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Nota di contenuto	Danksagung; Table of Contents; List of Figures; List of Tables; List of Abbreviations; 1. Introduction; 1.1 Problem Area; 1.2 Motivation, Relevance, and Research Questions; 1.3 Structure of this Work; 2. Theoretical Foundation - Path Dependence, Consumer Behavior, and Service Relationship Research; 2.1 Path Dependence and Individual Lock-in; 2.1.1 The Origins of Path Dependence in Technology; 2.1.2 Conceptualizing the Process of Path Dependence in Organizations; 2.1.3 The Social Side of Lock-in Mechanisms; 2.1.4 Individual Path Dependence and Mechanisms - The Research Gap 2.1.5 Summary of Path Dependence in this Work and Research Propositions2.2 Consumer Behavior Research - Exploring Decision-Making and Lock-in; 2.2.1 Contrasting Conceptions of Consumer Lock-In; 2.2.2 The Decision Process and Lock-in as an Outcome in Consumer Behavior; 2.2.3 Summary of Consumer Lock-in in Consumer Behavior

and ResearchPropositions; 2.3 The Post-Decision Process in Service Relationships; 2.3.1 On Relationship Marketing and Management; 2.3.2 Retention and the Strategic Dimension of Customer Bonding; 2.3.3 Switching Costs as Mechanisms leading to Consumer Lock-in 2.3.4 Context Dimensions that facilitate Consumer Lock-In 2.3.5 Summary of the Lock-in Process in Service Relationships and ResearchPropositions; 3. A Model of the Consumer Lock-in Process in Service Relationships; 3.1 Theoretical Model; 3.1.1 Decision Making in the Context of Individually Important Services; 3.1.2 The Post-Decision Process in Consumer Lock-in; 3.1.3 Summary of the Theoretical Consumer Lock-in Model; 3.2 Model Adapted to the Context of Higher Education; 3.2.1 The Relevance of Student Retention in Educational Research; 3.2.2 Higher Education Decisions, Processes and Lock-in 3.2.3 Summary of Context Adapted Model and Research Hypotheses 4. Longitudinal Study with Service Consumers in Higher Education; 4.1 Study Design for Examination of the Adapted Consumer Lock-in Model; 4.1.1 Qualitative Pretest Interviews; 4.1.2 Survey Design and Analysis Methodology; 4.2 Overview, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results; 4.2.1 Overview and Analysis of the Entry Decision; 4.2.2 Aggregate Examination of the Service Relationship Process; 4.2.3 Examination of Individual and Longitudinal Fixed Effects; 4.2.4 Summary of Results from Empirical Study and Evaluation of Hypotheses 5. Final Discussion 5.1 Summary of Results; 5.2 Contributions; 5.3 Limitations and Research Outlook; Appendix; References

Sommario/riassunto

Benjamin Krischan Schulte develops a process-model of consumer lock-in in service relationships by connecting three areas of research: path dependence, consumer behavior and service relationship marketing. He defines consumer lock-in as a situation of a potentially unaware inability to switch from or exit a consumption process due to entrenchment with increasing barriers on the individual and/or social level. Switching barriers are elaborated as consumer lock-in mechanisms. The resulting process model is outlined and empirically examined in an explorative panel study of a service relationship process in higher education. The author's findings support the presence of consumer lock-in in services as an idiosyncratic process of gradual entrapment. The phenomenon has relevance for researchers and practitioners in complex service relationships, where lock-in was found to be a likely occurrence but difficult to grasp. Contents Theoretical Foundation: Path Dependence, Consumer Behavior and Service Relationship Research Model of the Consumer Lock-in Process Longitudinal Study with Service Consumers in a Higher Education Service Target Groups Researchers, teachers and students of business with a focus on consumer behavior and relationship-marketing, particularly the process in complex service relationships Executives and consultants in services companies with the core areas strategy, CRM, and customer retention The Author Benjamin Krischan Schulte obtained a Doctoral Degree in Business from Freie Universität Berlin in 2014.
