

Study of Customer's Perceived Justice on Post-Recovery Satisfaction and Behavior Intention in Restaurant Industry

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Abstract

This study mainly aims to explore the influence among perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction and behavior intention. The customers who have had experience encountering service failure and service recovery in restaurants are selected as the respondents of and the method of convenience sampling and internet survey would be applied. After removing invalid questionnaires, there are 349 applicable samples in total. The results are as follows: 1. Perceived justice and sub dimension (distributive justice, procedural justice, and Interactional justice) has positive effect on post-recovery satisfaction. 2. Post-recovery satisfaction has positive effect on behavior intention. 3. Post-recovery satisfaction has mediation effect on perceived justice and behavior intention. 4. Types of failure has interfering effect on perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction. At last, the study organizes the empirical results and provide the managing implication for restaurant owners' reference to avoid service failure and related recovery strategies in the future.

Keywords: perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction, behavior intention, service failure types

1. Introduction

The business operators in food service industry aim to attract and satisfy customers by enhancing their service quality. They also expect that the word-of-mouth marketing will be able to bring new customers to their business. The food service industry is service oriented which is different when compared with the sales of tangible goods, and it is inevitable that service failures will occur during the delivery process and impact the service quality (Goodwin & Ross, 1992; Levesque & McDougall, 2000). Zero failure is almost an impossible goal to achieve (Bitner,

Booms, & Mohr, 1994). Once a service failure occurs, it will affect consumer satisfaction and create negative effects such as not coming back for a re-visit, negative word-of-mouth, impacting the company's reputation (Spreng, Harrell, & Mackoy, 1995; Kim, Kim, & Kim, 2009). When a serious service failure occurs, it is almost impossible to fully recover from the damage caused by the service failure (Magnini, Ford, Markowski, & Honeycutt, Jr., 2007). However, if the business operators can immediately provide appropriate service recovery to customers, it will certainly help improve customer satisfaction, reduce customer loss rate and establish customer loyalty (Hart, Heskett, & Sasser, Jr., 1990; Smith & Bolton, 2002). As for the business operators, a service failure is an opportunity for them to re-examine themselves. They can pro-actively discover and solve problems based on the process of service delivery and thus establish a long-term interactive relationship with customers (Kelley, Hoffman, & Davis, 1993).

There were many studies focused on the classification of service failure or strategy of service recovery in the past. However, the scholars' research results are not consistent for the relationship between perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction, as not everyone believes that all sub-aspects of perceived justice will affect the post-recovery satisfaction (Clemmer & Schneider, 1996; Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997; Karande, Magnini, & Tam, 2007). Even if they do all affect, the degree of the effect and order are not the same as the perceived justice in its multi-aspects (Maxham III & Netemeyer, 2002). Therefore, Río-Lanza, Vázquez-Casielles and Díaz-Martín (2013) believes that the relationship between perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction is still worth discussion.

On the basis of the above, this study uses perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction and behavior intention as the foundation and considers the failure type as the interference variable to discuss the relationship between perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction. Furthermore, this study uses population statistics variables to understand the differences for various research variables. The main research objectives of this study are as follows: (1) Discuss the impact of perceived justice on post-recovery satisfaction. (2) Discuss the impact of post-recovery satisfaction on behavior intention. (3) Construct and verify the overall suitability of "perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction, and behavior intention" model, (4) Discuss the interference effect of failure type on perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Perceived justice

