



How can a firm evaluate customer satisfaction with a service recovery in a B2B market?

By

Ana Rita Faria Magalhães

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Supervised by

Prof. PhD. Raquel Filipa do Amaral Chambre de Meneses Soares Bastos
Moutinho

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Biographical Note

Ana Rita Faria Magalhães was born on September 15, 1991 in Massarelos.

She completed her graduation in Economics at University of Aveiro in 2012. In the same year, Ana Rita began the master's degree in Services Management at Faculty of Economics of University of Porto.

She started working in April, 2013 in “Recheio”, company that integrates Jerónimo Martins' Group and she is employed in the Sales Division.

Thanks

I want to thank to the most important people in my life that are my father, my mother and my brother. They help me unconditionally in every difficult time and gave me all the support that helped me finish this work. They all have been present in my life and never let me down. My family always told me that only with work, dedication and commitment I would be able to achieve my goals.

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Abstract

B2B market is characterized by a strong interdependence, where offer quality of a firm is dependent of their supplier' qualities. Therefore, any gap will have repercussions throughout the product chain. It is a 'snow ball' effect. However, firms fail. Complaints in this market are very valuable and should be treated in the best way possible because they are a good source of information about clients and give the company the opportunity to recover these client. Thus, the company cannot fail in the complaint' treatment, in other words, after the complaint handling by the firm, the client should be satisfied.

The objective of this work is to understand how a company is able to evaluate customers' satisfaction after a fail, complaint and recovery, in a business-to-business market, in other words the goal of this work is to build a scale of satisfaction' control of complaint, in a business-to-business market.

In order to have a perception about what the business customers value in a recovery exploratory interviews were made followed by a questionnaire. The data of the questionnaire was analyzed using SmartPls and SPSS software programs. Then, five scales were analyzed, of which one was chosen and suggested by the author. This scale "PerRec" validates the fact that only the perceptions of consumers towards a company's performance are important, leaving the expectations of having some role towards satisfaction. This scale includes eight dimensions that are: express anger, apology, compensation, warn the customer, assume the gap, find the cause of the gap, be quickly and find a solution.

This study contributes with some novelty to the literature in a business-to-business market, in the way that a scale is suggested which may be validated by a company, which is, yet, a topic not very well studied in the B2B market.

Key-words: Complaint, B2B market, Satisfaction, Service recovery, "PerRec"

Resumo

O Mercado Business-to-business caracteriza-se por uma forte interdependência, em que a qualidade da oferta de uma empresa é dependente da qualidade de todos os seus fornecedores, assim sendo qualquer falha terá repercussões em toda a cadeia produtiva. É um efeito “bola de neve”. Contudo, as empresas falham. As reclamações neste mercado são bastante valiosas e devem ser tratadas da melhor forma possível, pois traduzem uma boa fonte de informação sobre os clientes e dão à empresa a oportunidade de recuperar estes clientes. Para que tal seja possível, a empresa não pode falhar no tratamento da reclamação, ou seja, após o tratamento da reclamação, o seu cliente tem que se sentir satisfeito.

O objetivo deste trabalho é perceber como é que uma empresa consegue avaliar a satisfação dos clientes após uma falha, reclamação e a recuperação, no mercado business-to-business, ou seja, o objetivo é construir uma escala de controlo de satisfação da reclamação no mercado B2B.

Para se ter uma perceção sobre o que os clientes empresariais acham importante no processo de recuperação foram realizadas entrevistas exploratórias seguidas de um questionário. Os dados do questionário foram analisados usando os seguintes softwares, SmartPls and SPSS. De seguida, foram analisadas cinco escalas, das quais uma foi escolhida e proposta pelo autor. Esta escala “PerRec” valida o facto de apenas as perceções dos consumidores face ao desempenho de uma empresa serem importantes, deixando as expectativas de ter algum papel relevante. Esta escala inclui oito dimensões: expressar o descontentamento, um pedido de desculpas, compensação, avisar o cliente, assumir a falha, encontrar a causa da falha, ser rápido, exigir uma solução.

Este estudo contribui com alguma novidade para a literatura no mercado business-to-business, na medida em que, é proposta uma escala que poderá ser validada por uma empresa que é, ainda, um tópico não muito estudado no mercado B2B.

Palavras-chave: Reclamação, Mercado B2B, Satisfação, Recuperação de serviços, “PerRec”

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Introduction

Customer satisfaction is a crucial and sensitive element that must be well analyzed and managed by companies. However, services gaps can occur at any time, due to their characteristics (intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity and inseparability) which may contribute to a not satisfied customer.

It has been found that once a service failure occurs, it becomes crucial that service recovery be effectively carried out, which will aim to transform a dissatisfied customer in a satisfied one (Johnston, 1995). According to Etzel and Silverman (1981), a good recovery service contributes to greater satisfaction, comparatively to a first service provision right. The recovery paradox has been discussed more recently by McCollough (2000).

Lately, service recovery created considerable interest in various authors (eg. Tax and Brown, 1998; Nyer, 2000; Mack, 2000; Kau and Loh, 2006; Vos and Huitema, 2008). Tax and Brown (1998) argued that service recovery management fails frequently and must be created an effective mechanism of support and response, to improve the company-customer relationship. The study of recovery and influences at the confidence level, word-of-mouth and loyalty, have been discussed in some studies (eg. Kau and Loh, 2006). Nyer (2000) researched whether complaining can cause increased consumer satisfaction. Gilly and Gelb (1982) analyzed the post-purchase process of consumers that complain, the satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the answers given by the firm when something goes wrong. Sharma *et al.* (2010) studied the influences on customer complaint behaviour in complainers and non complainers customers.

When any product is defective, it is removed from the process, before reaching the consumer. This way, the consumer does not see the defect because the product was removed. For services this is different. Unlike products, when the service provision somehow fails, the consumer is there and can see it. In services, production and consumption happens at the same time. Consumer is a co-producer of the service.

Given the characteristic of intangibility, services cannot be proved before experience it, thus quality is subjective. Due to the amount of competition that exists,

firms cannot afford to lose customers, so they should do all possible to keep them as customers. Therefore, when something goes wrong, the firm must treat the best way possible the customer. Usually the supply' quality of a company, its compliance of deadlines, the answers of questions from customers, is very dependent on its suppliers. Thus, a gap in a Business-to-business (B2B) market can be greatly affected to the firm. If there is a fail from a supplier, it will affect the firm and consequently the customer. It is a "snowball effect".

Complaints are usually not well seen by companies, because they still think that are bad (Vos and Huitema, 2008). But if they see them as an opportunity to improve, they will win much more. Through complaints, managers can understand how much satisfied are their customers. When customers complaint, they are showing the company what is wrong, and they are giving them a chance to do better. Furthermore, they are giving an opportunity to the firm to continue working with them. However, this is only possible if the recovery system works well.

