



Research Article

The Influence of Blogs on the Complain Intention: The Case of the Cruise Ship Industry

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Abstract

This paper investigates the influence of service recovery in the consumer's complaint intention to obtain benefits on the cruise industry. The research model proposed and tested empirically was based on a sample of 164 cruise vacationers who had experiences of a past service failure. The model also shows the influence of cruise blogs on consumer's complaint intention.

The result of the analysis demonstrates higher influence of cruise blogs and reviews than service recovery strategies on the complaint intention. The findings of the study provide a better understanding of the service recovery on the cruise industry, being useful for the managers of the cruise companies. Finally, the results suggest, as well, that cruise ship managers should implement new marketing strategies related to service recovery and at the same time attract cruise blogs to the company.

Keywords: service recovery, cruise ship industry, cruise blogs, complaint intention.

Introduction

The cruise industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the tourism industry

(Dickinson, & Vladimir, 1997; Hall, 2001) with an annual growth rate of 6.55% from 1990 - 2019 ("Cruise Market Watch," n.d.). As much as cruise ship companies try to

maintain their customers happy and loyal, complaint on cruise ships will always be present, as customers have more time to pay attention to the service offered (Weaver, 2005).

Nowadays, cruise blogs are one of the most visited webpages from the cruise vacationers before their travel. Due to the high influence of these websites on the vacationers, they rely more on the information and suggestions of other cruise travellers than on the cruise companies or travel agents ("CLIA," 2017).

The common explanation of complaining has been described as "dissatisfaction is based on disconfirmation theory and is defined as a customer experience that is lower than the perceived expectation" (Tronvoll, 2011, p. 114). However, "complaints do not always come from dissatisfaction and dissatisfaction does not always lead to complaining behaviour; therefore, dissatisfaction is not sufficient cause for customers to complain" (Tronvoll, 2011, p. 114).

The goal of this research is to find out the relationship between the service recovery strategies and the complaint intention. Furthermore, the research investigates if service recovery has an influence on the intention to complain by the consumers.

Cruise blogs and reviews were added to the study due to the high influence they have on cruise vacationers. Particularly, we want to explore how service recovery influences consumer's complaint intention to obtain benefits in the cruise ship industry.

This paper is divided into five sections. The research starts with the literature review and an overview of the main definitions: service recovery; cruise ship industry; customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, previous complaint experience and complaint intention. Secondly, we describe and justify the methodology used in this research. Then we introduce the empirical research results with a quantitative analysis and a moderator analysis that will demonstrate if the hypothesis raised is

supported or rejected. It follows the discussion of the research main findings. The paper ends with the limitations of the research and suggestions for further research.

Literature Review

Service Recovery

Different authors define Service recovery as the strategic solution when service failure occurs. According to Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2013, p.180), "service recovery refers to the actions taken by an organization or service supplier in response to a service failure". This definition is supported by Grönroos, (1988) who added that service recovery is a service provider response in response to a poor quality service.

McDougall & Levesque (1999), Nworie (2016), Skaalsvik (2011) stated that the most frequent service recovery actions are: apology, assistance or speed and compensation. Meanwhile, the study of Bitner, Booms and Tetreault (1990), suggests that: the acknowledgement of the problem, the explanation, the assistance, the apology, the upgrades and compensation are part of a satisfactory service recovery that the consumer may remember.

The justice theories also form part of the different studies related to service recovery, as there is a relationship between service recovery strategies and the three types of perceived justice.

Wirtz and Lovelock (2017, p. 418) analyze the service recovery process from the customer point of view as "three dimensions of fairness" or also called "three dimensions of perceived justice", where the customer perceives a similar service recovery; the three dimensions are as follows: Interactional justice (apology), Procedural justice (assistance) which is the recovery process, plus the solution of the problems and Outcome Justice (compensation) which is the restitution or replacement of the service failure.

Customer Satisfaction/ Dissatisfaction

The satisfaction or dissatisfaction of a customer is expressed after the service experience (Lovelock, & Wright, 1999). Only after trying the product or service, the customers can decide whether the product/service meets their expectation or not.

Mittal and Frennea (2010, p. 3) describe customer satisfaction as a “customer’s post-consumption evaluation of a product or service”. Also Mittal and Frennea (2010) consider customer satisfaction as a valid and useful marketing metric which can be used to improve service in companies.