The degree of fairness that customers feel about service recovery is called perceived justice (Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekar, 1998). This means that the customers feel fairness only when their received compensations match up the cost of their inputs (Goodwin & Ross, 1992). The assessment of service recovery is based on the theory of justice (Hoffman & Kelley, 2000), and it is also a necessary factor to establish customer reliability (Seiders & Berry, 1998). Perceived justice has three measurement aspects including distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Blodgett et al., 1997; Ha & Jang, 2009; Sabharwal, Soch, & Kaur, 2010; Wang, Wu, Lin, & Wang, 2011). First, distributive justice refers to the distribution of interests and costs among various parties (Santos & Fernandes, 2008), which means whether or not the customers will be able to get their desired results after complaining (Morrisson & Huppertz, 2010). Distributive justice includes fairness (cost of input and acquired results are proportionate), equality (acquired results are consistent with others), and demand (acquired results meet customer's needs) (Tax et al., 1998). Secondly, procedural justice is the degree of fairness that customers feel about the procedures and policies used by service providers when dealing with complaints (Blodgett, Granbois, & Walters, 1993). It is also the fairness of policies, methods and procedures used in the process of service recovery (Morrisson & Huppertz, 2010). Procedural justice includes procedural controllability (customers can freely express themselves in the process of service recovery),

decision-making controllability (customers can decide whether or not to accept the measures of service recovery based on their own thoughts), and accessibility (the process design empowers customers to more conveniently use the operations of service recovery), speed (minimizes the time it takes for customers to complete the procedures of service recovery after a service failure) and flexibility (different measures of service recovery will be adopted depending on different service failures) (Tax et al., 1998). At last, interactional justice is the way that the service representative communicates with customers when dealing with complaints (Santos & Fernandes, 2008). It is also the interactional relationship between the service representative and customers in the process of service recovery (Morrisson & Huppertz, 2010). Interactional justice includes honesty (service provider offers information that is able to reassure the customer's concern), courtesy (the service representative is humble and courteous when interacting with customers), effort (the service representative puts in effort with a positive attitude to solve issues for customers) and sympathy (the service representative gives customer positive attention) (Tax et al., 1998).

2.2. Post-recovery satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be divided into three stages, including the initial customer satisfaction, the satisfaction based on customer's expectations and service performance, and the satisfaction of customers after receiving the service recovery (Boshoff, 1997). However, some studies divide customer satisfaction into first satisfaction and second satisfaction (McCollough, Berry, & Yadav, 2000; Harris, Grewal, Mohr, & Bernhardt, 2006). The initial satisfaction of customers after receiving the service is called the first satisfaction. The customer satisfaction of the second service (recovery measures) provided by business operators after the service failure is called the second satisfaction which is the post-recovery satisfaction. The overall satisfaction is a combination of the first satisfaction and second satisfaction (Spreng et al., 1995). The post-recovery satisfaction is when the customer is satisfied with the effort that the service provider puts in to solve the issue after a service failure (Maxham III & Netemeyer, 2003; Boshoff & Staude, 2003). Some studies even point out that post-recovery satisfaction is the customer's satisfaction on particular events, including service failure and recovery (Varela-Neira, Vázquez-Casielles, & Iglesias, 2010). In comparison with the customers who are satisfied with the first service, the customers who are satisfied with the second service after post-recovery will have a higher satisfaction and loyalty (McCollough & Bharadwaj, 1992; Webster & Sundaram, 1998; Gustafsson, 2009). On the other hand, if the post-recovery service does not meet customer's expectations, it may cause the customers to take negative or positive actions. For example, the negative actions include reducing purchases or not coming back to the company (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991), and the positive actions include switching to other companies or spreading negative word-of-mouth (Holloway & Beatty, 2003; Sparks & McColl-Kennedy, 2003).

2.3. Behavior intention

The concept of behavior intention is initiated from the attitude theory of psychology, which divides the attitude into cognitive, affective and behavioral components (Engel, Konig, Kreiter, & Singer, 1991). Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) also agrees with this point of view. Behavioral intention is the incentive that affects behavioral performance, which refers to the consumers' specific actions or behavioral tendencies on a company or products after purchase (Ajzen & Driver, 1991). Behavioral intention not only affects the consumer's behavior, but is also a prediction measurement indicator of an individual's behavior (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995). Behavior intention can be utilized to evaluate the possibility that a customer will decide to stay or leave (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Chen and Chen (2010) believes that behavioral intention is behavioral loyalty which is the third stage of loyalty. Lai and Chen (2011)

defines behavior intention as the possibility that a person will take a practical action in the future. Consumers will usually evaluate their experience and feeling after using a product or service, and then give assessment of the product or service; the result of this assessment will indirectly affect the consumer's subsequent behavior (Locklove & Wright, 2002). The more the intensity of behavior intention, the higher the possibility that an individual will take the behavioral action (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Therefore, Petrick, Morais and Norman (2001) believes that the customers' behavioral intention is more important than their actual behavior.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research hypothesis and conclusion