There are many studies about these themes in a business-to-consumer (B2C) market, because this is well analyzed by various authors for a long time (eg. Gilly and Gelb, 1982; Sharma et al., 2010; Nyer, 2000). Thus, the motivation to do this work is to analyze some of these points mentioned, in a business-to-business market. It is a market that has not been studied too much relatively to complaints and service recovery, so in this work some studies will be mentioned about B2C market. The goal is to explore these themes and verify if occurs in the same way in B2B markets. Business-to-business market is more complex, the customers are more exigent and more attentive to details, than in B2C.

The aim of this study is to analyze what do clients in B2B market value in a recovery service.

It is intended to analyze, by triggering complaints, which way a good/bad treated complaint can influence a recovery service and satisfaction. This study draws attention to complaints and the way it can be solved, to give more satisfaction to customers, not letting them give up the company. So, the research question that will be the mote to this work is: How can a firm evaluate customer satisfaction with a service recovery in a B2B

market? To answer this question, at a first plan, this research should understand what customers expect to get with this recovery service.

This work has the following structure: initially a literature review is made about satisfaction and dissatisfaction, complaints, reasons to complain, service recovery and B2B market. In the second part it is presented the methodology used in this work and explained all steps the author took to the final conclusion. At the end, it is made a conclusion that covers all the work, explaining initial intentions, the research question, methodology applied, the final answers and it also has the study limitations and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

In this chapter a literature review is made that will be the theoretical base to the work. Here is approached, briefly, the notion of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and services gaps. It is approached theory about complaints, the way they should be managed and reasons to complain, and it is also approached the service recovery.

Because there is no literature about recovery services in B2B market, the major part of literature in this work is from B2C market, except the part of B2B market.

2.1. Satisfaction Vs Dissatisfaction

Lewis and Booms (1983) defined quality as a measure of how well the service was delivered according the expectations of a person. “Quality is a responsibility of all members of an organization” (Vijande *et al.*, 2013, p. 940), what leads to the fact that a small failure of an employee, can immediately transform in a service gap. Thus, gaps in services are easier to occur due to their intrinsic characteristics: intangibility (services cannot be touched), inseparability (the fact that the customer is a co-producer of the service), heterogeneity which means that a service is never produced in the same way for all customers (there is a big variability in the performance of services) and perishability (it is not possible to make stocks of services).

According to Mayo and Brown (1999) satisfaction is a crucial factor to create and hold up competitive advantages in a firm. Nowadays, satisfaction is a good reference of great relevance in the difficult competitiveness between firms.

During the service provision and when it finishes people develop within a feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Hunt (1977) argued that when an experience is better, at least than the expectations, the consumer is satisfied. However, when the service provision is worst then initial expectations, consumers become dissatisfied. Being dissatisfied is critically because consumers get a bad impression of the service provider.

Product expectations are created on the basis of product characteristics, past experiences or even actions from a service provider (Zussman, 1983). Service expectations are created, because of the impossibility of knowing exactly how it will be, while not happen.

Hirschman (1970) distinguishes two ways of reacting to dissatisfaction with a service provider: “exit” implies dissatisfied customers do not complaint, quit the firm and switch service provider and “voice” implying that they complaint. When it happens, they are giving company the opportunity to do better.

Consumers can be divided into two groups: those who complaint and those that not complaint. In the group of those who do not complaint, there are satisfied and dissatisfied consumers (Kau and Loh, 2006). The fact that consumers do not complaint does not mean they are satisfied with the service provider. They can be dissatisfied but for some reason, they choose not to complaint. So the fact that a company has not any complaints does not mean that it is the best company in the world. Moreover, companies must motivate consumers to complain, if something is wrong. Only this way, they can understand if their consumers are satisfied with the service provided. And if there is something wrong, they have the opportunity to know it and to do better. According to Zairi (2000), satisfaction is not stable, may vary easily, because it depends on interactions between customer and the service provider and depends on complaints. Thus, firms always need feedback that help them understand if they are doing well or not. The complaint is one way to receive feedback.

Thus, managers have to pay much attention to this situation, in order to identify and understand sources of dissatisfaction, reasons for complaining and non-complaining (Nimako and Mensah, 2012).

2.2 Complaint

According to Mowen (1993), complaint behavior is a set of actions taken by the consumers when there is dissatisfaction with something. When customers face a service failure, they can choose to complain or not. If they do not say anything, they give the firm no chance to fix their dissatisfaction (Barlow and Moller, 2008). There are many customers that do not complain their dissatisfaction, giving up the company, without showing their feeling. Tax and Brown (1998), report that only 5-10 per cent of dissatisfied people complain. Unlike products, service expectations are not very clear,

because people did not try it yet. It helps to explain why some people do not complain when they are dissatisfied (Tax and Brown, 1998).

According to Dutka (1994), for every customer complaint a company has approximately twenty other that have the same feeling but do not. Who do not complain can tell their bad experience with the service provider, through a negative word-of-mouth (Richins, 1982). According to Ang and Buttle (2012, pp. 1022), “Social interaction effects can multiply the negative effects of an unsatisfactory consumer experience”. Edvardsson (1988) argued that fails during a firm-consumer relation can have a destroyer impact.

According to Fornell and Westbrook (1984) a good complaint management implies two factors: individual complaint handling and aggregate complaint data analysis. “Effective complaint handling can have a dramatic impact on customer retention rates” (Tax *et al*, 1998, p. 60). Complaint data is essential in quality management efforts because it can be used to solve such problems (Lovelock, 1994), and to avoid future fails.

According to Adamson (1993) the *Technical Assistance Research Program* report that most companies spend more time on reacting individual complaints than in analyzing causes and trying to improve. According to Nyer (2000), marketers affirm that complaints from consumers are good useful sources of information that help identifying sources of dissatisfaction, so they must be encouraged. Barlow and Moller (2008) stated that this information about consumers “can become the foundation for a company’s quality and service recovery programs” (Barlow and Moller, 2008, pp. 12)

Firms need to know customers’ expectations and perceptions, since they complain when they are not satisfied with the service provider and when there is a discrepancy between initial expectations and the real perception. However, dissatisfaction is a necessary cause but not sufficient for claims arising (Day, 1984; Singh and Pandya, 1991). Quite often, people complain not only because they are dissatisfied, but because allow them to reach other goals. Forbes (2008) states that some consumers complain just because “they expect to receive a direct benefit, such as monetary compensation” (Forbes, 2008, p. 194). Eccles and Durand (1998) affirm that the main reason to

complain is the fact that they want what was denied (service or an apology). The importance, the value of the service, the reasons of the dissatisfaction, the circumstances around, the time needed to complain and the time waiting for the conclusion of the process also affect the option to complain.

