settings and the preferences of the public experts could be caused by (1) the opinion of experts that collective means like taxpayers' money should be spent on collective means (cf. Drewry, 2005) and not on compensating individual customers possibly leading to inequalities, (2) the fact that these experts were working for public organisations in monopolistic settings without market mechanisms making it, compared with the private sector, less important to have satisfied and loyal customers and (3) differences in the objectives of the experts for working with service guarantees: 'improving reputation', 'empowering customers' or 'improving customer centeredness and customer satisfaction' (see section 2.8).

In the research for Chapter 2, the majority of public experts indicated that offering service guarantee compensation was not desirable. But, the question is whether customers think compensation is desirable and positively influences their evaluations. Therefore, I conducted research by means of five scenario experiments with participants in the role of customers. The discriminatory effects of explicitly promising and offering a small monetary compensation (a gift voucher of 5 euro/dollar) on customers' evaluations were researched in public and private settings to find answers on the second research question. Combining the results of the Chapters 3 and 4 on the effects of monetary compensation, four main conclusions can be drawn. *First*, the results of the four experiments combined showed that offering a small

monetary compensation leads to more positive customers' evaluations on distributive justice, procedural justice and post-recovery satisfaction and less negative emotions compared with neither promising nor offering compensation. This effect was similar in public and private settings. This shows that also in public settings offering customers a monetary compensation is an effective service recovery tool. It compensates for the perceived loss caused by the service failure and improves customers' evaluations. This effect in public settings is in conformance with the results of earlier research in private settings (e.g. Grewal *et al.*, 2008; Schoefer and Ennew, 2005). Apparently, the expected differences in public-private effects as a result of differences in customer-supplier relationships (see section 1.4.) did not appear.

Second, explicitly promising compensation has positive signalling effects and leads to improved customers' evaluations. The first experiment of Chapter 4 showed that an explicit promise to compensate leads both in the public and private settings to more positive evaluations of corporate image, perceived credibility and WOM-intent than not explicitly promising a compensation (however, there was no effect on CSR-image). These results are in line with research in private settings showing that service guarantees have a positive impact on perceived service quality and reduce perceived risk (e.g. Wirtz and Kum, 2001). *Third*, results of the two experiments in service recovery situations after a service guarantee violation (Chapter 3) showed that explicitly promising compensation had no effects on evaluations of distributive and procedural justice, negative emotions and post-recovery satisfaction. From this service recovery perspective it makes no sense to promise compensation. *Fourth*, for organisations not effectively implementing their service guarantee promising compensation can even be dangerous. Customers' evaluations are very negative in 'double deviation' situations where not only the initial service promise is violated but also the promise to compensate. This could lead to customers seriously damaging the organisation.

Chapter 4 presents a study in which the effects of prosocial compensation on customers' evaluations are researched. In the case of prosocial compensation the service guarantee compensation is not offered to the customer but to a charitable cause on behalf of the customer (a fixed cause or a cause of customers' choice). It is a type of compensation that could fit well with public services, and could be effective because society and not individual customers are benefiting from the compensation. Combining the results of the three experiments for this study a picture emerges that prosocial compensation could be a good alternative for the traditional monetary compensation. From a signalling perspective on

potential customers, prosocial compensation helps the organisation to signal quality and show its CSR-engagement effectively. Prosocial compensation leads to more positive levels of corporate image, perceived credibility, WOM-intent and CSR-image as neither promising nor offering compensation. It leads to similar levels as a monetary compensation except for CSR-image. Prosocial compensation is more effective in increasing this image than a monetary compensation. From a service recovery perspective prosocial compensation also seems to be an interesting practice, although a monetary compensation is even more effective. In the third experiment the effects of prosocial compensation on distributive justice; procedural justice and post-recovery satisfaction were compared with neither promising nor offering compensation. Also here prosocial compensation led to more positive customers' evaluations of perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction.

Finally concerning the third design element, the *payout process*, the experts' opinion (Chapter 2) was that the rules for applying compensation should be clear and when granted, it should be easy to receive the compensation. These results are congruent with marketing and services management literature (e.g. Fabien, 2005; Hart, 1988).

Contributions to theory

This part of my dissertation contributes to justice theory, signalling theory, service guarantee literature and CSR-literature. *Justice theory* (Adams, 1965) is a dominant theoretical framework applied in service recovery research in private settings (e.g. Crisafulli and Singh, 2016; Schoefer and Ennew, 2005; Vázquez-Casielles *et al.*, 2010). Service recovery can be considered as an exchange in which the customer experiences a loss, while the organisation fulfils its ethical obligation by making up that loss by a recovery attempt in order to restore customer satisfaction (Mattila, 2001). Justice theory states that customers evaluate recovery fairness in interactional, procedural and distributive justice terms (e.g. Homburg and Fürst, 2005; Martinez-Tur *et al.*, 2006; Orsingher *et al.*, 2010; Vázquez-Casielles *et al.*, 2010). The relative impact of these three justice dimensions on post-recovery satisfaction depends on factors like the kind of failure, the service setting and characteristics of the customer and the customer-supplier relationship (e.g. Del Rio-Lanza *et al.*, 2008; Kwon and Jang, 2012; Mattila, 2001). Research in private settings has shown the positive relation between offering compensation, distributive justice and post-recovery satisfaction (e.g. Grewal *et al.*, 2008; Schoefer and Ennew, 2005; Siu *et al.*, 2013). My research contributes to the application of justice theory in service recovery settings in three ways. The first is that the research

presented in the Chapters 3 and 4 expands the scope from the private to the public domain. The research is the first using justice theory in public service recovery situations. It shows that there is also a positive relation between offering compensation and customers' evaluations of perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction in public settings. Thus justice theory seems to be as applicable in public as in private settings. The second contribution to justice theory is that it has expanded the scope of compensation from the traditional monetary types of compensation to the psychological type of prosocial compensation. Roschk and Gelbrich (2014) showed that an apology could function as an emotional benefit and psychological compensation for the customer. The research for Chapter 4 shows that also a non-monetary type of compensation like prosocial compensation can help restoring justice perceptions and post-recovery satisfaction. The third contribution to justice theory is that my research for Chapter 4 links justice theory to CSR. It confirms that justice theory is an important theory explaining the ethical effects of CSR on customers' evaluations (Husted, 1998; Bolton and Mattila, 2015).

This research shows that prosocial compensation also signals quality by increasing corporate image, CSR-image, perceived credibility and WOM-intent. It contributes to *signalling theory* (e.g. Bergh *et al.*, 2014; Connelly *et al.*, 2011; Karasek and Bryant, 2012; Spence, 1974; Zerbini, 2017). Signalling theory emerged from the study of information economics under conditions in which buyers and suppliers possess asymmetric information when facing a market interaction (Spence, 1974). This theory is concerned with deliberately reducing the information asymmetry between organisations and their customers. Important aspects of this theory are 'signal observability', 'signal costs' and 'signal usefulness' (Connelly *et al.*, 2011). I have researched this last aspect in the context of service guarantees in public and private settings. Service guarantees are extrinsic cues considered by (potential) customers as 'signals' of quality (Erevelles *et al.*, 2001). These signals could have an impact on perceived service quality and perceived risk (Kanpampully and Butler, 2001; Ostrom and Iacobucci, 1998; Wirtz and Kum, 2001). Research applying justice theory in service recovery settings has only used monetary types of compensation (e.g. Wirtz and Kum, 2001). The first contribution to signalling theory is that it has expanded the use of this theory from the private to the public domain. Again, it shows that signalling theory seems to be as applicable in public as in private settings. The second contribution of Chapter 4 to signalling theory is that it has expanded the scope of compensation from the traditional monetary types of compensation to the psychological type of prosocial compensation.