After the occurrence of a service failure, the impact on customer satisfaction after post-recovery service can be evaluated through the three aspects of perceived justice, namely distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice (Goodwin & Ross, 1992; Tax et al., 1998; Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999; Maxham III & Netemeyer, 2003; Karatepe & Uludag, 2006). Andreassen (1999) believes that perceived justice is the main pre-factor that affects post-recovery satisfaction. Kau and Loh (2006) utilizes perceived justice as an intervening variable and discovers that post-recovery service will be able to increase customer satisfaction through perceived justice. Varela-Neira, Vázquez-Casielles and Iglesias (2008) proposed that procedural and interactional justice in perceived justice have a greater impact on customer satisfaction. In Sabharwal et al. (2010) research results also prove that distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice have a positive impact on satisfaction after the occurrence of a service failure. As for the study of the three sub-aspects of perceived justice, some scholars have discovered that the distributive justice is able to increase satisfaction after post-recovery service (Maxham III & Netemeyer, 2002; Homburg & Fürst; 2005). Smith et al. (1999), Hocutt, Bowers and Donovan (2006) believes that procedural justice is an important factor that affects customer satisfaction after post-recovery service. Davidow (2003) and Karatepe (2006) pointed out that interactional justice has a positive relationship with the satisfaction of complaint handling. On the basis of the above findings, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Perceived justice has a positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction.

H1-1: Distributive justice has a positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction.

H1-2: Procedural justice has a positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction.

H1-3: Interactional justice has a positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction.

If business operators can effectively carry out post-recovery service, it will help in increasing customer satisfaction and willingness to purchase again (Tax et al., 1998). The post-recovery service not only can spread positive word-of-mouth and increase customer's willingness of re-purchase, but also can maintain good relationship between customers and business operators (Montoya-Weiss, Voss, & Grewal, 2003; Holloway, Wang, & Parish, 2005). Writz and Mattila (2004) proved that post-recovery satisfaction is an important pre-factor that affects word-of-mouth and re-purchase willingness. In Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000)'s research of service industry, it is found that the higher service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction have positive and significant influences on consumer's behavioral intention. As for the research in the tourism industry, some scholars believe that there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction, revisiting willingness and word-of-mouth recommendation (Hutchinson, Lai, & Wang, 2009; Chen & Chen, 2010). On the basis of the above findings, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Post-recovery satisfaction has a positive impact on behavior intention.

Sabharwal et al. (2010) believes that perceived justice has a positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction after a service failure. The post-recovery satisfaction has a positive relationship with

word-of-mouth and re-purchase intention (Montoya-Weiss et al., 2003; Holloway et al., 2005). On the other hand, regarding the relationship between service failure and perceived justice, and post-recovery satisfaction and behavior intention, most scholars use the severity of service failure and compensation type as the interference variables, and less scholars discuss the recovery effects among the types of service failures. On the basis of the above findings, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Post-recovery satisfaction has an intervening effect on perceived justice and behavior intention.

H4: The types of service failure have an interference effect on the perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction.

From the above conclusion, the architecture model of this research is created and is as shown in Figure 1.