Heung and Lam (2003, p. 285) argued that variables for complaining included “seeking compensation”, “seeking redress”, “seeking apology”, “ask for an explanation”, “express anger” and “requesting corrective action”. According to Nimako and Mensah (2012, pp. 316) “seeking corrective actions was the highest ranked motive for complaining”. Thus, people who participate in the study of Nimako and Mensah (2012) prefer to seek corrective actions or an apology than to seek compensation. According to Nimako and Mensah (2012) when corrective actions fail, people want some explanation from the firm. In case of no explanation or if it is not enough, consumers seek for redress from the company (they want to seek specific remedies from the seller directly or indirectly) (Nimako and Mensah, 2012). “If this fails they would likely seek and expect an apology from the service provider for the inconveniences caused to them.”(Nimako and Mensah, 2012, pp. 316). If this is not satisfactory, they will express their anger. If even this is not enough, they will seek some compensation or public action from the media (Nimako and Mensah, 2012).

According to Tax and Brown (1998) people do not complain not because they are passive but because they think that the enterprise will not be responsive, they are not sure about their rights and duties of firms, they do not want to confront the responsible for the gap and they are concerned about the high cost in time of complaining.

As already stated when people complain, they are giving to the company an opportunity to do better. Therefore, a company should inform, help consumers to complain and show them when, where and how to complain (Tax and Brown, 1998). According to Nimako and Mensah (2012), a complaint is a reward to the company. Nimako and Mensah (2012) stated that people who complain can be given gifts, awards, recognition through the company. Barlow and Moller (2008) also argued that people who complain directly to a firm are giving them a gift.

This way, as it is important to a company that when the customers are not satisfied should complain, this complaint must have a recovery. Thereby, through this recovery, a company can gain the confidence of those customers. Smith and Bolton (2002) argued that service recovery represents itself a moment of truth.

2.3 Service Recovery

After a consumer realizes that expectations about the service provider were not met, other expectations arise relatively to the recovery. “It is important that a complaint is handled effectively and seriously in a well-developed complaint management system” (Hanse *et al.* 2010, p.8). Tax and Brown (1998) also defend that this system has to be flexible. Complaints management must be integrated in the culture of a firm.

The recovery management is crucial. According to Ang and Buttle (2012, pp. 1022), “From a marketing perspective, it is important to handle complaints well”, trying to avoid negative word-of-mouth and to achieve loyalty. “Organizational responses are the initial reactions by a company in response to a complaint”, according to Gelbrich and Roschk (2010, pp.26).

Treating a complaint implies give an answer to the customer. The attention a firm gives to a consumer is determinant to the recovery (Davidow, 2000). When the service providers receive a complaint, they should be able to calm down the complainers and deal with them in a way that makes them to return (Barlow and Moller, 2008). When customers complain, they expect to be treated carefully, with respect, quickly and be rewarded for what went wrong. They hope to be right and reverse the sense of dissatisfaction.

According to Roehm and Brady (2007) in the moment of the realization of the gap cognitive resources should be assigned to activities related to understanding the problem.

When something goes wrong, the firm must be fast and realize when can and must act, to not let escape the consumer. Consumers are increasingly demanding and choices of service providers abound. According to Gilly and Gelb (1982, p. 326), “The more

quickly a complaint is resolved, greater the satisfaction.” Johnston and Mehra (2002) also defend that a quick answer is a good way to solve a complaint. Nimako and Mensah (2012, pp. 318) state that “management should emphasize immediate complaint resolution”. If a complaint takes too long to be solved, the consumer will be tired of waiting for some reimbursement and, possibly, will give up that company. The longer a company takes to answer and fix the problem more negative word-of-mouth will be practiced. Being slow only makes the company frowned from the point of view of the consumer. Thus, La and Kandampully (2004) think that to compensate a consumer and to thank him for understanding is an important action that may be taken.

Levesque and McDougall (2000) presented four types of recovery strategies: apologize, compensate, assist and assist and compensate.

According to Barlow and Moller (2008) when people complain, many companies start asking numerous questions like name, address and questions related with the service gap. However, the company should initially apologize about injury caused to the customers. This is a good way to start treating a complaint. (Tax and Brown, 1998; Davidow, 2003). After a complaint, consumers needs a quick answer by the company and the best a firm can do, is to apologize and say the company will do everything to solve the problem and will inform them about every step they take. An apology is like a psychological compensation (Davidow, 2000). Initially the firm has to assume responsibility for the gap (Tax and Brown, 1998). However, Levesque and McDougall (2000) argued that an apology only is a poor gain, however can be effective when there is just a little service gap.

“When services fail customers expect to be compensated” (Tax and Brown, 1998, p. 80). Gelbrich and Roschk (2011, p. 26) argued that “compensation represents a tangible benefit in the form of monetary or cash-equivalent remuneration”. Compensation can be either an intangible remuneration (Gelbrich and Roschk, 2011). Webster and Sundaram (1998) also argued that compensation given to the consumer can be tangible and psychological. For Hui and Au (2001) compensation serves a double purpose, it compensates a complainer for some loss experienced with a service provider and it can also bring more confidence and satisfaction to the consumer.

Tax and Brown (1998) argued that a service recovery needs to focus on achieving fairness. Tax *et al.* (1998) defend that consumers expect compensation for damages occurred with the gap. According to Smith *et al.* (1999) consumers expect some profit to compensate the service gap. A company can compensate a complainer with some discounts, exchange some poor products or repair it, etc. (Hansen *et al.* 2010). “The typical forms of compensation are refunds, credits, correction of charges, repairs and replacements” (Tax and Brown, 1998, p. 80). Consumers feel more satisfied when a company gives options of outcomes (Tax and Brown, 1998).

When there is a financial loss by the consumer, a partial compensation is not the best, and does not contribute to a total satisfied consumer (Gilly and Gelb, 1982).

Assist is the more effective action that can be taken by a firm (Levesque and McDougall, 2000). According to Levesque and McDougall (2000), these recovery strategies imply that the company takes action in order to solve the problem. These actions can satisfy the customers and put them at the original situation (Levesque and McDougall, 2000).

Levesque and McDougall (2000) show that in a study of Darida, Levesque and McDougall (1996) assist and compensation has good results relatively to loyalty. In other words, when a company assists and compensates, the customer tends to be more loyal to the company. Webster and Sundaram (1998) cited by Levesque and McDougall (2000) argued that at failures with less importance, compensation is more effective if followed by assistance and at gaps with more importance, assistance has more results followed by compensation.