So far *public service guarantee literature* on the content of service guarantees has been descriptive. This stream of literature is also inconsistent towards promising and offering compensation (e.g. Barron and Scott, 1992; Kim, 2009). Experimental research involving customers is scarce in public management literature. The five experiments for the Chapters 3 and 4 are the first investigating customers' evaluations in public service failure situations. This research among customers contributes to using a service-dominant logic approach in the public domain to place customers, rather than products, policy makers or professionals, at the heart of service research, design and operations (Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Osborne *et al.*, 2015). Chapter 4 contributes to public and private service guarantee literature by introducing a new type of service guarantee compensation. Public service guarantee and service recovery literature generally uses monetary types of compensation. In many definitions it is stated that the compensation like refunds, discounts on future purchase, gift vouchers, and exchanging the goods or service has to be monetary for the customer (Blodgett *et al.*, 1997, Grewal *et al.*, 2008; Homburg and Fürst, 2005; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; Tax *et al.*, 1998). Chapter 4 shows that also a psychological type of compensation could be used.

Finally, this research contributes to *CSR literature* in two ways. First, it offers scholars and practitioners relevant information on a new and not before researched type of CSR-practice that can be used in public and private settings. Second, it is the first research connecting CSR literature with service guarantee literature.

Further research

Over the course of the three empirical chapters, three research questions were researched using different research methods. In these chapters the limitations of the research (methods) used and the suggestions for further research are mentioned. I here give avenues for further research on five issues.

A first line of research could study the question what the optimal conditions are for explicitly communicating compensation. The question whether compensation should be explicitly promised in a service guarantee seems to be complex. From a signalling perspective, explicitly promising to compensate makes sense, it has positive effects on e.g. corporate image and perceived credibility (first experiment Chapter 4). However, in service recovery situations after a service failure it has no effects on perceived justice and post-recovery

satisfaction (last two experiments of Chapter 4). In these situations it makes no sense. Also, there is a potential danger in explicitly communicating compensation. In Chapter 3 the effects of a double deviation on customers' evaluations were researched. This is a service guarantee situation where one or more promises are violated (first failure) and where also the promised compensation is not offered to the customer (second failure). Marketing and services management research has shown that more than half of all attempted recovery efforts reinforce dissatisfaction because of a failed service recovery (Casado-Díaz and Nicolau-Gonzálbez, 2009). Results of the study reported in Chapter 3 showed that this double deviation had strong negative effects on customers' evaluations of distributive justice, procedural justice, post-recovery satisfaction and strong positive effects on negative emotions. These results were similar for public and private settings and are in conformance with earlier research in private settings (e.g. Casado-Díaz and Nicolau-Gonzálbez, 2007, 2009; Gneezy and Epley, 2014). Customers could, actively and systematically, seek opportunities to criticise or damage the organisation. From this double deviation perspective it only seems to be sound to explicitly promise compensation when the organisation is sure she can avoid these double deviation situations. Future research could determine the conditions in which compensation explicitly (or not) has to be communicated.

A second avenue for future research concerns the offering of compensation. The traditional view on service guarantees is that it contains one type of monetary compensation (see for an overview Hogreve and Gremler, 2009). The first question is whether alternative nonmonetary types of compensation (like the researched prosocial compensation) could be as effective as a monetary compensation. For example Thwaites and Williams (2006) showed that if a failure in service delivery can be directly resolved and/or monetary compensation would not solve the customer's problem, then customers not always expect monetary compensation. Customers prefer monetary compensation in low-critical situations. In high critical situations, customers prefer that the organisation solve the problem (Webster and Sundaram, 1998). Also in a service recovery situation an apology can function as an emotional benefit and psychological compensation for the customer (Roschk and Gelbrich, 2014). This triggers the question whether a monetary compensation should be a standard design element of a service guarantee or that other more psychological types of compensation could also be used in service guarantees. The second question is whether a service guarantee, instead of having one type of monetary compensation for all failures, should not have a hybrid set of types of compensation depending on the type of failure made. The type of compensation has to match

the type of service failure to be effective (Roschk and Gelbrich, 2014). From this perspective a multi attribute-specific service guarantee with several promises could have a specific compensation per promise. Future research could study this hybrid compensation in a public service guarantee.

In conformance with Crisafully and Singh (2016) I kept the interaction with the employee (interactional justice) intentionally constant in all five experiments in order to focus on the effects of compensation and the payout process. However, in daily practice differences in employee behaviour in service guarantee situations could influence the perceived justice (e.g. Homburg and Fürst, 2005), emotions and customer satisfaction. For example Björlin Lidén and Skålen (2003, p. 52) showed that employees in a hotel setting relied too much on offering guests a monetary compensation after a problem instead of relying on their empathic and responsive behaviour leading to decreased levels of guest satisfaction. McQuilken (2010) showed that the effort for solving a problem employees display in a 100% satisfaction guarantee context have an impact on customers' evaluations. McQuilken *et al.* (2013, p. 48) concluded from their research: 'It is clear from our findings that guarantee compensation alone will not atone for the dissatisfaction caused by a negative service experience'. Follow-up research in public service guarantee settings could investigate what the effects of differences in employee behaviour are on customers' evaluations of service guarantees.

In order to find similar service settings in public and private sectors, I used direct-exchange situations where customers directly had to pay for their product. However, in the public domain services are also offered where customers do not have to pay because they are (partly) financed through taxpayers' money. Additional research could be conducted in these non-direct exchange situations. Customers' evaluations of a compensation being promised and offered after a service guarantee violation could differ in these non-direct-exchange situations because the service was perceived by the customer to be 'for free'.

Finally, my study on the design of a service guarantee (Chapter 2) was conducted within a Dutch context with Dutch service guarantee experts. This Dutch setting could have an impact on the outcomes of my research. The public setting for service guarantees could be different in other countries. The main objective for introducing service guarantees in The Netherlands was to improve performance to customers, however in other countries this could be to justify government performance or because of pressure from national governments. In the

Netherlands a bottom up approach was used, in other countries a national service guarantee framework was imposed on public organisations (see section 1.2.) and finally in The Netherlands it is possible to offer public customers compensation after a failure. These national differences could have an impact on the national experts' opinions towards the content of a service guarantee. Further research by replicating the research in other countries or conducting a multinational study in countries that use public service guarantees would increase the external validity of my findings.

Managerial implications

An effective public service guarantee sets clear standards for customers and employees, it creates team spirit and pride, it generates customer feedback, it promotes focus on customers, improves performance to customers and increases customer satisfaction (based on Hart, 1988; McCollough, 2010). It could contribute in creating public customer-supplier relationships with citizens as customers with more power, similar to the private sector, as was the original intention of the UK Government for implementing public service guarantees named Citizen's Charters (see also section 1.2.). But in order to achieve these effects it is important that service guarantees are properly designed. Chapter 2 offers an overview of the important service guarantee characteristics. A public service guarantee should be a multi attribute-specific guarantee with specific promises that can be checked by customers. The promises reflect the most important service attributes for customers. The research as presented in the Chapters 3 and 4 offers guidance concerning service guarantee compensation. Compensation should always be offered after a service guarantee violation since this has positive effects on perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction.

In Chapter 4 prosocial compensation is studied as an alternative for the traditional monetary compensation. It shows that prosocial compensation also improves customers' evaluations and on top of this has a positive effect on CSR-image. In this way service guarantees could contribute to not only fulfilling the ethical obligations to compensate customers but also to the philanthropic obligations of organisations by offering money to good causes. These results of the Chapters 2, 3 and 4 could be translated into a set of guidelines for the content of public service guarantees. Organisations developing a service guarantee could use this for the design; organisations already using a service guarantee could use it to review and improve their current service guarantee.

7.3. The study of the effective implementation of a public service guarantee

Having studied the content of service guarantees in public settings, the last two research questions of this dissertation focussed on the effective implementation of a public service guarantee that increases customer centeredness of the organisation and improves customer satisfaction: *What are the enablers for effectively implementing a public service guarantee by a single organisation?* (RQ4) and *What are the enablers for effectively implementing a public service guarantee by a service delivery network?* (RQ5). In other words, I studied the implementation by looking at a single organisation as well as a network situation.

