



## The Effects of Interactional Justice on Recovery Satisfaction and Its Relation to Affective Commitment: A Conceptual Paper

Sahar Hosseinikhah Choshaly

Department of Management, Lahijan Branch , Islamic Azad University, Lahijan, Iran  
Email: s.hk@liau.ac.ir

### Abstract

Drawing on consumer behavior and service marketing literature, service recovery strategy needs investigation to better understand the customer's responses. In particular, it is necessary to investigate the factors that may influence customers' perceptions of the recovery process, this paper aims to propose a framework to further investigate in area of recovery satisfaction and proposes a model to examine the effects of interactional justice on recovery satisfaction and its relation to affective commitment. It contributes to the literature as it considers recovery satisfaction as mediator for the relationship between interactional justice and affective commitment. This will help researchers to develop their model and investigate more in terms of interactional justice and recovery satisfaction with in turn helps service companies to built effective strategies to gain recovery satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Service recovery satisfaction, interactional justice, affective commitment



## Introduction

Today, in everyday life service companies try to provide effective services to improve customer satisfaction and recovery satisfaction. In order to be successful, organizations need to be aware of the key variables involved in service recovery. Service recovery helps to providing customers with explanations about the service failure, apologizing and empowering staff to resolve problems (Blodgett et al., 1997). Service recovery strategy needs investigation to better understand the customer's responses. In particular, it is necessary to investigate the factors that may influence customers' perceptions of the recovery process. Studies mentioned that a poor service will cause customer loss; while successful service recovery will increase customer satisfaction and retention (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002). A useful theoretical framework for investigating customer evaluations of service recovery processes is provided by justice theories Perceived justice is found to be a key influence in the formation of customers' evaluative judgments of the recovery process (Collie et al., 2000). Different studies have been done for understanding service recovery, commitment and loyalty (de Ruyter and Wetzels 2000; Karatepe, 2006). This paper proposes recovery satisfaction as mediator for the relationship between interactional justice and affective commitment.

## Organizational Fairness

Organizational justice theory appears to be the dominant theoretical framework applied to service recovery (Wirtz and Mattila, 2004). Justice theory indicates that customer perceptions towards the fairness of service recovery efforts have effects on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (McColl Kennedy and Sparks, 2003). Research by Tyler and Bies (1990) suggests that there are interaction effects between the different aspects of justice (procedural and interactional). According to justice theory, there are three dimensions of organizational justice that influence how people evaluate service encounters. Distributive justice focuses on the perceived fairness of the outcome of the encounter and is often defined as refunds, exchanges, and discounts on future purchases. Interactional justice focuses on the way the customer is treated during the encounter and is often defined as truthfulness, a reasonable explanation, politeness, empathy, and apology. Procedural justice focuses on the perceived fairness of the policies and procedures used to resolve the failure and are often defined as consistent, unbiased, and impartial customer policies (Sparks and McColl-Kennedy 2001).

## Interactional Justice

Interactional justice conceptualized as "the perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment that people receive during the enactment of procedures" (Tax, Brown, Chandrashekar, 1998). It means the evaluation of the level in which customers have experienced justice in human interactions from the employees of service firms during the recovery process (Sparks & McColl-Kennedy, 2001). Interactional justice relates to the aspects of the communication process between the source and the recipient of justice, such as politeness, honesty, and respect (Tyler & Bies 1990).

Interactional justice includes both informational justice and interpersonal justice. Informational justice refers to "providing knowledge about procedures that demonstrate regards for people's concerns" and interpersonal justice refers to "showing concern for individuals regarding the distributive outcome they receive". The most recent studies of justice stated that interactional justice can be separated into interpersonal treatment and informational fairness. Interpersonal treatment refers to "Sensitivity, politeness, dignified behavior and respect" and Informational fairness refers to "The perceived adequacy and truthfulness of information explaining the causes for unfavorable outcomes" (Colquitt, 2001).



### **Recovery Satisfaction:**

Customer satisfaction with service recovery means “A positive status of emotion perceived by customers in the process and result of recovering the failed service” (Oliver, 1997). Recovery satisfaction is thought to be influenced by how well a service encounter responds to customers (Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel & Gutman, 1985).

### **Affective commitment**

It is a known fact that commitment plays a very important role in individual success. It shows motives towards continuing a relationship that contains both psychological and behavioural aspects. According to Allen & Meyer, 1990, “most measures of organizational commitment assess effective commitment, the degree to which employees identify with the company and make the company’s goal their own” (Cited in Colquitt et al, 2001). According to Kumar, Scheer & Steenkamp, 1995, “affective commitment involves the intention to continue on the basis of affect towards the partner, expectation of continuity involving a firm’s perception of its own and its partner’s intention to remain in the relationship, and willingness to invest involving a desire to do more than just remain” (cited in Sharma, Young & Wilkinson, 2006).

### **Interactional Justice and Recovery satisfaction**

Many studies have been done to examine the relationship between perceived justices with service recovery and recovery satisfaction. Researches stated that perceived justice could affect satisfaction with the recovery. According to them interactional justice was the top predictor of satisfaction followed by distributive justice (Blodgett, Hill, Tax, 1997).

According to Karatepe , 2006, interactional justice has a greater influence on hotel guests’ satisfaction with complaint handling compared to distributive justice and procedural justice (cited in [Kim et al, 2009](#)). McCollough et al. (2000) indicated that interactional justices are important determinants of customer satisfaction. Interaction between customers and service encounters has important effect on the evaluations of service recovery. Interactional justice has effects on recovery satisfaction (Smith, 1999). It also has strong effect on satisfaction with complaint handling (Tax et al, 1998).