There are huge differences between monetary complaints and non-monetary complaints. According to Gilly and Gelb (1982) when there is a treatment of a monetary complaint 72% of consumers are satisfied; when there is a non-monetary complaint, only 52% are satisfied. “Responses to complaints that do not involve monetary loss will bring about lower levels of satisfaction than responses to complaints which do involve monetary loss” (Gilly and Gelb, 1982, pp. 325). If it is made a claim that involves money, the company is able to handle the consumer and the process better. Gilly and Gelb (1982) also stated that the level of satisfaction with the complaint handling is

positively related with the percentage of monetary loss reimbursed. Naturally, when customers complain along with an apology by the company, they expect to be reimbursed monetarily. Thus, the more they receive, more satisfied they will be. When complaints are “successfully addressed by the firm, the more likely consumers are to experience overall satisfaction for the service provider” (Nimako and Mensah, 2012). However, a partial reimbursement is always better than none (Davidow, 2000).

According to Kau and Loh (2006), the level of confidence and word-of-mouth in complainers that are dissatisfied with the service recovery is less than initially dissatisfied consumers. This shows that managers have to pay more attention to service recovery, because once wrong, it could trigger a huge lack of confidence and negative word-of-mouth in dissatisfied customers. If things go right, it is very probable that they returns. Andreassen (1999) refers that an effective service recovery leads to satisfaction and loyalty of the customer.

However, the inability of an organization to give a good answer after an occurrence of a gap will disappoint a consumer twice. According to Mack (2000), a firm by failing a recover, loses certainly a consumer and probably risks losing all their friends, due to a negative word-of-mouth. According to Berry and Parasuraman (1991) a consumer becomes more dissatisfied when the company fails in recovering service than with the service gap. However, when two unsatisfactory recoveries, the effect of double dissatisfaction is clear. Consumer can even understand one failure recovery, but never two (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002).

This is even more important if we take into consideration Gupta *et al.*, (2004) who argued that one per cent increase in customer retention has almost five times more impact in an organization value than one per cent change in discount rate.

Define guidelines for service recovery will help a company. If a company focuses on fairness, justice, quality, satisfied employees, satisfied consumers, they will achieve clearly a better performance (Tax and Brown, 1998). *Samaritan Health Services*¹ developed a framework, “AAAA” for service recovery that means: Anticipate problems

¹ Non-profit network of hospitals, physician clinics and health services caring, in United States.

and try to solve them; Acknowledge mistakes; Apologize for the gap even if a company has no fault; make Amends for the mistake (Tax and Brown, 1998).

Tax and Brown (1998) have a different approach claiming that companies should have a database of complaints. This way, in the future, complaints would be treated quickly and more effectively. With reports of past complaints, managers can understand and treat better the next ones. In every complaint, a company does a better work. This is in accordance with Nyer (2000) that argues that complaints are an excellent source of information.

A way to centralize and handle complaints is the existence of call-centers (Tax and Brown, 1998). They have an important role in managing the relationship with the customer (Jaiswal, 2008). It permits problem solving, answer questions quickly through a database with all information necessary (Mancini, 1991). It is a low-cost option, which has been used by many companies. The complaint handling process should be integrated into the culture of a company and should be pursued seriously.

The Role of front-office

Many complains are made to the staff, in front-office, and here some mistakes and confusions may arise.

The bet in empowerment must be an asset to the company. This practice allows to the development of the service in a personalized way solving claims individually (Rafiq and Ahmed, 1998). Thus, employees must be responsible when something goes wrong, admit it and solve it, at the exactly moment. Thus, they must be trained, tested and approved, by managers. If given the power to employees, authority to respond a service failure, they are going to feel better, important to the company and will develop a better work. According to Tax and Brown (1998), train employees so that they are able to resolve this kind of situations.

Companies must transmit to employees their mission, vision, goals, and make them feel part of the company, so they demonstrate their values to consumers. Employees should be involved in complaints management, be aware that they are an important role. Thus, they will be motivated in their routine. The role of front-office employees is very important. According to Loveman (1998), loyal employees are more willing and able to

provide a higher level of service quality. So, they are friendly and cordial to consumers, making them feel good, treating them in the best possible way. Therefore, because employees are so close to consumers, it is through them, that consumers can say that something is wrong, hoping that they can solve it. In order to start dealing with complaints, managers should give employees the authority to deal with them. Complaints should be well received by them (Nimako and Mensah, 2012). Given the nature of the services, the behavior of first line employees, can affect satisfaction of a consumer. The staff at the front line should keep in mind, that they are a crucial key in providing service. It is necessary to make the consumer feel important to the company. For example, in order to show the importance of service recovery to their guests, The Ritz Carlton made a wallet sized card with the values of the company, that every employee uses (Tax and Brown, 1998). This way, every employee knows the statements of the firm and will help in achieving effective recovery.

According to Ang and Buttle (2006), the closer a firm and consumer are, less are the costs of maintenance relationship.

The Role of Perceived Justice

To be nice and quick are important but not sufficient. When customers complain they expect justice or fairness (Tax and Brown, 1998). The way in which a company handles the claims is very important to the customer. “Justice involves the propriety of decisions” (Tax *et al*, 1998, p. 62).

Perceived justice is an important concept in the study of complaints behavior. Perceived justice is based in checking whether or not the expectations of a consumer are realized. It can be divided in three types: 1) Distributive justice, related to compensation that may arise to the consumer that can be in form of discounts, coupon or apologies; 2) procedural justice, related with the decisions made by companies, like control of situation, speed of decision, flexibility and respect. Procedural justice contains five elements: process control, control decisions, accessibility, time of response and flexibility (Tax and Brown, 1998). This type of justice is really important in the recovery service because it offers satisfaction with for example a quick answer And 3) Interactional justice that deals with human behavior, honesty, sympathy, empathy and efforts demonstrated by front line employees in solving problems (Kau and Loh, 2006).

According to Greenberg (1990) consumers are more worried with gaining a fair procedural treatment than with obtaining specific results of the process of complain.

When a company apologizes to a consumer, this one becomes more satisfied compared to situations where the realization of justice is lower (Tax and Brown, 1998). However, in B2B markets the consequences of a fail are deeper and the importance of apologies, compensation and justice may be different.

2.4 Business-to-business Market

Business-to-business means business between firms. They sell and commercialize their products/services to other firms. Unlike B2C, where a company sells directly to the final consumer, in a B2B market a company sells to other company. In a B2B market the customer of a firm is another firm. This customer uses products that have been bought in their own manufacturer, producing services to the final consumer.

Similarly to consumers in B2C market, firms have to make choices that will affect their business. The products that companies in a B2B market buy drift from preferences of final consumers. There is lot of responsibility in this market, in many phases, as there represents a dependent value chain. All depend on all. A gap in the beginning will affect this value chain, the cliente offer, and the final consumer satisfaction.