Main findings

In Chapter 5, I researched the enablers for implementing a service guarantee in a single organisation. Enablers are elements of processes, structures or states that are necessary antecedents to an effective implementation of a service guarantee (Kashyap, 2001). The research involving public service guarantee experts resulted in the Public Service Guarantee Implementation (PSGI)-Framework. The research for a service delivery network involving the managers of a stroke service resulted in the Network Framework. The clusters of both frameworks and their similarities and differences are presented in Table 19. When comparing both frameworks, three main conclusions can be made. The *first* conclusion is that there are many similarities between the clusters ‘Leadership’, ‘Empowerment of employees’ and ‘Continuous improvement’ of the PSGI-Framework and the clusters ‘Strategy and managerial commitment’, ‘Employee focus’ and ‘Patient focus’ of the Network Framework. The labels of these clusters are different but the enablers in them have many similarities. When analysing the three clusters of the PSGI-Framework, five organisational ‘key enablers’ emerge for the implementation on an organisational level. These are (1) top management commitment (e.g. having a vision on the customer and customer orientation, commitment for and actively promoting the service guarantee), (2) linking the service guarantee to the strategy (e.g. service guarantee implementation as a part of a broad customer-centric program, positioning the service guarantee as an instrument to improve service quality), (3) active involvement and empowerment of employees (e.g. active involvement in implementation, commitment to the content of the service guarantee, authority to act, possibilities to deviate from standard procedures), (4) active customer involvement (e.g. customer research, use of customers’ wishes and expectations) and (5) continuous reflecting, learning and improving (e.g. use of feedback mechanisms, measuring the realisation of promises, improvement of operations).

The full scope of the enablers for implementing a service guarantee on an organisational level shows that it is not a quick fix but it takes time. All stakeholders (e.g. management, employees and customers) have to be actively involved. The picture emerges that implementing a service guarantee is not a standalone initiative, but should be part of a broader customer centeredness initiative like Total Quality Management (TQM). The enablers have many similarities with the five principles of TQM: customer focus, process focus, teamwork, employee participation and continuous improvement (Murray and Chapman, 2003). This could lead to the idea that a TQM-approach may be necessary to implement a service guarantee effectively.

Table 19. Comparing the PSGI-Framework and the Network Framework

PSGI-Framework	Network Framework	
Cluster: Leadership	Cluster: Strategy and managerial commitment	Clusters with many similarities in both frameworks
Cluster: Empowerment of employees	Cluster: Employee focus	
Cluster: Continuous improvement	Cluster: Patient focus and Sub cluster: Continuous improvement	
	Cluster: Chain chemistry	Two additional specific network clusters for the network framework
	Cluster: Chain characteristics	Two additional clusters on project management and project organisation
	Cluster: Steering and managing the project	
	Cluster: The way of implementation	

The *second* conclusion is that, on top of the enablers on a single organisational level, there are several network-specific enablers influencing the effectiveness of the implementation (see Table 19). These are represented in the two clusters ‘Chain chemistry’ and ‘Chain characteristics’ of the Network Framework. The cluster ‘Chain chemistry’ concerns trust between partners, willingness to cooperate, putting the chain before the interests of the individual organisation and having one organisation in the lead. The cluster ‘Chain characteristics’ consists of enablers like the structure of the chain and the extent of integration. Especially these two clusters show that implementing a service guarantee in a network offers additional challenges compared with a single organisation. Differences in leadership, policy, priorities and culture between organisations can make an implementation in a network setting more difficult.

The *third* conclusion is that in the Network Framework two additional clusters of enablers (‘Steering and managing the project’ and ‘The way of implementation’) were identified that were not included in the PSGI-Framework. In the PSGI-Framework some enablers on this issue are part of the ‘Leadership’ cluster, but the focus has not been directed towards this

aspect. In the single case study leading to the Network Framework there was also a focus on the specific project-organisation and way of implementation. Although these enablers are not specific clusters in the PSGI-Framework these enablers are nonetheless important for a single organisation during the service guarantee implementation.

Contributions to theory

This research contributes in four ways to theory. *First*, both the PSGI-Framework and the Network Framework are an extension to public service guarantee literature. Both research based frameworks are the first addressing the enablers for implementing a public service guarantee. *Second*, the PSGI-Framework, although developed in a public setting, could contribute to marketing and services management literature. As explained in section 1.5, beside the anecdotal papers and the case studies on enablers there is only one research-based paper on the common mistakes of implementing service guarantees (McColl and Mattsson, 2011). Based on 22 interviews with ten private organisations using a service guarantee a list with the most important mistakes was developed. In Table 20 an overview is given of the nine mentioned common mistakes and these are related to the five organisational key enablers found in this dissertation (see first conclusion of the main findings in this section).

Table 20. Comparing common mistakes and organisational key enablers

Common mistakes (McColl and Mattsson, 2011)	Organisational key enablers (this dissertation)
1. Inadequate or non existent pre-launch market research (customers, industry standards, competition, legal environment)	Customer research provides input for the enabler <i>active customer involvement</i> . Other sources are not included in the enablers
2. Unclear definition of the role of the service guarantee	Integrated in <i>linking the service guarantee to the strategy</i>
3. Inadequate testing of alternative promises among customers	Not included in the enablers
4. Inadequate organisation-wide involvement of key managers	Integrated in <i>management commitment</i>
5. No full knowledge of staff members of procedures for processing a guarantee claim	Is a part of <i>active involvement and empowerment of employees</i>
6. Lack of consultation with key functional managers	Integrated in <i>management commitment</i>
7. Lack of CEO commitment	Integrated in <i>management commitment</i>
8. Ambiguous assignment of responsibility for on-going management of the guarantee (no use of phases of feedback and review)	Integrated in <i>continuous reflecting, learning and improving</i>
9. Absence of performance evaluations (e.g. number of payments)	Integrated in <i>continuous reflecting, learning and improving</i>

When comparing the common mistakes (column 1) and the organisational key enablers (column 2) there seems to be a large overlap. But there are also some differences. The common mistakes 1 ('inadequate or non existent pre-launch market research') and 3 ('inadequate testing of alternative promises among customers') are missing in the

organisational key enablers. On the other hand, several employee-related key enablers are missing in common mistake 5 ('no full knowledge of staff members of procedures for processing a guarantee claim'). This seems to justify the conclusion that this research also could contribute to the know-how on implementing service guarantees in private settings. *Third*, the Network Framework contributes to both public and private public service guarantee literature by lifting the service guarantee concept from the current studied level of the single organisation to the level of a service delivery network jointly organising one customer journey. Since organisations are organising themselves in service delivery networks more and more often (Tax *et al.*, 2013), a network service guarantee could become more frequently used and become more important in the future. *Fourth*, Chapter 6 contributes to implementation science in healthcare (e.g. Damschroeder *et al.*, 2009; Moullin *et al.*, 2015). It expands implementation research on integrated care services (Wensing *et al.*, 2006) and managed networks (Tremblay *et al.*, 2016) that is often focussed on innovations in specific pathways like asthma, cancer, heart failure and stroke (Greenhalgh *et al.*, 2004) in order to improve medical outcomes. This research is focussed on a quality management innovation in such a network in order to improve patient satisfaction. It offers a holistic overview of the organisational conditions (enablers) that have to be in place in order to implement a service guarantee effectively.

Further research

Over the course of the two empirical Chapters 5 and 6, two research questions were investigated using different qualitative research methods. In these chapters the limitations of the research (methods) used and the suggestions for further research are mentioned. I here give some avenues for further research on three issues. The *first* concerns the development and validation of a new framework. The PSGI-Framework offers a strong basis depicting the enablers influencing the effectiveness of an implementation. However the research of McColl and Mattsson (2011) and my research for Chapter 6 offer a limited number of additional possibly relevant enablers. In a follow-up research an even more complete framework could be built that is validated by testing it in several organisations. A *second* interesting avenue for further research is comparing the PSGI-Framework and the Network Framework with commonly used excellence models. Examples of these models are the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and the framework for The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (Assif and Gouthier, 2014; Bou-Llusar *et al.*, 2005; Gouthier *et al.*, 2012; Murray and Chapman, 2003) or the Path to Customer Centricity

(Shah *et al.*, 2006) and Service Excellence (Assif and Gouthier, 2014; Gouthier *et al.*, 2012). An additional interesting next step could be to research the positive relationship between the enablers and the results within an organisation as Bou-Llusar *et al.* (2005) have done for the EFQM-Model. *Finally* it would be interesting to research the effects of organisational characteristics like size, type of public agency and the way of financing the organisation on the importance of certain enablers.