The problem arises when a service failure occurs and dissatisfaction gives the right to complain: the customer then decides whether to do nothing or to take one or more complaint actions for his/her best interest (Day, 1984; Qadeer, 2013).

Service Failure

The study of Kazi and Prabhu (2016, p. 1) stated “Service failure is a situation when a service provider delivers the service performance far below the adequate service expectations of the consumer”.

Koc (2017, p. 3) also explains that “service failure is any type of error, mistake, deficiency or problem occurring during the provision of a service.

Based on the above statements, it seems that most of the complaints are consequences of service failure that may occur during phases of service delivery. Therefore, when a failure occurs, companies provide a service recovery not only to seek loyalty and long-term relationship but also to get the confidence back and increase the levels of customer satisfaction with the recovery (Hassan, Azhar, & Farooq, 2014).

Service Quality

There is a large empirical literature studying service quality as one of the most widely used instruments to measure the

quality of service (Choi, Ann, Lee & Park, 2018; Kar, 2016). The research uses SERVQUAL, the first quality model used, from which other studies were adapted (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988).

These studies help companies identify problems in the service and find a rapid solution which will allow them to offer a better service that will increase customer satisfaction.

Service Recovery onboard Cruise Ship

Cruise ships are considered as floating hotels or ship hotels due to the fact that they have similar activities as a hotel on land (Dowling, 2006). The cruise ship industry features a “high degree of interactions between the service employees and the tourists, and there are many opportunities for service failures to occur during phases of service delivery” (Skaalsvik, 2011, p. 158).

Different authors (Dowling, 2006; Jaakson, 2004; Weaver, 2005) stated that on cruise ships, passengers could be in an enclosed environment for a long period of time, described as “environmental bubbles” (Weaver, 2005, p. 169) - this will depend on the itinerary booked.

As a service company, some cruise ships offer a specific service recovery to their passengers onboard and also a post-service recovery from land. On the other hand, cruise companies, by offering service recovery, seek that customers “become advocates for cruising, overwhelmingly rating cruising ahead of land-based vacation in a number of categories” (“CLIA,” 2017, p. 14).

Apology

As mentioned before, apology is perceived by the customer as an interactional justice, since it is related with the way the customer is treated while making the complaint. Apology includes aspects of: explanation, honesty, politeness, effort, and empathy. (Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekar, 1998).

Skaalsvik (2011) considers apology as the first recovery strategy that should be applied onboard a cruise ship, as it is the minimum that could be offered to a customer and it is what they usually expect for minor inconveniences (McDougall & Levesque, 1999; Wirtz & Lovelock, 2017).

Assistance

Assistance is the next recovery strategy. Previous studies stated that the speed in which the problem is solved is perceived as procedural justice (Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997; Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999). The study made by Blodgett, Hill and Tax (1997, p. 189) stated: "this dimension, in effect, is reflective of the timeliness, responsiveness, and convenience of the complaint handling process". Thus, we can say that procedural justice is the time that customer wait, while his/her problem is solved.

The goal here is to rectify the problem effectively as quick as possible, in order "to bring the customers back to the level of services they initially expected or contracted for" (McDougall & Levesque, 1999, p. 7).

Compensation

The last service recovery strategy previously mentioned is "compensation". Different authors including Smith, Bolton and Wagner (1999), associate any monetary compensation with the distributive justice.

Based on the study made by Blodgett, Hill and Tax (1997, p. 188), distributive justice is "the perceived fairness of the redress offered to consumers to resolve their complaints", where redress includes "refunds, exchanges, repairs, discounts on future purchases, store credits, etc., or some combination".

The study of Skaalsvik (2011, p. 165) of service recovery in a cruise line context finds out that three service recovery actions are provided which are: economic compensations, service personal assistance and upgrading of the core delivery value.

For this study, in cruise ships, we separated the last service recovery strategy to:

compensation or distributive justice in *upgrades* (replacement of the product/service - e.g. stateroom or dinner upgrade) and *economic compensation* (onboard credit or discount on future cruise), which will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Upgrades

Upgrades are considered a plus on the compensation, because they are applied without any extra charge on the passenger account. These upgrades are usually a replacement of the service or product failure onboard. Skaalsvik (2011, p. 165) provides a clear example of upgrades in a cruise ship. He also added that "upgrading the core delivery implies that the complainer(s) receive(s) more than the original paid for".