Rollins *et al.* (2012) affirm that in business-to-business relationships information is more complex than a product. Through that information companies can improve their business, learn more about customers, improving their satisfaction (Rollins *et al.*, 2012).

Cooper and Jackson (1988) stated that B2B market has a buying process more rational than in B2C, relationship of long-term, product complexity, decision making very important and an enormous amount of money exchanged. Customers pay more attention to the specific characteristics of products/services, because they have to choose the best to fit their goals. Usually, they need factsheets of some products, in order to

know better information about products, so they can decide if it will make any difference to their business (Boaz *et al.*, 2010). Most of the times there is a fast delivery. Unlike B2C, customers buy in large volumes of products/services. The prices are a criterion that customers in B2B market take really into account (Turley and Kelley, 1997). These prices are very competitive and stable along time. Customers usually pre-negotiate with suppliers, payment terms for their purchases. Personal relationship is very important in this market because there are fewer customers, so each customer needs a different treatment.

In a B2B relationship, the customer does not have the motivation to continue with a service provider just because of the relationship itself. Customers maintain relationships with firms because they really want or because they have no other option (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997). The main reason to maintain this situation is a product/service that meets expectations of the customer (Cater and Cater, 2010). Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) argued that the relationship between a company and a customer is stronger when these ones identify with the company that best fulfilled his needs. Customers point that quality is the main criterion to choose their service providers. Product quality and service quality are benefits expected by the customers (Homburg *et al.*, 2005). This way companies as customers expect suppliers can give them a good service quality that is essential to a good relationship (Homburg *et al.*, 2005). According to Dobler and Burt (1996) in an organizational buying quality is very important. They give quality more importance than even the price (Cater and Cater, 2010). According to Mckinsey.com “while they may say price is one of the biggest concerns, a satisfying sales experience is ultimately more important”.

For many authors (eg. Gounaris, 2005; Homburg *et al.*, 2005; Walter *et al.*, 2002) trust is a crucial factor to maintain a relationship in B2B market. According to Gounaris (2005, pp. 128) “trust leads to high level of affective commitment”. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) believed that commitment is the factor more important to solidify relationships leading to loyalty.

Maintaining a relationship at this level is not easy. Thus, good interactions between both parts are very important. The relationship between firms and customer is crucial to the success and survival of a firm (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997). Homburg *et*

al. (2005) argued that quality, trust, commitment and flexibility between customer and supplier are important characteristics of this market. Trust between both parts can improve the relationship by sharing information and ideas (Homburg et al., 2005). Flexibility in these relationships is important essentially for unforeseen situations (Homburg et al., 2005). Commitment refers to efforts demonstrated to maintain a good relationship with the customers (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and helps in reducing the uncertainty (Homburg et al., 2005)

In a B2B market a gap can influence many things. Thus, a failure in the beginning, in the middle or even at the end of the chain, can cost a final customer. It is a dependent value chain and a failure in any part can destroy all the process. Therefore it is expected that an apology is necessary but not enough to the customer. An apology will not solve the problem, per se. With an apology, a customer expects other action from the company.

Essentially, the customer expects a quick answer from the company. He expects to be compensated by the service gap somehow. He pretends a fair and good compensation. Expects to be heard with attention, respect and carefully. He wants the company to solve the problem and expects it not to happen anymore.

Conclusion

The major part of literature about complaints focuses on B2C market. Although B2B market is also important, it has been less studied. However, like it was just said gaps in this market have many consequences that can prejudice all the value chain. This way, complaints at this level must be well analyzed, in order to satisfy all complainers.

Table 1 was elaborated to compile important items from literature review. It shows in the first column what customers want with a complaint, according to authors named in the second column. The third column represents actions firms must take to solve complaints, cited by authors named in the fourth column. The last column shows the

author's expectations about the importance of the actions cited in the third column, in B2B markets, before exploratory research. In this column, the signal (+) means more importance, (-) means less importance and (=) means equal importance.

The paradox of service recovery affirms that with a satisfactory recovery, a gap is more likely to have a better classification of the service than a case where no gap occurs. "After a complaint, loyalty depends essentially on complaint satisfaction and not as much on satisfaction that as cumulated over time" (Homburg and Furst, 2005, p. 108). According to Gilly and Hansen (1992) analysis, plan, implement and essentially control are the steps for an effectively complaint management system. Thus, it is necessary to know what customers want and have a satisfaction' measurement tool for an effective control.

Table 1: Actions taken by consumers at a service recovery and actions taken by companies.

Consumers' actions	Authors	Actions taken by companies	Authors	B2B Expectations about actions taken by companies
Seeking Redress	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)	Apology	Tax and Brown (1998), Davidow (2003), Levesque and McDougall (2000)	(-) It is an important action because must be the first one taken by the company. However, in the set of all actions this one plays a less important role.
Seeking Apology	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003); Eccles and Durand (1998)	Responsiveness	Tax and Brown (1998)	(+); The responsiveness a company can give to a service gap is a very important point. It should understand, measure and act quickly. The responsiveness of a company will surely mark a customer.
Seeking Compensation	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003); Forbes (2008);	Assist	Levesque and McDougall (2000)	(+); This action is very important because when there is a failure, something is missing to the costumer. What is missing must be fixed quickly. This way the assistance a company gives to the customer is very important because is showing support to the complainer.

Seeking Redress	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)	Compensation	Levesque and McDougall (2000), La and Kandampully (2004), Gelbrich and Roschk (2011), Webster and Sundaram (1998), Hui and Au (2001), Smith <i>et al.</i> (1999), Tax and Brown (1998), Gilly and Gelb (1982), Nimako and Mensah (2012), Davidow, 2000	(=); When there is a service gap, the author of this work thinks that the complainer should be compensated somehow. It is equally important for B2C and B2B market. However, there are so much different forms and types of compensation.
Seeking an Explanation	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)	Be quickly	Johnston and Mehra (2002), Nimako and Mensah (2012)	(+); A gap at this level really affects all the value chain of a B2B market. So, when there is a realization of a gap, a firm has to be quick in solve it and do the best to not to worsen the situation.
Request Corrective action	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003);	Be thankful	La and Kandampully (2004)	(=); It is an important action because when there is a gap, a firm must be thankful for the complaint. This way, a firm will be more attentive to its causes, trying not to repeat them.
Express anger	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003);	Fairness	Tax and Brown (1998), Thibaut and Walker (1975)	(=) At this point the author thinks that a fair action must be taken in any market. So be fair in a B2C market and in a B2B is equally important.