Managerial implications

An important condition for achieving the objectives of an improved customer centeredness and customer satisfaction is a properly implemented service guarantee with all the important enablers in place. This research resulted in PSGI-Framework for a single organisation and a Network Framework for a service delivery network using one shared service guarantee. Both frameworks consist of a number of organisational enablers that could be addressed and put in place to make a service guarantee implementation effective. Both frameworks could be translated into checklists or audit tools to assess strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of a service guarantee. Results of such an assessment show management the necessary measures to take and help in deciding how to implement the service guarantee. Using such a checklist in a pre-implementation phase could show top management what it takes for the organisation and have a well-informed decision to start implementing a service guarantee. Such a checklist could also be used in a post-implementation phase to determine in an audit to what extent the organisation supports an already implemented service guarantee.

7.4. Building bridges between public and private sectors

The main objective of this dissertation was to shed light on service guarantees in the public domain. Doing so made it possible to build a bridge between public and private management scholarship. Based on past research on performance management (Hvidman and Calmar Andersen, 2013) and decision-making practices (Nutt, 2006) showing that public management is not similar to private management, there was the expectation that this could also be the case for designing and implementing a public service guarantee. Public-private differences in customer-supplier relationships, funding, control and ownership (e.g. Boyne, 2002; Bozeman, 1987) could cause these differences. This dissertation makes it possible to reflect on the similarities and differences between the two settings.

Based on literature stating that public and private customer-supplier relationships are different (see Sections 1.4. and 1.5.), there seemed to be a need to conduct additional research in public settings. The results however show that despite these possible public-private differences, there are many similarities in the design of public and private service guarantees. Note that this conclusion is based on scenarios with direct-exchange situations where the public customers had to pay directly for the services instead of services being payed through taxpayers' money. Because of differences in funding and control between public and private organisations (e.g. Boyne, 2002; Bozeman, 1987) there were possibly also public-private differences in the *implementation* of a public service guarantee. The results of the research presented in the Chapters 5 and 6, however, showed that the enablers of the PSGI-Framework and the Network Framework did not show public-specific enablers like for example political involvement. It seems that also concerning the implementation there are many public-private similarities.

These results support the notion that public customer relationships and public management are becoming more and more similar to private settings (Van der Walle, 2016). The increasing commercialisation of public services, and the introduction of many private management and customer service innovations (like service guarantees), may have shifted customers' expectations to levels similar to those found in the private sector (Clarke *et al.*, 2007; Needham, 2006). Also customers' experiences in private settings might influence their service expectations (Clarke *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, public organisations increasingly approach citizens as customers (Aberbach and Christensen, 2005) in order to satisfy their needs (Vigoda, 2002). This development shows the necessity to build bridges between public management literature on the one hand and marketing and services management literature on the other hand.

7.5. Conclusion

This dissertation provides theoretical insights and empirical data on public service guarantees. Moreover, it provides practitioners valuable guidelines for working with service guarantees in order to increase the customer centeredness of their organisation or network and improve customer satisfaction. By combining the results of the five empirical chapters it becomes clear that a careful design and implementation of a service guarantee is as important in the public sector as it is in the private sector. Implementing a service guarantee is not a fad, a marketing trick, or one of the many action points of a management agenda. A good public multi-attribute

specific service guarantee contains several specific promises, is based on customers' preferences and contains an explicit or implicit promise to compensate customers. Customers receive compensation after a service guarantee violation. This can be in terms of a monetary compensation, a prosocial compensation or another type of psychological compensation. Compared with a monetary compensation, this prosocial compensation has the additional advantage of contributing to the CSR-image of the organisation.

To make sure the service guarantee is used in a coherent way and service guarantee violations and even worse double deviations are prevented, all the important enablers should be addressed during the implementation. A service guarantee implementation should not be a standalone project but is part of a major change program towards customer centricity using a holistic management approach like TQM or Service Excellence. This eventually could lead to a service guarantee that really acts as a signal of quality to potential customers and improves customer-supplier relationships.

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Summary

This dissertation focuses on the concept of service guarantees used in public settings. In a service guarantee an organisation explicitly promises specific levels of service, or even total satisfaction, to its customers. It also promises that when this first promise is violated, the customer will be compensated. The concept has received much attention in private settings, but although service guarantees are also used in public settings there are no research-based guidelines for the content and implementation of a public service guarantee. In this dissertation the characteristics of an effective public service guarantee are determined first. One of the design elements of a service guarantee is compensation. The dissertation identified the effects of monetary and prosocial compensation on customers' evaluations and compares the effects to a situation without compensation. In the case of prosocial compensation it is not the customer who receives the compensation, but compensation is donated by the organisation to a charitable cause on behalf of the customer. Organisational aspects of implementing the concept are investigated next. The dissertation reveals the enablers for effectively implementing a public service guarantee by a single organisation and by a service delivery network. For researching the content and implementation of a public service guarantee, a multi method approach was used including five experiments involving Dutch students and US-citizens as well as qualitative research methods like Delphi, concept mapping, focus group, case study with in-depth interviews and inductive analysis based on Grounded Theory.

The **General Introduction (Chapter 1)** describes the concept of service guarantees used in public and private settings. The focus of this dissertation is presented followed by the five research questions. The first focuses on the content of a service guarantee, the second and third on the effects of monetary and prosocial service guarantee compensation on customers' evaluations. The last two research questions focus on the enablers for effectively implementing a service guarantee in a single public organisation and in a public service delivery network. In the last two sections also the differences between the public and private sectors are discussed that possibly have an effect on the content and implementation of a public service guarantee.

Chapter 2 describes the results of a Delphi study researching the characteristics of the content of a public service guarantee. Based on a literature study a list with potential important service guarantee characteristics of the scope, the compensation and the payout process was developed. In three voting rounds, an expert panel of 37 public service guarantee

experts determined the importance of these characteristics. Results concerning the scope showed that ideally a public service guarantee is easy to understand by employees and customers and is specific and easy for customers to check whether the promised service levels are met. The scope is focused on the most important aspects of the service provision for customers. A multi attribute-specific guarantee is preferred, while an unconditional satisfaction guarantee is rejected. Concerning the compensation, the amount should not be considerable. There was much less consensus among the experts on other characteristics. For example about 60% of the experts had the opinion that offering compensation in case of a service guarantee failure was not desirable. Concerning the payout process, results showed that there should be clear rules with respect to the application of the compensation and if offered, it should be easy to receive.

Chapter 3 focuses on the compensation in a public service guarantee. Monetary compensation is a strategy commonly used in private settings, but less so in public settings. Ultimately, it is customers that determine if compensation is effective in improving their evaluations. Therefore an experimental study was conducted consisting of two vignette studies (Dutch students N=157; US-citizens N=937) researching the discriminatory effects of promising and offering monetary compensation in public and private service recovery settings. I measured customers' perceived distributive justice, procedural justice, negative emotions and post-recovery satisfaction. The results showed that compensating customers for a service failure led to more positive evaluations than not offering compensation. Explicitly promising compensation had no effects on perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction in service recovery settings. However, promising compensation and not offering it (a double deviation) led to a strong decrease in all customers' evaluations. Despite differences between public and private customer-supplier relationships, these effects were similar in the public and private settings researched.