P1: Interpersonal Treatment has positive relationship with recovery satisfaction.

P2: Informational Fairness has positive relationship with recovery satisfaction

### **Recovery satisfaction and affective commitment**

Previous research suggested that recovery satisfaction is positively related to affective commitment (de Ruyter & Wetzels, 2000; Karatepe, 2006). Other study also revealed that recovery satisfaction is positively related to affective commitment and customer retention (Smith & Bolton, 1998). Other studies showed that recovery satisfaction has a significantly positive effect on ([Tax et al., 1998](#)). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

P3: Recovery satisfaction has positive relationship with affective commitment.



As it is discussed earlier, interactional justice has a positive effects on recovery satisfaction (Kim et al, 2009; McCollough et al.,2000; Smith, 1999;Tax et al, 1998) and previous researches also suggested that recovery satisfaction is positively related to affective commitment (de Ruyter & Wetzels, 2000; Karatepe, 2006; Smith & Bolton, 1998 ;Tax et al., 1998).

P4: The relationship between interpersonal treatment, informational fairness and affective commitment is mediated by recovery satisfaction.

Figure 1 shows the proposed framework of this study.

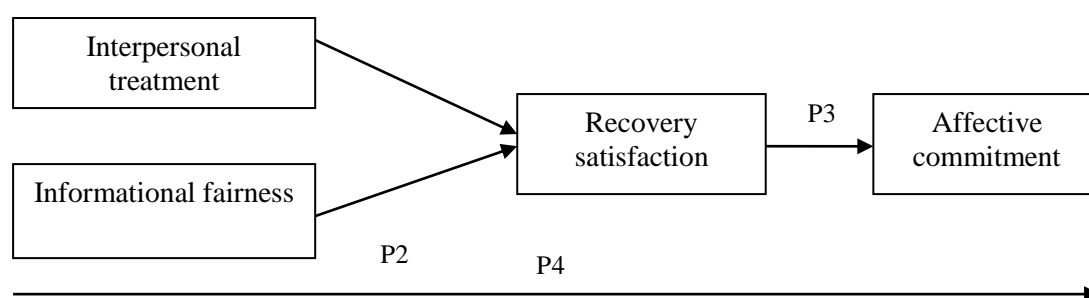


Figure1

## References

- Blodgett, J. G., Hill, D. J., & Tax, S. S. (1997). "The effects of distributive, procedural and interactional justice on postcomplaint behavior", *Journal of Retailing*, 73(2), 185–210.
- Collie, T. A., Sparks, B., & Bradley, G. (2000). Investing in interactional justice: a study of the fair process effect within a hospitality failure context. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 24(4), 448–472.
- Colquitt, J. (2001), "On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct validation of a measure", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86 (3), 386-400.
- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O. L. H., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 425–445.
- De Ruyter, K., and M. Wetzels. 2000. Customer equity considerations in service recovery: A cross-industry perspective. *International Journal of Service Industry Management* 11(1): 91-108.
- Karatepe, O. M. 2006. Customer complaints and organizational responses: The effects of complaints' perceptions of justice on satisfaction and loyalty. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 25 (1): 69-90.
- Kelley, S.W., Hoffman, D.K. and Davis, M.A. (1993), "A typology of retail failures and recovery", *Journal of Retailing*, 69 (4),429-52.
- Kim,T.T., Kim,W.G. & Kim,H.B. (2009) . "The effects of perceived justice on recovery satisfaction, trust, word-of-mouth, and revisit intention in upscale hotels", *Journal of tourism management*, 30, 51–62.





- Maxham, J.G. III and Netemeyer, R.G. (2002), "Modeling customer perceptions of complaint handling over time: the effects of perceived justice on satisfaction and intent", *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 78 No. 4, pp. 239-252.
- McCullough, M. A., Berry, L. L., & Yadav, M. S. (2000). An empirical investigation of customer satisfaction after service failure and recovery. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(2), 121-137.
- Oliver, L.R., 1997. *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer*. Irwin/ McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Smith, A. K., & Bolton, R. N. (1998). An experimental investigation of customer reactions to service failure and recovery encounters: paradox or peril. *Journal of Service Research*, 1(1), 65-81.
- Solomon, M.R., Surprenant, C., Czepiel, J.A., Gutman, E.G. (1985). A role theory perspective on dyadic interactions: the service encounter. *Journal of Marketing* 49, 99-111.
- Sparks, B. A., & McColl-Kennedy, J. R. (2003). Justice strategy options for increased customer satisfaction in a service recovery setting. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(3), 209-218.
- Sparks, B. A., & McColl-Kennedy, J. R. (2001). Justice strategy options for increased customer satisfaction in a service recovery setting. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(3), 209-21.
- Tax, S. S., Brown, S. W., & Chandrashekar, M. (1998). Customer evaluations of service complaint experiences: implication for relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 62(2), 60-76.
- Tyler, T.R. and Bies, R.J. (1990), "Beyond formal procedures: the interpersonal context of procedural justice", in Carroll, J. (Ed.), *Advances in Applied Social Psychology: Business Settings*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 77-98.
- Zeithaml, V.A., Parasuraman, A. and Malhotra, A. (2000), "A conceptual framework for understanding e-service quality: implications for future research and managerial practice", MSI Working Paper Series No 00-115, Cambridge, MA, pp. 1-49.