Source: Own elaboration

3. Exploratory study

The methodology used must answer and fit the initial question “How can a firm evaluate customer satisfaction with a service recovery in a B2B market?”

There is not literature sufficient about these themes in a business-to-business market so it will be made an exploratory work. With an exploratory work it is intended to finding out what is happening in a B2B market related to complaints, asking questions.

From here, it was made a scale of quality complaint handling. SERVQUAL (service quality) (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988) is based on expectations and performance of the service. The bottom line, in terms of logical construction of the satisfaction scale was Gaps’ model and SERVQUAL (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988). The initial logic refers to the idea that satisfaction is the difference between perceptions and expectations. However, note that later Cronin and Taylor (1992) developed SERVPERF that is only based on perceptions. According to Cronin and Taylor (1992) only performance perception is important.

Complaints are very important to a firm and it is a service that should be equally tested, in order to manage service quality. Some important points about complaints and actions that must be taken by a firm were made through interviews. However, not all of these situations have the same importance. Therefore, it was introduced in the scale the item “importance”, in order to weighing those situations described in the questionnaire. Hsieh (2014) defends the use of multiplicative scores (multiplying satisfaction and importance scores). However, to overcome the problem of ambiguity of the previous scale, Hsieh (2003) gave an alternative to multiplicative scores that is a weighting method which is achieved by “including the sum of importance scores across all domains as a dominator” (Hsieh, 2014, pp. 472).

So, it was developed a questionnaire in which people had to evaluate the importance, expectation and perception of responsiveness of the company about categories resulted from literature review and from the exploratory interviews.

3.1 Exploratory interviews

The goal to do exploratory interviews was to understand the reality of complaints in B2B market through direct contact with customers.

Sample

Five interviews were made to customers of “Recheio”² that represent an important part of this investigation. People interviewed are long-time customers of the same retail company and purchase in a weekly basis. These interviews were made in April and May and many conclusions were drawn.

In table 2, there are represented the date of interviews, name of the purchasing responsible person of each restaurant and local where the restaurants are located and where interviews were done. This is a convenience sample. The option for shoppings’ customers was because of the extended hours they have.

Table 2: Interviews’ informations

Interview	Date	Name	Local
1	9 th April, 2014	Rosa Lemos (RL)	“Restaurante Alentejo- MaiaShopping.- Maia
2	22 th April, 2014	Daiana (D)	“Loja dos Grelhados” –MaiaShopping - Maia
3	24 th April, 2014	Lia (L1)	“Comida&Companhia”-Parque Nascente – Rio Tinto
4	8 th May, 2014	Raquel (R)	“Barcarola” - Dolce Vita Porto - Porto
5	10 th May, 2014	Lúcia (L2)	“Loja dos Grelhados” - Dolce Vita Porto - Porto

Source: Own elaboration

² Specialized food operator. In this case, this is the food service platform, in Oporto. It belongs to Jerónimo Martins’ Group.

Interview Procedures

The interview was composed by three parts. In the first part it was asked how long they worked with that supplier, frequency of purchases, importance of purchase in their value chain and if those customers have more suppliers of the same products. In the second part it was asked if they already have felt any gap with that supplier. Here customers could answer “yes” or “no”. For those who answered affirmatively, it was asked, “Did you complain?”, “What were your goals with the complaint”, “What did you expect from the company?”, “What would you want the company to do”? For customers that answered negatively, it was asked, “And if there was a gap, what would you do?”, “Would you complain?”, “What would you expect from the company”, “What would be your objective with that complaint?”. In the last part of the interview it was asked their opinion about, if the time of the relationship between customers and supplier has impact on the decision of complaining, on the expectations and on the goals customers have, if the value of their purchases influence the decision of complaining, which factors can contribute to other attitudes, which factors can have impact on the decision of complaining, in the way customers complain and in the expectations they have from the company.

These interviews were recorded, with the permission of each person and transcribed with the initial intention of each one. Through them, it was possible to understand some realities about complaints and actions around them. Customers were capable of explain and describe some situations in which they, were previously involved. It is noted that all customers have already felt a service gap. From these interviews were extracted some categories (assume the gap, find the cause of the gap, no excuses, find a solution and notify the customer).

The content’ analysis of the interviews was done using NVivo10. With this software it was possible to analyze the information in a very simple way. In this program all information about interviews was classified into nodes and that content was encoded by those nodes.

Interview Results

The table 3 represents a compilation of categories from literature review and categories from exploratory interviews. In the first column, there are the categories, in the second column there are described some answers from customers interviewed and the person who said each citation, with the original intention of each and in the third column there are the source of each categories.

Table 3: Framework with categories from literature review and from interviews and citations from the interviews

	A: Citations	Categories Source
1: Express anger	"You have to be hard, brave and have to require a solution and a demanding attitude" (L1)	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)
2 : Seeking an apology	"If they do not have, they will say: Sorry, Mrs. Raquel, we do not have." (R)	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003); Eccles and Durand (1998)
3 : Seeking compensation	"In the following week, the company, rectifies the failure." (D)	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003); Forbes (2008); Wysocki (2001)
4: Seeking explanation	"We call there and tried to solve the problem" (RL), "I hope, that at least, they talk to me and tell me what is going on. I need to know what is happening. I must know if I have to seek for an alternative supplier" (L1) "I call them to know the reason". (L2)	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)
5: Seeking redress	"I wish they deliver what was missing in the other day" (RL), "I would like they deliver the product that was missing" (D), "For them to come here to deliver the product in the same week" (L2), "Usually I order ten bags of potatoes. Imagine that one is missing, I need the firm to deliver the bag that is missing in the following day. Otherwise I will not have the product to the customer" (D). "Send in the next day" (D), "Do you want me to take it there?" (L1), "If the supplier wants to please the	Heung <i>et al.</i> (2003)

	customer he has to order someone to do it or carry it by himself" (L1), "If possible in the same day" (D), "In case of the occurrence of a gap, I was waiting they would bring the product" (L1)	
6: Assume the gap	"Assume the gap" (L1) "We failed. We have to solve it and move to the next phase" (L1). "In my opinion the seller must assume the problem, the gap." (D)	Interviews
7: Quick on the decision making	"I want to solve the problem as quick as possible" (D), "I need them to come and deliver the bags missing the following day" (D), "In the following week they have to rectify the failure" (L1)	Johnston and Mehra (2002), Nimako and Mensah (2012)
8 : Find the cause of the gap	"They have to try to find the cause of the gap so that it does not happen again" (L1), "I have repetitive gaps in some suppliers" (L1), "It is repetitive" (L1), "Always fails the same thing" (L1), "You have to find the cause because it happens often" (R) "Pay attention, please" (L1).	Interviews