Chapter 4 describes the results of a second study on service guarantee compensation. The effects of prosocial compensation on customers' evaluations were researched. In the first experiment researching the signalling effects on potential customers (US-citizens N=603) the effects of promising no compensation, a monetary compensation and two types of prosocial compensation (fixed cause and cause chosen by customer) were researched. This experiment showed that both prosocial compensation and a monetary compensation had more positive effects on corporate image, perceived credibility and word-of-mouth (WOM)-intent than not

promising any compensation. For these three dependent variables prosocial and monetary compensation had similar effects. However, prosocial compensation had more positive signalling effects on corporate social responsibility (CSR)-image than a monetary compensation. There were no differences between the public and private settings. This study showed that explicitly promising compensation had positive signalling effects in a situation of potential customers seeing a service guarantee on the website. In two additional experiments (Dutch students N=148; US-citizens N=633) the perceived justice effects of offering compensation were researched in service recovery situations again comparing prosocial compensation with a monetary compensation and a situation where neither compensation was promised nor offered. Results showed that prosocial compensation led to improved customers' evaluations of perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction compared with neither promising nor offering compensation. However, offering a monetary compensation led to even better customers' evaluations than prosocial compensation. These last two experiments thus showed that offering monetary and prosocial compensation had positive effects on customers' evaluations. This study showed also that prosocial compensation could be an interesting new CSR-practice since it contributes to CSR-image and fulfilling the philanthropic as well as the ethical responsibilities of the organisation.

Chapter 5 describes the results of a concept mapping study with an integrated Delphi study determining the enablers for the effective implementation of a service guarantee in a single public organisation. A total of 45 experts have cooperated in this research. Based on a literature review a list with potential enablers was developed. In three voting rounds experts, who had worked with public service guarantees in the Netherlands, selected the most important enablers. This list was the basis for the following step in which experts individually clustered the enablers. Next a clustering and graphical presentation of the enablers was developed using multidimensional scaling analysis (ARIADNE software). This led to the Public Service Guarantee Implementation (PSGI)-Framework. This framework consists of three clusters, ten sub clusters and a total of 44 enablers. The clusters are 'Leadership', 'Empowerment of employees' and 'Continuous improvement'. It shows that implementing a service guarantee requires a structured change management process that addresses both structures/systems and cultural aspects.

Chapter 6 describes the results of a single case study researching the enablers for the effective implementation of a public service guarantee in a service delivery network. For

customers being serviced by several organisations in one customer journey it makes sense that they are offered one service guarantee instead of one guarantee per involved organisation. Since this practice is still rare, a single case study of a healthcare network for service after suffering a stroke consisting of five organisations was used. Relevant documents were studied followed by individual semi-structured interviews with all managers responsible for the implementation of the service guarantee. Interview transcripts were analysed using Glaser's approach to inductively develop a framework of these enablers. This resulted in a Network Framework of seven clusters with a total of 27 enablers. Three clusters are similar to those of the PSGI-Framework; two are on the specific way of implementing and the project organisation. There are also two specific clusters ('Chain chemistry' and 'Chain characteristics') typically important for the effective implementation of a service guarantee in a network context. This shows that implementing a network service guarantee could even be more difficult than one for a single organisation.

The **General Discussion** (Chapter 7) reflects on the results of the Chapters 2-6. Combining the results it becomes clear that a public service guarantee should preferably have a multi attribute-specific design with several specific promises. These promises reflect the aspects of service important to customers. Therefore it is important to involve customers in designing and implementing a service guarantee. It could also contain an explicit formulated compensation. This could be a monetary or a prosocial compensation. The advantage of using prosocial compensation is that it contributes to the organisation's CSR-image and to fulfilling philanthropic and ethical CSR-responsibilities. This research has proven that promising to offer compensation but not offering it leads to extreme negative customers' evaluations. Therefore, a well-structured implementation that takes time and effort is of great importance. Preferably, a service guarantee is not implemented as a standalone concept, but as a part of a larger customer-centric change process. A service guarantee is not a goal in itself, but a means to improve the customer-centricity of the organisation, signal service quality to (potential) customers and strengthen customer relationships. Similar to private settings, a service guarantee in a public setting can be a powerful concept to realise these goals, but organisations should not be too light-hearted in the decision to start implementing it.

Samenvatting

Dit proefschrift richt zich op het gebruik van servicegaranties in de publieke dienstverlening. Een organisatie belooft haar klanten in een servicegarantie specifieke servicelevels of zelfs volledige klanttevredenheid. De servicegarantie geeft tevens aan dat als deze beloften niet waar worden gemaakt de klant hiervoor wordt gecompenseerd. Dit concept heeft aandacht gekregen in de commerciële/private dienstverlening, maar ondanks het feit dat het ook in de publieke dienstverlening wordt gebruikt, zijn er geen op onderzoek gebaseerde richtlijnen voor de inhoud en het implementeren van publieke servicegaranties. In dit proefschrift worden eerst de ontwerpkenmerken van een publieke servicegarantie vastgesteld. Een van de elementen van een servicegarantie is de compensatie. Deze is diepgaand onderzocht door de effecten van een financiële en een pro-sociale compensatie op de klant te bepalen. In het geval van pro-sociale compensatie is het niet de klant die de compensatie ontvangt maar deze wordt door de organisatie namens de klant aan een charitatieve instelling gedoneerd. Hierna worden de organisatie-aspecten van het implementeren van een servicegarantie onderzocht. De factoren die bijdragen aan een effectieve implementatie van een servicegarantie worden onderzocht voor een enkele organisatie en een netwerk van dienstverlenende organisaties. Voor dit onderzoek naar het ontwerpen en implementeren van een publieke servicegarantie zijn verschillende onderzoeksmethoden gebruikt waaronder vijf experimenten met Nederlandse studenten en VS-burgers en verder kwalitatieve onderzoeksvormen zoals Delphi, concept mapping, focusgroep, case studie met diepte-interviews en een inductieve analyse conform Grounded Theory.

De **introdunctie (Hoofdstuk 1)** beschrijft het concept van servicegaranties dat wordt gebruikt in zowel de commerciële als publieke dienstverlening. In de volgende paragrafen worden de focus van dit proefschrift en de vijf onderzoeksvragen behandeld. De eerste richt zich op het ontwerp van een publieke servicegarantie, de tweede en de derde op de effecten van een financiële en een pro-sociale compensatie op de klant. De laatste twee onderzoeksvragen richten zich op factoren die van invloed zijn op het effectief implementeren van een servicegarantie in een publieke organisatie en een netwerk van organisaties in de publieke sector. In de betreffende paragrafen komen de verschillen tussen de publieke en private sectoren aan de orde die mogelijk een effect hebben op het ontwerp en de implementatie van een publieke servicegarantie.

Hoofdstuk 2 beschrijft de resultaten van een Delphi studie gericht op het ontwerp van de inhoud van een publieke servicegarantie. Op basis van een literatuurstudie is een lijst met mogelijke kenmerken van de belofte, de compensatie en het compensatieproces van een servicegarantie ontwikkeld. Een panel bestaande uit 37 publieke servicegarantie experts heeft vervolgens in drie stemronden het belang van deze kenmerken vastgesteld. De resultaten met betrekking tot de belofte laten zien dat de inhoud idealiter gemakkelijk te begrijpen moet zijn voor medewerkers en klanten, concreet is en door klanten gemakkelijk te controleren is of de beloften wel/niet zijn waargemaakt. De beloften hebben betrekking op de voor de klant belangrijkste aspecten van de dienstverlening. Dit onderzoek laat zien dat een servicegarantie met meerdere specifieke beloften de voorkeur heeft, een volledige tevredenheidsgarantie heeft dit niet. De omvang van de compensatie dient beperkt te zijn. De experts zijn echter minder eensgezind voor wat betreft de compensatie. Bijvoorbeeld 60% van de experts is van mening dat het niet gewenst is om klanten een compensatie te bieden in het geval van het niet voldoen aan de beloften in de servicegarantie. De experts zijn ten aanzien van het compensatieproces van mening dat er concrete regels voor de aanvraag van een compensatie zouden moeten zijn en als deze er is, dan moet de ontvangst ervan gemakkelijk zijn voor de klant.