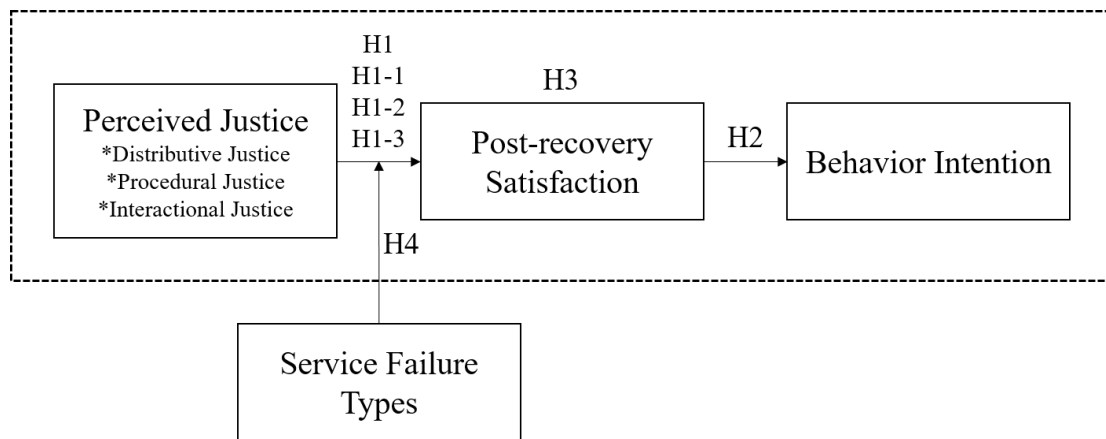


Figure 1. Research Architecture Model

3.2. Questionnaire design

The research framework includes three research variables: perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction and behavior intention. In perceived justice, Blodgett et al. (1997), Tax et al. (1998), Smith et al. (1999), Maxham III and Netemeyer (2003)'s research questions were adopted as reference questions in this study, which along with the questions added in this study were compiled based on actual restaurant consumption experiences, 16 questions in all. In post-recovery satisfaction, Tax et al. (1998), McCollough et al. (2000), Maxham III and Netemeyer (2003)'s research questions were adopted as reference questions in this study, 4 questions in all. In behavior intention, Blodgett et al. (1997)'s research questions were adopted as reference questions in this study, 6 questions in all. The Likert 5-point scale was used for all the questions above, ranging from strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, to strongly disagree.

3.3. Data analysis method

Data analyses in this study used the SPSS20 Statistics software package as the main data analysis tool. After recovering the questionnaires, descriptive statistics was first carried out. A reliability analysis using Cronbach's α coefficient values was then performed to measure whether each of the questions reached consistent results. Finally, a regression analysis was performed to test the correction effects among the structural model variables and verify whether the hypotheses held true.

4. Results

4.1. Distribution of Questionnaires

The convenient sampling method was implemented, distributing 30 questionnaire copies for the pre-test questionnaire analysis. The pre-test questionnaire analysis results show that the Cronbach's α values of perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction, behavior intention were all above 0.7, at 0.981, 0.940, and 0.761 respectively, indicating good reliability and leading to the proposition of the formal questionnaire. The formal questionnaire copies in this study were collected online, 373 copies collected. After checking and eliminating 24 invalid questionnaire copies, there were 349 valid copies, accounting for the effective recovery rate of 93.6%. The reliability analysis results of the formal questionnaire show that the Cronbach's α values of perceived justice, post-recovery satisfaction, and behavior intention were all greater than 0.8, at 0.982, 0.960, and 0.813 respectively, indicating good questionnaire reliability. In terms of sample structure, the females comprised 55.3%, mostly belonging to the 21-30 age bracket, accounting for 41.5%; in terms of education level, most were concentrated in the college/university category, accounting for 66.8%; in terms of occupation, the military/government/faculty category comprised the highest, accounting for 44.4%; in terms of consumption behavior, among the service error types, service/meal delivery delays comprised the majority (accounting for 22.1%), followed by omitted meals (accounting for 21.8%), and delivery of the wrong meal (accounting for 19.8%).

4.2. Research Hypothesis Verification

In the regression analysis of perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction, Table 1 shows that the regression models of perceived justice and its sub-dimensions (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice) showed high significance ($p < 0.001$) and all positively ($t > 0$) affected post-recovery satisfaction. That is, the higher the degree of the customer's perceived justice, the higher the post-recovery satisfaction. In addition, the regression analysis showed that in the sub-dimensions of perceived justice, the degree of procedural justice produced the most significant effect on post-recovery satisfaction ($\beta = 0.401$). Therefore, research hypotheses H1, H1-1, H1-2, and H1-3 all held true.