	"I wanted them to tell me before"(RL) "It is only to warn you that we do not have this product" (R)"I am waiting for them to tell me what is happening" (L2) "I want them to proceed with my complaint" (D), "Usually, when they have any failure, they call me. But when they do not call me I go to another supermarket" (RL), "Usually it is the firm that tells me that the product I want will not be delivered" (D) "Sometimes they call me and tell me that they do not have the product. That action is good" (RL) "There was a situation that they did not have the wine and they did not call me to inform. So I called to the call-center" (RL), "Sometimes they tell me so that I can be informed" (RL).	Interviews
9: Notify the customer		
10: Find a solution	"Require a solution" (L1), "I wait a solution for the problem" (L2) "I want the company to do something" (L1)	Interviews
11: No excuses	"Excuses" (L1) "No more excuses, where is the solution?" (L1), "It will take half an hour to get to the part of the solution" (L1)	Interviews

Source: Own elaboration

Results Discussion

Categories from literature reviews were Express anger, seeking an apology, Seeking compensation, Seeking redress and Quick on the decision making. Assume the gap, Find the cause of the gap, Notify the customer, Find a solution and No excuses are categories that were created through interviews.

The eleven categories on Table 3 were analyzed and compiled in eight. These eight categories were the mote to build the questionnaire. Those categories express the feeling of customers and actions that they want the company to take (express anger, apologize, compensation, warn the customer, assume the gap, find the cause of the gap, quick on the decision making and find a solution).

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was made after interviews, in order to test these categories as well as test a scale relatively to service recovery.

Methodology

The questionnaire was based on literature review and on exploratory interviews. For the eight categories were made an average of two questions each, in order to build the questionnaire (see Annex). Nineteen questions were made to each for importance, expectations and performance. In Table 4, there is a framework with the eight categories and questions about them.

Questionnaires are an easy and usual form of obtaining data. The questionnaires allow a better comprehension of reality and understanding at what extent this scale is in accordance with reality.

The questionnaire was made in “google docs”. It is a free platform that is very easy and simple to use.

Sample

The target of the questionnaire was customers who worked as restaurants. The questionnaire was sent to e-mails of restaurants in all Portugal. It was used a “Recheio” database for some restaurants’ emails. The e-mails of restaurants that were not customers of “Recheio” were found on the Internet. Thereafter it was sent a link to each customer and all the person had to do was access the link and answer the questionnaire. The answers were automatically recorded to that database. The questionnaire was sent to four hundred customers but only forty-five answered.

Structure

In the first part of the questionnaire there were questions about the socio demographic profile (age, sex, and educational level of the respective respondent). The first question of the second part was about an occurrence of a service gap. It was questioned if as a company, they have already felt a service gap. If the answer was “yes” it was asked to focus on one of those episodes and answer the questions that followed. Thereafter, nineteen questions were asked for “importance”, “expectations” and “performance” to each about the eight categories taken from interviews and literature review. If the answer was “no”, the questionnaire was over. Other questions in the questionnaire were about the type of gap they have felt; the satisfaction or not with the resolution of the gap; if they stayed customers of the respective company; types of services/products they usually buy from the company and importance of each one.

Table 4: Questions associated to each category

Customers feel better after a gap if they show their displeasure.	Express anger	Own elaboration
It is important for consumers to show their displeasure to the companies when they are disappointed with the service.		Own elaboration
It is very important that the company knows the problems a failure can cause.		Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
When the company fails it should apologize to the customer.	Apologize	Own elaboration
When the company fails, employees should be extremely cordial and friendly.		Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
When the company fails, it should show genuine concern and understanding to the customer.	Compensate	Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
When the company fails it should financially, compensate the customer.		Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
When the company fails, it should offer the customer a bonus.		Own elaboration
When the company fails, it should offer the customer discounts.		Own elaboration
When there is a gap, the company must contact the customer and explain what happened.	Warn the customer	Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
When the company fails it should explain the failure to the client.		Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
It is important that the company assumes the gap to the customer.	Assume the gap	Own elaboration
It is very important that the company tells the truth to clients		Own elaboration
It is very important that the company is able to find the cause of the gap.	Find the cause of the gap	Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
The firm must tell the customers the cause of the gap		Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)

It is crucial that the company acts quickly in the complaint process.	Quick in the decision making	Adapted from Kau and Loh (2006)
The company must communicate to the customer the solution to its problem.	Find a solution	Own elaboration
When the company fails it should return the money spent back to the customer.		Own elaboration

Source: Own elaboration

Scale Construction

It was intended to build a scale of recovery satisfaction. For the nineteen questions of “importance” (I), “expectations” (E) and “performance” (P) each, it was used a scale of Likert of 1 to 7 (1-totally disagree, 2- partially disagree, 3-disagree, 4- neither agree nor disagree, 5-agree, 6-partially agree and 7 – totally agree). This type of scale help to understand if customers agree with the situations described. These aim to realize the relationship with the company, by complaints made, initial expectation, perception, importance and level of satisfaction (dependent variable) with the answers of the firm.

In the table 5, it is shown five scales that were calculated. The first scale drifted from Servqual by Parasuraman *et al.*, (1988) who argued that satisfaction is the difference between expectations and perceptions. The second scale drifted from Servperf developed by Cronin and Taylor (1992), valuing only percptions. The third scale is tested by Hsieh (2014), that presents a weighted multiplicative scale. The fourth scale is similar to the previous one, but only using weighted multiplicative perceptions. The fifth scale is tested by Hsieh (2014) that is a weighted divided scale.

Table 5: Scales analyzed

	Expectations Vs Perceptions	Perceptions
Unweighted	Scale 1: $P - E$	Scale 2: P
Weighted multiplicative	Scale 3: $(P*I) - (E*I)$	Scale 4: $P*I$
Weighted quotient	Scale 5: $((P*I)/I) - ((E*I)/I)$	

Source: Own elaboration

Measures

It was used *Cronbach's Alfa* and *Composite Reliability* (CR) to measure the reliability of the model. In order to measure the convergent validity, it was calculated the *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE). These three measures assess the scale validation and were calculated using Smartpls software. In order to test the sampling adequacy it was calculated KMO (*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy*) and *Bartlett's test of sphericity* (BEsf) using SPSS software. It was also calculated *T-Stat* (T) and R^2 . R^2 is an adjustment model measure. Determines an increase on the dependent variable as a function of independent variables.

Cronbach's Alfa values acceptable should be equal or above 0.6 (Marôco and Garcia Marques, 2006). Composite Reliability should have values equal or above 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2011). According to Hair *et al.* (2011) AVE should be above 0.5. KMO must be equal or above 0.6. BEsf must be equal to 0.000. T-stat should be above 1.96 (with 95% confidence level). According to Falk & Miller (1992) R^2 values should be above 0.1%.