Hoofdstuk 3 richt zich op de compensatie in een servicegarantie. Financiële compensatie wordt algemeen gebruikt in de commerciële, maar veel minder in de publieke dienstverlening. Het zijn uiteindelijk de klanten die kunnen aangeven of een compensatie helpt bij het verbeteren van hun ervaringen. Vandaar dat een experimenteel onderzoek is uitgevoerd bestaande uit twee vignettestudies (Nederlandse studenten N=157; VS-burgers N=937) om zo de afzonderlijke effecten van het beloven en aanbieden van een financiële compensatie te bepalen. Dit is gemeten in situaties waarin fouten in de dienstverlening zijn gemaakt in publieke en private dienstverlening. De afhankelijke variabelen waren: ervaren rechtvaardigheid, negatieve emoties en tevredenheid na een servicefout. De resultaten laten zien dat het aanbieden van een compensatie aan klanten na een fout leidt tot een meer positieve waardering dan als er geen compensatie wordt aangeboden. De compensatie expliciet beloven heeft geen effect op de afhankelijke variabelen. Echter, een compensatie beloven en deze vervolgens niet aanbieden (een tweede fout na de initiële servicefout) leidt tot een sterk negatief effect op alle variabelen. Ondanks de verschillen tussen klantrelaties in publieke en private settings zijn deze effecten gelijk in de onderzochte publieke en private scenario's.

Hoofdstuk 4 beschrijft de resultaten van een tweede studie met betrekking tot de compensatie in een servicegarantie. Hierin zijn de effecten van pro-sociale compensatie op klanten onderzocht. Deze vorm van compensatie is niet eerder onderzocht. In het eerste experiment, gericht op de signaaleffecten op potentiële klanten (VS-burgers N=603), zijn de effecten van het niet beloven van compensatie, een financiële compensatie en twee vormen van pro-sociale compensatie (een vast goed doel en keuze van het goede doel door de klant) vastgesteld. Dit experiment laat zien dat het beloven van een financiële en pro-sociale compensatie dezelfde, maar meer positieve effecten heeft op het bedrijfsimago, de geloofwaardigheid van de organisatie en de intentie tot mond-tot-mond reclame dan geen compensatie beloven. Pro-sociale compensatie heeft echter een meer positief effect op het imago van maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen (MVO) dan de financiële compensatie. Er waren hierbij geen verschillen tussen de onderzochte publieke en private scenario's. Deze studie laat zien dat het expliciet beloven van pro-sociale en financiële compensatie positieve signaaleffecten heeft. In twee aanvullende experimenten (Nederlandse studenten N=148; VS-burgers N=633) zijn de effecten van compensatie op de ervaren rechtvaardigheid en tevredenheid onderzocht. In situaties van een servicefout zijn de effecten van het aanbieden van financiële en pro-sociale compensatie vergeleken met die van het niet beloven en niet aanbieden van compensatie. De resultaten laten zien dat pro-sociale compensatie leidt tot een meer positieve ervaren rechtvaardigheid en tevredenheid dan geen compensatie beloven en aanbieden. Echter, een financiële compensatie aanbieden leidt tot nog positievere resultaten op deze variabelen dan een pro-sociale compensatie. Deze twee laatste experimenten laten zien dat het aanbieden van pro-sociale compensatie na een servicefout positieve effecten heeft op de klant. Dit onderzoek toont aan dat pro-sociale een interessante praktijk in het kader van MVO kan zijn daar het zowel bijdraagt het MVO-imago, aan het vervullen van de filantropische als de ethische verantwoordelijkheden van de organisatie.

Hoofdstuk 5 beschrijft de resultaten van een concept mapping studie met een geïntegreerde Delphi studie voor het bepalen van de factoren van invloed op het effectief implementeren van een servicegarantie in een publieke organisatie. In totaal hebben 45 Nederlandse experts die met publieke servicegaranties hebben gewerkt, aan dit onderzoek bijgedragen. Op basis van een literatuur studie is een lijst met mogelijke factoren ontwikkeld. Experts hebben vervolgens in drie stemronden de belangrijkste factoren vastgesteld. Deze vormden de basis voor de volgende stap waarin de experts op individuele wijze de factoren hebben geclusterd. Vervolgens is een clustering en grafische weergave hiervan ontwikkeld met gebruikmaking

van een multidimensionale scaling analyse (ARIADNE software). Dit heeft geresulteerd in het Publiek Service Garantie Implementatie Model. Dit model bestaat uit drie clusters, tien sub clusters en in totaal 44 factoren. De clusters zijn ‘Leiderschap’, ‘Empowerment van medewerkers’ en ‘Continue verbetering’. Het model laat zien dat een servicegarantie implementeren om een gestructureerd veranderproces vraagt waarin zowel aandacht is voor structuur/systemen als de cultuur.

Hoofdstuk 6 beschrijft de resultaten van een casestudie waarin de factoren voor de effectieve implementatie van een servicegarantie in een netwerk van serviceorganisaties zijn onderzocht. Voor klanten die door meerdere organisaties in één klantreis worden geholpen, is het zinvol dat er één servicegarantie voor de hele klantreis is in plaats van een servicegarantie per organisatie. Daar deze praktijk nog niet veel voorkomt, is gekozen voor een enkele casestudie betreffende een netwerk bestaande uit vijf medische instellingen voor de behandeling van patiënten met een beroerte. Relevante documenten zijn bestudeerd waarna individuele semigestructureerde interviews hebben plaatsgevonden met alle managers verantwoordelijk voor de implementatie van de servicegarantie. De interviewtranscripten zijn vervolgens geanalyseerd conform de aanpak van Glaser om zo op inductieve wijze een model van de factoren te ontwikkelen. Dit heeft geresulteerd in een Netwerk Model bestaande uit zeven clusters en 27 factoren. Drie clusters zijn gelijk aan het Publiek Service Garantie Implementatie Model, twee hebben betrekking op de wijze van implementatie en project organisatie. Het model bevat ook twee netwerk specifieke clusters die van belang zijn voor de implementatie van een netwerk servicegarantie (‘Keten chemie’ en ‘Keten karakteristieken’). Dit zou kunnen betekenen dat het implementeren van een servicegarantie binnen een netwerk nog moeilijker is dan voor een enkele organisatie.

De **discussie (Hoofdstuk 7)** reflecteert op de resultaten van de Hoofdstukken 2-6. Door het combineren van de resultaten ontstaat het beeld dat de belofte in een publieke servicegarantie bij voorkeur bestaat uit meerdere concrete beloften. Deze hebben betrekking op de voor de klant belangrijke aspecten van de dienstverlening. Daarom is het belangrijk om klanten te betrekken bij het ontwerp en de implementatie van een servicegarantie. Een publieke servicegarantie kan een expliciet geformuleerde compensatie bevatten. Dit kan een financiële maar ook een pro-sociale compensatie zijn. Het voordeel van het gebruik van een pro-sociale compensatie is dat deze bijdraagt aan het MVO-imago en helpt aan de filantropische en ethische verplichtingen te voldoen. Dit onderzoek toont aan dat een compensatie beloven,

maar vervolgens niet aanbieden leidt tot een zeer negatieve klantbeoordeling. Vandaar dat een goed gestructureerde implementatie die tijd en inspanning vraagt van belang is. Bij voorkeur wordt een servicegarantie niet 'los' geïmplementeerd, maar als een onderdeel van een omvangrijk verandertraject in het kader van klantgerichtheid. Een servicegarantie is geen doel op zich maar een middel om de klantgerichtheid van de organisatie te vergroten, om zo een hoge kwaliteit uit te stralen naar (potentiele) klanten en om de band met klanten te versterken. Een servicegarantie kan een krachtig concept zijn om deze doelen te realiseren, maar organisaties zouden de beslissing om er een te implementeren niet te lichtvaardig moeten nemen.

