

Customer Incivility and Service Recovery Performance: Job Crafting as a Buffer

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of customer incivility (CI) on service recovery performance (SRP) of Indian frontline banking employees with emotional exhaustion (EE) as a mediator. Whether job crafting behaviour of the employees would assuage the effect of uncivil customer interactions and, thereby, help in maintaining superior recovery performance is further investigated. Data from 428 dyads of employees were gathered to test the hypothesized relationships using structural equation modelling in AMOS 23. The results indicated that CI negatively influences SRP, and EE significantly mediates this relationship. Increasing social and structural resources significantly alleviate the negative effect of (a) CI on EE, (b) CI on SRP and (c) EE on SRP. On the other hand, increasing challenge job demands and decreasing hindrance job demands do not moderate the relationship between (a) CI and EE and (b) CI and SRP. However, decreasing hindrance job demands significantly moderate the negative effect of EE on SRP while, surprisingly, increasing challenge job demands strengthens the relationship between EE and SRP.

Key Words

Customer Incivility (CI), Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Service Recovery Performance (SRP), Job Crafting

Executive Summary

Service marketing literature offers scant evidence on the possible negative effects of customer incivility (CI) on service recovery performance (SRP). Some other forms of stressors like customer verbal aggression have been explored in a service recovery context (Karatepe et al., 2009). However, Sommovigo et al. (2019) argue that CI occurs more frequently than other forms of customer-related social stressors (CSSs) and, as such, might bring about adverse consequences above and beyond other CSSs. As such, specific research attention needs to be focused on investigating the impact of CI on SRP. Moreover, it would not suffice to merely know the consequences of adverse customer interactions on the recovery performance of employees. We also need to be aware of the mitigating mechanisms that would suppress the effects of CI on employees and help them in delivering superior performance despite unfavourable customer attitude.

In this backdrop, this study explores the impact of CI on SRP of Indian frontline banking employees with emotional

exhaustion (EE) as a mediator. Whether job crafting behaviour of the employees would assuage the effect of uncivil customer interactions and, thereby, help in maintaining superior recovery performance was further investigated. To the best of the author's knowledge, this study is a maiden attempt to examine the implications of CI for SRP of Indian frontline retail banking employees.

Data from 428 dyads of employees were gathered to test the hypothesized relationships using structural equation modelling in AMOS 23. The results indicated that CI negatively influences SRP, and EE significantly mediates this relationship. Increasing social and structural resources significantly alleviate the negative effect of (a) CI on EE, (b) CI on SRP and (c) EE on SRP. On the other hand, increasing challenge job demands and decreasing hindrance job demands do not moderate the relationship between (a) CI and EE and (b) CI and SRP. However, decreasing hindrance job demands significantly moderate the negative effect of EE on SRP while, surprisingly, increasing challenge job demands strengthen this relationship.

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