Table 1. Regression Analysis of Perceived Justice and Post-recovery Satisfaction.

<i>Dependent variable: post-recovery satisfaction</i>					
<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>β coefficient</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>F-value</i>
<i>Perceived justice</i>	0.808	0.899	38.327	0.000	1468.994
<i>Distributive justice</i>		0.269	4.680	0.000	
<i>Procedural justice</i>	0.808	0.401	5.275	0.000	488.576
<i>Interactional justice</i>		0.262	4.480	0.000	

In the regression analysis of post-recovery satisfaction on behavior intention, Table 2 shows that overall regression model possessed high significance ($p < 0.001$) and positively ($t > 0$) affected behavior intention. That is, the higher the degree of the customer's post-recovery satisfaction, the higher the subsequent behavior intention. Therefore, research hypotheses H2 held true.

Table 2. Regression Analysis of Perceived Justice and Post-recovery Satisfaction.

<i>Dependent variable: behavior intention</i>					
<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>β coefficient</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>F-value</i>
<i>post-recovery satisfaction</i>	0.567	0.754	21.351	0.000	455.877

In the regression analysis of post-recovery satisfaction as the mediating variable, independent variables were usually used to predict the dependent variables, and the predictive power showed significance. The effect may have solely come from the independent variables, or it may have indirectly or directed affected the dependent variables through the mediating variable. In this study, the research hypothesis used post-recovery satisfaction as the mediating variable. The hierarchical regression analysis results in Table 3 show that the β value in Model 1 was 0.702, the β value in Model 2 was 0.899, the β values in Model 3 were 0.128 and 0.638, respectively. Additionally, it was found that with the post-recovery satisfaction regarded as the predictive variable and placed in Model 3, the perceived justice no longer produced a significant effect on behavior intention. However, post-recovery satisfaction could be used to affect behavior intention ($\beta=0.638$), indicating post-recovery satisfaction produced a mediating effect. Therefore, research hypotheses H3 held true.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of Post-recovery Satisfaction as the Mediating Variable.

Dependent variable	Measuring	Independent variable			Post-recovery satisfaction
		Mode 1 Perceived justice	Mode 2 Perceived justice	Mode 3 Perceived justice	
Post-recovery satisfaction	Adjusted R ²		0.808		
	β coefficient		0.899		
	t-value		38.327		
	p-value		0.000		
	F-value		1468.994		
Behavior intention	Adjusted R ²	0.492		0.568	
	β coefficient	0.702		0.128	0.638
	t-value	18.373		1.591	7.923
	p-value	0.000		0.113	0.000
	F-value	337.553		230.209	

The β coefficient of Model 2 in Table 4 shows that when “error type” was added, the error type produced a significantly positive impact on post-recovery satisfaction. The regression analysis of error type as the intervening variable, prior to testing the intervening effect, this study first tested whether there was a correlation between error type and post-recovery satisfaction. Then, whether the determining coefficient change volume (adjusted R²) was significant was used to observe whether the intervening variable explained the variance of dependent variables. The hierarchical regression analysis results in Table 4 show that perceived justice produced an effect on post-recovery satisfaction (Model 1), while error type also produced significant differences on post-recovery satisfaction (Model 2). Overall, error type exerted an influence on post-recovery satisfaction. In addition, concerning the test of the intervening effect of error type on the correlation between perceived justice on post-recovery satisfaction, “the interaction effect of distribution justice and error type” was added in Model 3. The β co-effect showed this cross item produced a significantly positive effect on post-recovery satisfaction. It was also found that the determined coefficient change volume (adjusted R²) was 0.984, and the p value was less than 0, showing significant differences and indicating error type indeed produced an intervening effect. Therefore, research hypotheses H4 held true.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Error Type as the Intervening Variable.