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Curriculum Vitae

Jean Pierre Thomassen was born in Maastricht on May 11 1962. In 1987 he graduated from the Hotelschool The Hague and in 1991 from Erasmus University (business economics) with a Master's dissertation on the cost of non-quality of a Dutch bank. That same year he started as an independent management consultant on this subject that quickly changed into service quality management. He has held this occupation to this very day, with a focus on customer centeredness, service excellence, service guarantees and customer delight.

It was in 1994 that he first met Christopher Hart, an American Harvard University professor and author of the Harvard Business Review (1988) article 'Extraordinary Service Guarantees' that is seen within marketing and services management literature as the breakthrough of the concept. Christopher Hart presented the concept of service guarantees and it's potency during an in-company seminar at a Spanish bull ranch. From that moment cooperation with Christopher Hart started. In the period 1995-1996 he has published on the subject in e.g. Holland Management Review (Thomassen and Hart, 1995) and a book on service guarantees with Kluwer Bedrijfswetenschappen (Thomassen, 1996). Since 1994 he has supported a large number of Dutch public and private organisations with the development and implementation of their service guarantee.

Appendix I - Service guarantee definitions

In this appendix to section 1.1. an overview of 20 service guarantee definitions used in literature is presented in alphabetical order of the (first) author. Since the term ‘service charter’ is often used in public management literature, three definitions (1, 17 and 18) use this term.

1. Charters are, essentially, a formal contract between the public service provider and their customers (Aldridge and Rowley, 1998 p. 27).
2. A service guarantee promises the customer that if the service delivery system does not meet certain performance standards, the customer is entitled to an economic and/or noneconomic payout (Baker and Collier, 2005 p. 197).
3. A service guarantee is a formal commitment by a service provider designed to reduce a customers’ loss in the event of a service failure (Berman and Mathur, 2014 p. 108).
4. A service guarantee is a tool to systematize and formalise the recovery process (Björlin Lidén and Skålen, 2003 p. 37).
5. Service guarantees are a formalised recovery technique that is used for dealing with service failures and learning from the experience (Björlin Lidén and Sandén, 2004 p. 2).
6. A service guarantee is a tangible manifestation of the reliability of the service (Boshoff, 2002 p. 292).
7. A service guarantee can be represented as a promise to the customer and is often advertised as such (Callan and Moore, 1998 p. 60; Kashyap, 2001 p. 1).
8. A service guarantee is a kind of warranty that promises a particular level of service to a customer and compensation if that level of service is not achieved (Chen *et al.*, 2009 p. 584).
9. Service guarantees, in essence, are “a policy, expressed or implied, advertised or unadvertised, that commits the operation to making its guests happy” (Evans *et al.*, 1996 p. 57, Kashyap, 2001 p. 1).
10. A service guarantee is an explicit commitment to the customer concerning all or part of the service process, generally including compensation for the customer if the commitment is not honoured (Fabien, 2005 p. 33).
11. Dienstleistungsgarantien können als Versprechen eines Anbieters definiert werden, dass dieser die Voraussetzungen zur Erbringung einer bestimmten Leistung besitzt oder eine bestimmte Leistung oder einzelne Leistungsbestandteile in der vom Kunden gewünschten Qualität liefert (Fliess and Hogreve, 2007 p. 238; Hogreve and Sichtmann, 2009 p. 347).

12. A guarantee is simply a statement explaining the service customers can expect (the promise) and what the company will do if it fails to deliver (the payout) (Hart *et al.*, 1992 p. 20; McDougall *et al.*, 1998 p. 278; Levy, 1999 p. 4; Kashyap, 2001 p. 1; McQuilken and Robertson, 2011 p. 953).
13. A service guarantee is a set of two promises. The first is a promise to provide a certain level of service. The second is a promise to compensate the customer in a particular way if the first promise is not met (Hays and Hill, 2006 p. 754).
14. A service guarantee is an explicit promise on the part of the service provider to satisfy customers in the performance of a service (Hocutt and Bowers, 2005 p. 8).
15. A service guarantee is an explicit promise made by the service provider to (a) deliver a certain level of service to satisfy the customer and (b) remunerate the customer if the service is not sufficiently delivered (Hogreve and Gremler, 2009 p. 324; Van Vaerenbergh *et al.*, 2014 p. 45).
16. Service guarantees are written promises of service performance declared through advertising and company literature, making offers of compensation if promises are not honoured (McColl and Mattsson, 2011 p. 451).
17. Service charters are in essence a quality assurance strategy that offers a type of consumer guarantee (McGuire, 2002 p. 494).
18. Service charters list the rights that citizens can expect from public institutions and introduce – especially in European continental countries – the notion of putting citizens or users first (Torres, 2006 p. 159).
19. A service guarantee is an extension of a product warranty, but in a service setting (Wong *et al.*, 2009).
20. Service guarantees are formal promises made to customers about the service they will receive (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996 p. 458; McCollough and Gremler, 2004 p. 58; McCollough, 2010 p. 28).

Appendix II. Vignettes for manipulations of dependent variables

This appendix to Chapter 3 gives an overview of the vignettes used in the two experiments.

Sector	Vignettes
Municipality (study 1)	'In a month your driving license is expired. You have been at the municipality office to apply for a new one (costs approximately 40 euro). After a couple of days you receive a message that it is ready for pickup and you go to the municipality office.'
Visa governmental organisation (study 2)	'In a month you have to be in another country for which a travel visa is required which costs you approximately 40 dollar. You have ordered it by internet. After a couple of days you receive a message that it is ready for pickup at the office (about 20 minutes drive from home) and you go to the office.'
Internet store (study 1 and 2)	'You have made an online order on the web shop of the only store that offers this product (costs approximately 40 euro/dollar). It is a gift for a friends' birthday next month. You have indicated that you want to collect the parcel at a pick up point. After a couple of days you receive a message that it is ready for pickup and you go to the pick up point (study 2: about 20 minutes drive from home).'
All scenarios	Followed by.... 'Now you are at the desk, and the employee informs you that the driving license/package/visa (dependent on study and scenario) is not there. The employee checks the system and informs you that it is still on its way. It will be available tomorrow'. Only in the four 'compensation promised' scenarios a service guarantee with an explicit compensation was visible behind the desk: ' <i>We keep our promises, if not, you'll get a gift voucher worth 5 euro/dollar</i> '. Only in the four 'compensation offered' scenarios the customer received proactively a gift voucher. The scenario ends with the customer leaving the hypothetical building. Participants then answer a number of questions related to the dependent variables.

Appendix III. Scales for dependent variables

This appendix to Chapter 3 gives an overview of the dependent variables used.

Severity of failure	(1) How would you rate the importance of the service failure? (1=unimportant 7= extremely important)
Distributive justice (study 1 $\alpha = 0.76$; study 2 $\alpha = 0.91$)	(1) The compensation for the inconvenience is fair (2) I did <u>not</u> receive what I deserve (R) (3) The outcome I received was <u>not</u> fair (R) (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Procedural justice (study 1 $\alpha = 0.88$; study 2 $\alpha = 0.89$)	(1) The organisation used a good procedure to solve my problem (2) If I was an employee of that organisation, I would have acted similarly (3) I felt taken seriously (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Negative emotions (study 1 $\alpha = 0.90$; study 2 $\alpha = 0.95$)	(1) How annoyed would you be? (2) How irritated would you be? (1=not at all, 7=extremely so)
Post-recovery satisfaction (study 1 $\alpha = 0.75$; study 2 $\alpha = 0.94$)	(1) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied did this experience make you feel? (1=very dissatisfied, 7=very satisfied) (2) How well did this service experience meet your needs? (1=not at all, 7=absolutely yes) (3) Overall, I am very satisfied with this experience. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Realism of scenario	(1) To what extent do you think this was a realistic situation? (1=not at all realistic, 7=very realistic)

Appendix IV. Scales and items used in three experiments

This appendix to Chapter 4 gives an overview of the scales/dependent variables used in the experiments 1 and 2A&B.