Economic Compensation

Economic compensation is the last recovery strategy applied onboard cruise ship to recover a failed service. The case study of Schumacher and Komppula (2016, p. 121) finds out that "monetary compensation is considered to be the easiest and most satisfactory method among customers". Economic compensation is a partial or full refund of the product or service failure and "also for the time, effort, and energy spent during the process of service recovery" (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2017, p. 418).

Cruise lines companies offer economic compensation such as "onboard credit", which is considered a monetary compensation that should be spent onboard before the cruise finishes (the amount varies depending on the problem) or "discount on a future cruise" that is applicable only in the next sail with the company and applied only by managers (in some cruise lines).

In addition to the previous statements, cruise companies can direct their passengers to the customer service ashore, due to a continuous complaint or dissatisfaction on the last day of the cruise - the disembarkation day (Hochberg, 2016).

Cruise Blogs and Reviews

Blogs are not part of the service recovery process, however, for this study, cruise blogs and reviews play an important role as a large number of cruise blogs readers use this websites before their cruise vacation ("CLIA," 2017). Through this blogs and forums, consumers become knowledgeable about the service recovery provided on a cruise ship in case a service failure occurs.

Penco, Remondino and Esposito De Falco (2012, p. 2) mention on their research that "blogs can be a powerful source of WOM, while on the other hand, they can be the source of negative influence from unsatisfied customers" and it is necessary to consider that most of the consumers rely on the information and opinions shared on these blogs (Yang, 2011).

There are a number of websites suggesting the best cruise blogs and reviews to follow before buying a cruise, and these websites, are also the most visited by the tourists before they make any purchase.

One of the most visited web page is Cruise Critic; "a cruise review community website" ("Cruise Critic," n.d.), which offers information, news and forums related to cruising. However, this website also influences the consumer complaint behavior (when customers express their dissatisfaction), teaching customers directly or indirectly to get a compensation back (Cruise Critic Staff, 2017), from the service recovery provided on the cruise companies.

Complaint Intention

Complaint intention can be defined as the intention of dissatisfied customers to report a complaint to a company (Rehman, Saeed, Kanwal, Rizwan, Rehan, & Hassan, 2013, p. 108). Also consumers may "complain even when they do not have a legitimate concern about product performance, it was noticed in general" (Singh, & Pandya, 1991, p. 8).

Wirtz and Lovelock added that "studies of consumer complaining behavior have

identified four main purposes of complaining: (1) to obtain restitution or compensation; (2) to vent their anger; (3) to help to improve the service; (4) for altruistic reasons" (2016, p. 508). This study is focused on the first purpose of complaining by Wirtz and Lovelock (2016): (1) to obtain restitution or compensation, with the aim to find out if the service recovery provided by cruises ships has an influence on the intention to complain by the consumers to obtain benefits.

Complaints in the Cruise Ship Industry

Recent researches in cruise lines stated that first-time and repeated customers are different in various aspects like the product related knowledge that consists of two components: familiarity and expertise - meaning that familiarity would lead to increased consumer expertise. First time and repeated cruise customers have a different perception in regard to the quality and service offered by the cruise line, as an example: repeated consumers will have an accurate judgment of the company, whereas the first time consumers, due to limited knowledge, will rely on service offer because of the lack of prior experience (Chua, Lee & Han, 2017). There is a high possibility that repeated customers will complain more due to the fact that they are familiar and are "experts" in a specific cruise line. Thus, they are aware of the service recoveries that a cruise line offers when a service failure occurs.

The Moderating role of Previous Complaint Experience

There are limited studies that use "previous complaint experience" as a moderator variable. However, different studies in service recovery takes into account this variable as part of the complaint intention studies. Therefore, previous complaint experience is proposed for this study as a moderator variable.

Previous Complaint Experience as Moderator between Service Recovery in Cruise Ships and Complaint Intention and

Cruise blogs and Reviews, and Complaint Intention.

Service recovery strategies in cruise ships (apology, assistance, upgrade and economic compensation) described previously on the literature review show that they are directly related to the complaint intention. Authors like Skaalsvik (2011), investigate this relation on his study of service recovery in a cruise line context. The relationship between cruise blogs and reviews and complaint intention has already been explained in the previous literature review.