<i>Dependent variable: post-recovery satisfaction</i>						
<i>Mode</i>	<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>β coefficient</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>F-value</i>
1	X1	0.984	0.992	145.309	0.000	21114.837
2	D1	0.915	0.476	30.561	0.000	472.822
	D2		0.230	14.767	0.000	
	D3		0.200	12.854	0.000	
	D4		0.399	25.628	0.000	
	D5		0.452	29.011	0.000	
	D6		0.353	22.673	0.000	
	D7		0.135	8.699	0.000	
	D8		0.302	19.421	0.000	
3	D1	0.915	0.018	0.604	0.546	472.822
	D2		-0.038	-1.692	0.091	
	D3		-0.021	-0.594	0.553	
	D4		-0.079	-3.311	0.001	
	D5		-0.003	-0.101	0.920	
	D6		0.019	0.623	0.534	
	D7		0.052	2.551	0.011	
	D8		0.015	0.663	0.508	
	X1 & D1	0.984	0.487	71.220	0.000	1370.052
	X1 & D2		0.245	35.801	0.000	
	X1 & D3		0.205	29.920	0.000	
	X1 & D4		0.422	61.772	0.000	
	X1 & D5		0.466	68.149	0.000	
	X1 & D6		0.361	52.828	0.000	
	X1 & D7		0.137	20.091	0.000	
	X1 & D8		0.316	46.240	0.000	

*X1: Perceived justice, D1: Service/meal delays, D2: Special food needs not catered to, D3: Perceived differences of store promotional offers, D4: Delivery of the wrong meal, D5: Missing orders, D6: Meal quality/hygiene negligence, D7: Bill calculation error, D8: Poor employee attitude/misconduct,

5. Conclusions

The research results show that perceived justice produced a significantly positive effect on post-recovery satisfaction. That is, in the event of a service error in the restaurant, the service recovery process gave rise to the consumer's perceived justice. On the other hand, the higher the degree of the consumer's perceived justice, the higher the post-recovery satisfaction. The correlation between the perceived fairness sub-dimensions (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice) and post-recovery satisfaction was subsequently inspected. It was found that the three sub-dimensions all reached a significantly positive effect. Among them, procedural justice produced the greatest significance in the three sub-dimensions in terms of the effect on post-recovery satisfaction, indicating restaurant owners not only needed to provide a sound customer complaint channel when service error occurred, but also a flexible and efficient attitude when responding to the customer was required during the recovery process. Hence, it is important for restaurant owners to establish a set of comprehensive error handling process. Moreover, the ability to respond to problems handled also needs to be included into employee

training. Regardless of the remedial measure adopted, the ultimate purpose is to provide customers with satisfactory compensation.

Secondly, post-recovery satisfaction produced a sufficiently positive effect on behavior intention. The higher the degree of the customer's satisfaction towards the restaurant owner's remedial measure, the higher the subsequent behavior intention, which is the willingness to visit the restaurant again and recommend the restaurant to others or share the dining experience with others. Furthermore, the effect of perceived justice on behavior intention also reached the significant standard. After incorporating post-recovery satisfaction, the post-recovery satisfaction produced a mediating effect between perceived justice and behavior intention, indicating the effect of perceived justice on behavior intention used post-recovery satisfaction to affect or strengthen the customer's behavior intention. Thus, while restaurant owners strengthen perceived justice, they must not overlook the influence of post-recovery satisfaction, to achieve customer satisfaction following a service error occurrence, thereby enhancing the customer's willingness to pay a re-visit in the future.

Finally, error type produced an intervening effect between perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction. Service/meal delays produced the highest degree of intervening effect, followed by missed meals, and delivering the wrong meal, indicating these three error types produced a higher intervening effect on perceived justice and post-recovery satisfaction. Therefore, when a service error occurs, restaurant owners should start by taking a remedial measure to improve the customer's perceived justice, which is primarily intended to improve procedural justice, followed by distributive justice and interactional justice. In other words, while making sure the customer perceives the availability of a good customer complaint channel when the restaurant is handling a service error, the recovery process must also be flexible and efficient in order to improve customer satisfaction. Meanwhile, restaurant owners should strengthen employee education training and avoid meal delays, missed meals, delivering the wrong meal, and other errors during the meal delivery service process.

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