Dependent variable	Used in experiment	Items
Corporate image	1	(a) Negative - positive (b) Unfavourable - favourable (c) Bad - Good (d) Dislike - Like (7 point scale)
Credibility	1	(a) I have sincere doubts about the ability of the Internet store/visa governmental organisation to keep its promises (R) (b) There would be no risk in dealing with this Internet store /visa governmental organisation (c) I would feel very confident in dealing with this Internet store/visa governmental organisation (d) I am confident in the ability of this Internet store/visa governmental organisation to perform as promised (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree), scales are separately presented for both sectors
WOM-intent	1	(a) I would say positive things about this Internet store/visa governmental organisation to other people (b) If someone talks negatively about this Internet store/visa governmental organisation I would argue against it (1=most unlikely, 7=most likely), scales are separately presented for both sectors
CSR-image	1	(a) This Internet store/visa governmental organisation is a social responsible organisation (b) This Internet store/visa governmental organisation is concerned about the well-being of society (c) I think this Internet store /visa governmental organisation has legitimate interest in improving society (d) Contributing to society appears important to this Internet store/visa governmental organisation (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree), scales are separately presented for both sectors
Severity of service failure	2A&B	(a) How would you rate the importance of the service failure? (1=unimportant, 7= extremely important)
Distributive justice	2A&B	(a) The compensation for the inconvenience is fair (b) I did not receive what I deserve (R) (c) The outcome I received was not fair (R) (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Procedural justice	2A&B	(a) The organisation used a good procedure to solve my problem (b) If I was an employee of that organisation, I would have acted similarly (c) I felt taken seriously (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Post-recovery satisfaction	2A&B	(a) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied did this experience make you feel? (1=very dissatisfied, 7=very satisfied) (b) How well did this service experience meet your needs? (1=not at all, 7=absolutely yes) (c) Overall, I am very satisfied with this experience. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)
Realism of the scenario	1, 2A&B	(a) To what extent do you think this was a realistic situation? (1=not at all realistic, 7=very realistic)

Appendix V. Main and interaction effects of three experiments

This appendix to Chapter 4 gives an overview of the main and interaction effects of the experiments 1 and 2A&B.

Experiment 1. Signalling Effects – US-citizens

Dependent variable		Main/interaction effect
Corporate image	compensation	$F(3,595) = 4.78, p = .003$
	sector	$F(1,595) = 0.83, p = .363$
	compensation x sector	$F(3,595) = 0.82, p = .484$
Credibility	compensation	$F(3,595) = 6.28, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,595) = 0.04, p = .843$
	compensation x sector	$F(3,595) = 1.86, p = .136$
WOM-intent	compensation	$F(3,595) = 7.06, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,595) = 2.80, p = .095$
	compensation x sector	$F(3,595) = 0.03, p = .991$
CSR-image	compensation	$F(3,595) = 15.13, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,595) = 6.21, p = .013$
	compensation x sector	$F(3,595) = 0.84, p = .474$

Justice Effects: Experiment 2A– Dutch students & Experiment 2B – mainly US-citizens

Dependent variable		Main/interaction effect	
		Experiment 2A	Experiment 2B
Distributive justice	compensation	$F(2,142) = 13.10, p = .000$	$F(3,588) = 38.02, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,142) = 2.57, p = .111$	$F(1,588) = 3.79, p = .187$
	compensation x sector	$F(2,142) = 0.82, p = .445$	$F(3,588) = 1.53, p = .205$
Procedural justice	compensation	$F(2,142) = 9.41, p = .000$	$F(3,588) = 46.62, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,142) = 1.48, p = .226$	$F(1,588) = 2.06, p = .152$
	compensation x sector	$F(2,142) = 0.85, p = .431$	$F(3,588) = 2.54, p = .056$
Post-recovery satisfaction	compensation	$F(2,142) = 3.09, p = .049$	$F(3,588) = 36.71, p = .000$
	sector	$F(1,142) = 0.29, p = .591$	$F(1,588) = 1.24, p = .266$
	compensation x sector	$F(2,142) = 0.86, p = .425$	$F(3,588) = 0.73, p = .534$

Appendix VI. Summary of Ms and SDs for the dependent variables

This appendix to Chapter 4 gives an overview of the Ms and SDs for the dependent variables of the experiments 1 and 2A&B.

Experiment 1. Signalling Effects – US-citizens

Dependent variable	Compensation	Customers' evaluations					
		total (N = 603)		internet store (N = 293)		travel visa (N = 310)	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Corporate image	no compensation (NC)	5.41	1.06	5.28	.96	5.56	1.15
	gift voucher (GV)	5.76	.90	5.82	.80	5.72	.97
	fixed cause (FC)	5.73	1.09	5.71	1.24	5.75	.96
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	5.86	1.14	5.81	1.03	5.91	1.26
Credibility	no compensation (NC)	4.52	.95	4.42	.81	4.63	1.09
	gift voucher (GV)	4.93	.99	5.09	.83	4.80	1.09
	fixed cause (FC)	4.99	1.11	4.91	1.15	5.06	1.09
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	4.96	1.18	5.02	1.12	4.89	1.26
WOM-intent	No compensation (NC)	4.09	1.26	3.99	1.16	4.21	1.36
	gift voucher (GV)	4.67	1.24	4.56	1.18	4.75	1.28
	fixed cause (FC)	4.67	1.35	4.61	1.37	4.73	1.33
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	4.71	1.41	4.61	1.41	4.81	1.42
CSR-image	no compensation (NC)	4.62	1.14	4.41	1.14	4.86	1.11
	gift voucher (GV)	4.95	1.13	4.82	1.03	5.05	1.20
	fixed cause (FC)	5.37	1.11	5.25	1.15	5.47	1.08
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	5.40	1.20	5.38	1.10	5.41	1.30

Experiment 2A. Justice Effects – Dutch students

Dependent variable	Compensation	Customers' evaluations					
		total (N = 148)		internet store (N = 76)		municipality (N = 72)	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Distributive justice	gift voucher (GV)	4.31	1.28	4.63	1.27	4.16	1.28
	fixed cause (FC)	3.08	1.32	3.07	1.21	3.10	1.45
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	3.40	1.28	3.61	1.07	2.99	1.58
Procedural justice	gift voucher (GV)	5.14	1.44	5.54	1.20	4.94	1.53
	fixed cause (FC)	3.91	1.42	3.84	1.23	3.99	1.63
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	4.43	1.54	4.58	1.36	4.12	1.86
Post-recovery satisfaction	gift voucher (GV)	3.25	1.39	3.38	1.45	3.19	1.37
	fixed cause (FC)	2.60	1.18	2.48	.86	2.74	1.46
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	2.96	1.28	3.10	1.19	2.67	1.44

Experiment 2B. Justice Effects – mainly US-citizens

Dependent variable	Compensation	Customers' evaluations					
		Total (N=596)		Internet store (N=298)		Travel visa (N=298)	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Distributive justice	no compensation (NC)	2.13	1.17	2.05	1.22	2.21	1.21
	gift voucher (GV)	3.88	1.57	4.01	1.48	3.77	1.64
	fixed cause (FC)	3.25	1.50	3.01	1.54	3.47	1.44
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	3.47	1.62	3.35	1.59	3.61	1.65
Procedural justice	no compensation (NC)	2.85	1.36	2.75	1.35	2.95	1.36
	gift voucher (GV)	4.75	1.41	4.93	1.33	4.59	1.47
	fixed cause (FC)	3.91	1.55	3.65	1.64	4.17	1.42
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	4.17	1.37	4.03	1.38	4.32	1.35
Post-recovery satisfaction	no compensation (NC)	1.77	1.01	1.74	1.05	1.81	.98
	gift voucher (GV)	3.54	1.66	3.61	1.63	3.49	1.70
	fixed cause (FC)	2.85	1.61	2.67	1.70	3.03	1.51
	cause of customers' choice (CCC)	3.02	1.56	2.91	1.54	3.14	1.59