Research Methodology***Conceptual Model***

This research study seeks to examine the relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable that has been explained on the preceding literature review.

The proposed model consists of seven variables. The model wants to demonstrate the relationship among variables. The independent variables: apology, assistance, upgrades and economic compensation

(related to the service recovery on cruise ships), and the other independent variable: cruise blogs & reviews seek to find out which of them has the highest influence with the dependent variable complaint intention.

For this model, previous complaint experience was proposed as a moderator variable, in order to know how strong the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Hayes, 2018a). Lastly, complaint intention as a dependent variable requires further research on the cruise ship industry as there is limited information.

After analyzing the literature review, the following research question was raised: How service recovery influences consumer's complaint intention to obtain benefits in the cruise ship industry?

The aim of this research is to find out if the service recovery provided by cruise ships has an influence on the intention to complain by the consumers. Therefore, the following conceptual model (Figure 1) provides a descriptive representation of the variables mentioned, attempting to explain the relationships among them.

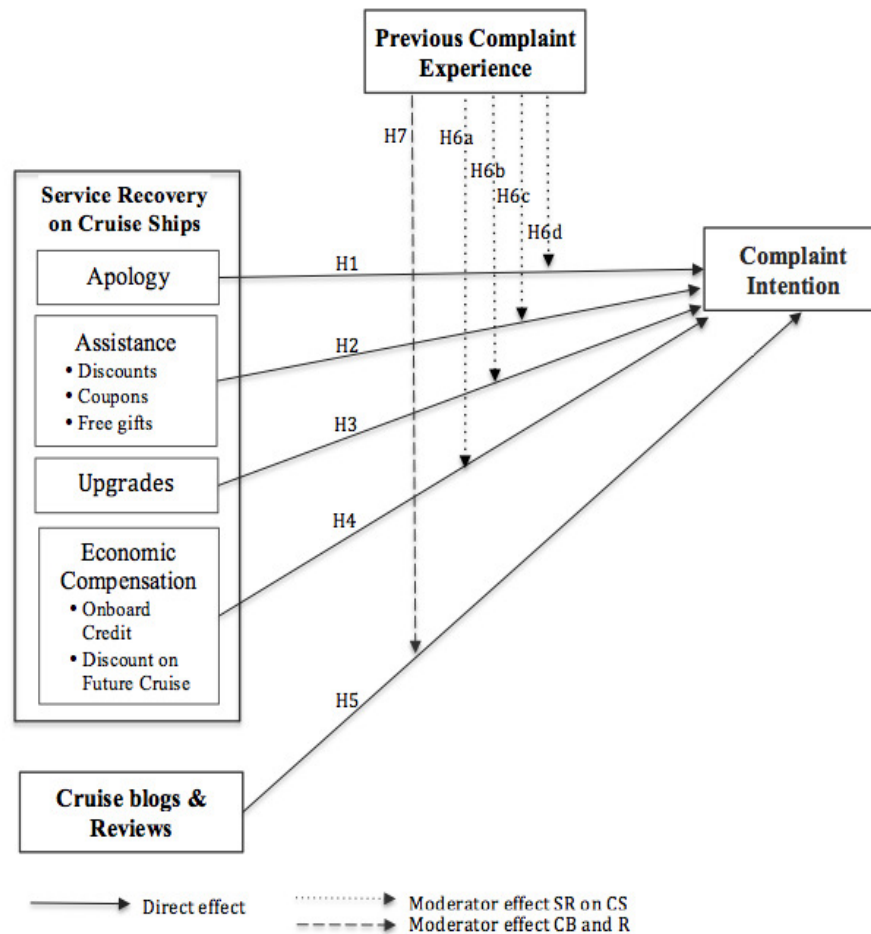


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Based on the above conceptual model and literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

H1 - The apology offered onboard a cruise ship will have a significant influence on the complaint intention, as customers seek for apology plus extra benefits.

H2 - The assistance offered with discounts, coupons or free gifts will have significant influence on the complaint intention, as passengers like to receive extra compensation while the problem is rectified.

H3 - Upgrades onboard cruise ships will have significant influence on the complaint intention, as it is considered an extra benefit of the compensation.

H4 - The economic compensation onboard cruise ships (Onboard Credit and Discount on future cruise) will have significant influence on the complaint intention, as monetary compensation is what the passengers seek the most.

H5 - Cruise blogs & reviews will have significant influence on the complaint intention, as these websites directly or indirectly influence the consumer complaint behaviour.

H6a - The relationship between apology and complaint intention is moderated by previous complaint experience, such that if consumers have a previous complaint experience, the effect of apology on complaint intention will increase, but if consumers do not have previous complaint

experience the effect of apology on complaint intention will decrease.

H6b - *The relationship between assistance (discounts, coupons or free gifts) and complaint intention is moderated by previous complaint experience, such that if consumers have a previous complaint experience the effect of assistance on complaint intention will increase, but if consumers do not have previous complaint experience, the effect of assistance on complaint intention will decrease.*

H6c - *The relationship between upgrades and complaint intention is moderated by previous complaint experience, such that if consumers have a previous complaint experience the effect of upgrades on complaint intention will increase, but if consumers do not have previous complaint experience, the effect of upgrades on complaint intention will decrease.*

H6d - *The relationship between economic compensation (Onboard Credit and Discount on future cruise) and complaint intention is moderated by previous complaint experience such that if consumers have a previous complaint experience the effect of economic compensation on complaint intention will increase, but if consumers do not have previous complaint experience, the effect of economic compensation on complaint intention will decrease.*

H7 - *The relationship between cruise blogs and reviews, and complaint intention is moderated by previous complain experience, such that if a consumer read the previous complaint experience of other consumer on cruise blogs, the complaint intention will increase, but if the consumer does not read, the complaint intention will decrease.*

Research Design

For this study, the descriptive research design was chosen along with the quantitative research method and primary data sources (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau, & Bush, 2013; Malhotra, 2007).

In order to gather the information, a structured questionnaire was developed to

measure the relationship between the variables and the strength of the moderator variable, scales related to service recovery and blogs from different authors were used and adjusted to this study. The research maintains the same scale used by the different authors, the 7-point Likert scale.

The population of this research is cruise ship passengers. The sample was selected from different cruise companies and passengers from different countries in order to understand the passenger complaint behavior in different environments. The sample is focused on men and women between 20 to 75 years old who are frequent cruise travelers, according to the recent research of "CLIA," of 2017.

As the population is unknown due to the fact that cruise ship passengers travel from different parts of the world and they are from different countries, the Multiple Regression Analysis will be used in order to calculate the population along with a Statistical power analysis.

This study will utilize convenience sampling, a type of non-probability sampling technique that will allow collecting relevant information in a short time and at a low cost.

A questionnaire link was posted on the main cruise forum web page, such as "Cruise Critics" which is the most visited web page for cruise travelers among other websites. The posted link directly led respondents to the questionnaire that was also posted through different Facebook groups related to cruises. The data was collected in 6 days (from April 14 to 19).

Finally, the data was exported and analyzed statistically using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 25 (IBM, n.d.).

Empirical Research Results

As mentioned before, the data was collected through online reviews. A total of 164 responses were collected in 6 days, from where only 96 responses were

analyzed as 68 of them had to be eliminated because of incomplete response (10), and for the 3 first filtered questions (58).

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis determines if the hypotheses raised previously are supported or rejected. It also seeks to know which independent variables (Apology, Assistance, Upgrade, Economic Compensation and Cruise Blogs & Reviews)

have more influence towards the dependent variable (Complaint Intention). A multiple linear regression was carried out for this statistical data analysis.

The model summary (Table 1) shows that R-Square for the overall model is 0.315, meaning that 31.5% of the variability of Complaint Intention can be explained by the 5 independent variables. Despite a relative low R-Square, we can still predict by 32% the answer for the new respondents.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of The Estimate
1	.562 ^a	.315	.269	1.02417

a. Predictor: (Constant), MPri, Blog, Apo, Upg, Eco, Asst

b. Dependent Variable: DComp

Note. Compiled by the authors

The Anova test (Table 2) shows that the model is significant at the $p < .000$, therefore, the regression model is a good predictor for Complaint Intention. A

significant regression equation was found $F(6,89) = 6.833$, $p < .001$, in other words, the regression model is a good fit of the data

Table 2: Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	43.004	6	7.167	6.833	.000 ^b
Residual	93.355	89	1.049		
Total	136.359	95			

a. Dependent Variable: DComp

b. Predictor: (Constant), MPri, Blog, Apo, Upg, Eco, Asst

Note. Compiled by the authors

Hypotheses Testing

The previous analysis demonstrates that there is a significant relationship between the variables and the model. The next test displayed on the regression analysis is the coefficient table, which provides a better understanding of the results for each variable, from where is possible to know if the hypotheses were supported or rejected.

Table 3 represents Model 1, which analyzed the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 including the moderator variable. To

understand better the table, each variable was renamed for the analysis. The independent variables renamed are: Apology (Apo), Assistance (Asst), Upgrade (Upg), Economic Compensation (Eco) and Cruise Blogs & Reviews (Blog). The moderator variable (Prior Complaint Experience) was renamed as (MPri) and the dependent variable (Complaint Intention) as (DComp). The Summary of the Hypotheses Test Result is explained in Table 4.

Table 3: Linear regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.722	.595		4.577	.000
Apo	-.075	.103	-.098	-.726	.470
Asst	-.271	.129	-.376	-2.102	.038
Upg	.035	.077	.059	.456	.650
Eco	.261	.121	.362	2.165	.033
Blog	.291	.077	.342	3.767	.000
MPri	.286	.084	.321	3.421	.001

a. Dependent Variable: DComp

Note. Compiled by the authors

DComp = Complaint Intention; Apo = Apology; Asst = Assistance; Upg = Upgrade; Eco = Economic Compensation; Blog = Cruise Blogs & Reviews; MPri = Previous Complaint Experience

Table 4: Summary of the Hypotheses Test Result: H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5

Hypotheses	Result
H1 -	Rejected
H2 -	Supported
H3 -	Rejected
H4 -	Supported
H5 -	Supported

Note. Prepared by the authors

As already mentioned, *previous complaint experience* was chosen as the moderator variable. Hayes (2018a), explains that “moderator variable W influences the magnitude of the casual effect of X on Y” (p. 8).

Therefore, Hayes’ (2018b) PROCESS v3.0 macro Model 1 was performed in order to

know if the moderator variable strengthens the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable for the hypothesis H6a, H6b, H6c, H6d and H7. Table 5 shows the summary of the hypotheses raised for the moderator effect.

Table 5: Summary of the Moderation Hypotheses Test Result for: H6a, H6b, H6c, H6d and H7

Hypotheses	Result
H6a -	Rejected
H6b -	Rejected
H6c -	Rejected
H6d -	Rejected
H7 -	Supported

Note. Prepared by the authors

Findings

In this section, findings will discuss the relationship between the variables proposed and the results obtained from the analysis. The results of the findings are explained below:

The relationship between apology and complaint intention

The studies find out that apology is expected when a service failure occurs (Smith, Bolton & Wagner, 1999). Meanwhile, the study of Mattila and

Cranage (2005) may provide the insight of rejecting the hypothesis, as it suggests that apology and compensation have to be provided together in order to assure a maximum customer satisfaction.

The relationship between assistance and complaint intention

This relation has also been supported. Wirtz and Lovelock (2017) stated that the assistance offered to the consumer for an inconvenience should be accompanied by extra benefits in order to have a good service recovery outcome. Also, the speed at which assistance is offered is also important for the consumer, meaning that the less waiting time for the recovery, the better the outcome (Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997).

The relationship between upgrades and complaint intention

Upgrades on service companies like hotels, restaurants or airlines are especially provided when a service failure occurs (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2017). Whereas, in cruise companies (Skaalsvik, 2011), upgrades are especially provided when it is necessary to rectify a service failure. However, results of the empirical research were rejected. Meaning that onboard a cruise ship, customer may prefer an economic compensation instead of upgrades when a service failure occurs.

The relationship between economic compensation and complaint intention

The research results confirm the theory of Shumacher and Komppula (2016) stating that in a service company, consumers prefer monetary compensation more among the others service recovery strategies. Nevertheless, cruise companies are not the exception as consumers prefer a monetary compensation the most due to the fact that this kind of compensations like onboard credit can be applied directly to their account (Cruise Critic Staff, 2017) or in their next sail with the same company as a Discount on future cruise.

The relationship between cruise blogs and reviews, and complaint intention

“CLIA” (2017), stated that cruise vacationers use cruise blogs looking for information or tips prior their travel. The results of the findings demonstrate that if a consumer reads more cruise blogs and reviews from another consumer, his/her desire to complaint will increase. It is in this interaction that consumers learn about other consumer experience (good and bad ones), acquiring knowledge about the possible benefits that may obtain from the service recovery.

The moderator effect in service recovery strategies

Base on the research findings, a previous complaint experience has a strong significant influence on complaint intention. However, the analysis demonstrates that in the service recovery strategies, the moderator’s effect was not significant, even if consumers have previous complaint experience with service recovery.

The moderator effect in cruise blogs and reviews

The findings demonstrate the relationship between cruise blogs and reviews with complaint intention. This effect is stronger on consumers that don’t have previous complaint experience, as they will read more cruise blogs and reviews. These results have already been explained by different studies confirming that cruise blogs have an influence on the consumer complaint behaviour (Cruise Critic Staff, 2017), as blogs is the place where consumers learn from other experienced consumers (Yoo & Gretzel, 2009).

Discussion

After this analysis, there can be an answer to the research question: *How service recovery influence consumer’s complaint intention to obtain benefits in the cruise ship industry?*

The result of the analysis demonstrates that service recovery influences the

consumer complaint intention, since customers seek to obtain the same service recovery outcome learned from their past experience - Customers know that there is a high possibility to obtain the same benefits from the service recovery if the same service failure occurs.

The analysis of the research also confirms that among the service recovery provided in a cruise ship, consumers seek more economic compensations, meaning, monetary compensations have higher influence among the overall recoveries provided. However, costumers prefer more the combination of service recoveries: apology or assistance plus an extra benefit (any kind of monetary compensation).

In addition, through the cruise blogs and reviews, consumers acquire knowledge about the possible benefits that they can obtain from the service recoveries provided onboard a cruise ship. Also, considering that by reading other customers experiences related to service recovery, customers obtain certain level of knowledge of the benefits that they may obtain from the cruise company.

Managerial Implications

This study has several implications for cruise ship managers and for marketers. First, cruise ship managers have to pay more attention to the service recovery provided when a consumer complains. This study demonstrates that consumers prefer to have a combination of service recoveries, especially the ones that include economic compensation. Based on these findings, it is suggested to the managers along with the marketers to work for new service recovery strategies. Even though cruise companies collect information from surveys provided at the end of each cruise (Reijnders, 2016), companies should direct a second survey to the customers that made a complaint during that cruise. This will allow the companies to have a better insight about the expected service recovery and suggestions to improve.

Second, another important factor that managers have to take in consideration is

the influence of cruise blogs and reviews towards the passengers. Findings of the study demonstrate that the statistical analysis of cruise blogs and reviews have a strong influence on the complaint intention. Therefore, cruise ships companies have to engage this cruise blogs with the company in order for the managers to have a better control of the information shared through these blogs and start to work for possible solutions to the problems shared there.

Third, another implication that managers should consider is the expertise consumers. The findings indicate that previous complaint experience has strong influence on complaint intention. Meaning that these consumers are expertise in different areas of the cruise including service, procedures and complaints. Therefore, cruise ship managers have to be able to recognize these consumers in order to work differently with them as they will have more intention to complaint and they know what service recovery to expect when they encounter another service failure (Bitner, Booms & Tetreault, 1990).

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The study has several limitations. First, the collection of the data was limited to few cruise blogs and cruise Facebook groups. As most of the cruise forums only accept an actual cruise member, and allow the members to delete posts that are not relevant, the link posted was eliminated in a short period of time, most of the time by the members and not by the website itself. Future research should be conducted as a personal interviewer or as qualitative analysis.

Second, the respondents expressed through the blogs that they were not interested in finishing the survey because there was not link to a specific company when they were seeking to complaint about them. As a recommendation for future research, surveys should be focused on a specific type of Cruise Company. In order to focus on a specific company, the survey has to target a specific segment.

The third and last limitation is related to the compensation in the service recovery. Most of the service industries use compensation to refer to any extra benefit provided to the consumer for a service failure. As an example; discounts, coupons, free gifts, free dinners, upgrades or any kind of monetary compensations is called with the same name, causing bias to the consumers who may not know how to differentiate when each compensation have to be provided. Therefore, as a recommendation for future researches, it will be necessary to make studies based only on compensations.

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