Results

Here it is presented the results from the questionnaires' analyze.

As the categorie "be quick" only has one question, it does not permit to calculate KMO and Besf.

Table 6: Unweighted scales

Categories	Scale 1	Scale 2	Measures
Exp anger	0,782781 0,877098 0,761269 0.405 0.123 1.206	0,919959 0,971810 0,956799 0.45 0.000 4.698	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Apologize	0,268298 0,164746 0,759279 0.605 0.000 1.773	0,956323 0,985004 0,977179 0.736 0.000 1.722	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Compensate	0,660819 0,885614 0,829677 0.716 0.006 2.923	0,760186 0,926822 0,895573 0.750 0.000 1.604	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Warn the customer	0,862229 0,926016 0,840435 0.5 0.000 1.579	0,958275 0,978693 0,956517 0.5 0.000 0.101	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Assume the gap	0,903904 0,949527 0,893693 0.5 0.001 1.527	0,963370 0,981343 0,961979 0.5 0.000 1.108	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Find the cause of the gap	0,813062 0,896864 0,771398 0.5 0.000	0,983862 0,991865 0,983597 0.5 0.000	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf

	3.166	1.007	T
Be quick	1,000000 1,000000 1,000000 1.728	1,000000 1,000000 1,000000 1.411	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Solution require	0,684045 0,805747 0,639658 0.5 0.068 1.872	0,830551 0,907378 0,799066 0.5 0.02 3.723	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Satisfaction	0.513	0.896	R ²

Source: Own elaboration

In this unweighted scale it is possible to see that in the scale 1' side "apology" has problems with the part of the validation scale because has AVE (0.26) and CR (0.16) values below the common acceptable. "Express anger", "warn the customer", "assume the gap", "find the cause of the gap" and "solution require" has problems at the level of the sample size because presents values below the acceptable for the theory. Relatively to "T-stat", this specific sample does not value actions like "express anger" (1.206), "warn the customer" (1.579), and "assume the gap" (1.527). This scale presents a R² of 0.513 that means 51% of satisfaction can be explained by these independent variables.

In the second scale it is possible to see that there is not any problem with the measures of the scale validation (Chronbach' alfa, CR and AVE). In "express anger", "warn the customer", "assume the gap", "find the cause of the gap" and "solution require" categories there are problems with KMO measure. This problem was expected taking into account the sample size. In this specific case, "warn the customer" (0.101), "assume the gap" (1.108), "find the cause of the gap" (1.007) and "be quick" (1.411) are not statistically significant, so it means that these customers do not value this actions. This scale presents a R² of 0.896, which means 89% of the satisfaction can be explained by independent variables.

Table 7: Weighted multiplicative scales

Categories	Scale 3	Scale 4	Measures
Exp anger	0,631676 0,760553 0,546451 0.344 0.095 0.713	0,875942 0,954906 0,929284 0.73 0.000 1.506	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Apologize	0,815002 0,929610 0,887286 0.739 0.000 0.635	0,935618 0,977574 0,965564 0.765 0.000 2.919	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Compensate	0,657364 0,880062 0,818696 0.558 0.002 1.141	0,653058 0,882271 0,827949 0.76 0.000 0.188	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Warn the customer	0,896861 0,945618 0,886494 0.5 0.000 1.208	0,923742 0,960360 0,917448 0.5 0.000 0.394	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Assume the gap	0,919723 0,958183 0,912763 0.5 0.000 2.026	0,936382 0,967146 0,932100 0.5 0.000 1.468	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo Esf T
Find the cause of the gap	0,872542 0,931933 0,853928 0.5 0.000 0.786	0,970243 0,984897 0,969360 0.5 0.000 0.385	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T

Be quick	1,000000 1,000000 1,000000 0.367	1,000000 1,000000 1,000000 0.621	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Solution require	0,826879 0,905236 0,790687 0.5 0.029 0.301	0,782985 0,877937 0,734180 0.5 0.000 2.119	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Satisfaction	0.245	0.87	R ²

Source: Own elaboration

In the third scale there are problems with the validation of the scale in the category “express anger”, given that Chronbach’ Alfa is 0.54. There are also problems with the measures that deal with the sample size (KMO and Bartlet’s test of sphericity) in the following categories, “express anger”, “compensate”, “warn the customer”, “assume the gap”, “find the cause of the gap” and “solution require”, because they present values below the acceptable. Relatively to “T-stat” measure, this sample does not value any categories with the exception of “assume the gap”. R² of this scale is 0.245, which means that 24% of the satisfaction can be explained by these independent variables.

In the fourth scale there are not any problems with the measures of scale validation. However, there are problems on the sample size level with KMO, which shows values below the acceptable of all categories except “apologize”, “express anger” and “compensate”. This KMO values were already expected, giving the sample size. T-stat only presents acceptable values for “apologize” and “solution require”. R² of this scale is 0.87 which means that 87% of the dependent variable (satisfaction) can be explained by these independent variables.

Table 8: Weighted quotient scale

Categories	Scale 5	Measures
Exp anger	0,651790 0,779509 0,571946 0.428 0.003 0.542	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Apologize	0,812647 0,928590 0,886332 0.735 0.000 0.268	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Compensate	0,677206 0,891001 0,843503 0.704 0.000 1.171	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Warn the customer	0,885211 0,939095 0,872406 0.5 0.000 0.695	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Assume the gap	0,912877 0,954454 0,904580 0.5 0.000 1.559	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Find the cause of the gap	0,883832 0,938329 0,869276 0.5 0.000 1.198	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T

Be quick	1,000000 1,000000 1,000000 0.164	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Solution require	0,837776 0,911728 0,806371 0.5 0.000 0.234	Ave Cr Alfa Kmo BEsf T
Satisfaction	0.268	R ²

Source: Own elaboration

In table 8 it is shown the fifth scale. Here only “express anger” represents a little problem relatively to scale validation, because Alfa is below 0.6, although is near (0.57). Relatively to the sample size measures have problems in all categories except “apologize” and “compensate” that have acceptable values. T-stat is low in all categories. R² of this scale is 0.268, which means that 26% of the satisfaction can be explained by independent variables.

Results Discussion

As there is not a consensus in literature about, using Servqual or Servperf both were analyzed. Similarly there is not a consensus between using a weighted or unweighted scale and on the form of how should weight a scale, it was analyzed unweighted scale and weighted multiplicative and weighted quotient.

Giving the five scales' results it is imposed to choose only one scale. The author choose the second scale (that used only perceptions). These scale has not any problems with scale validation' measures (Alfa, Cr and AVE) and presents the biggest R². The little problems these scale has with sample size' measures were predicted, giving the small sample this study has. This choice meets Cronin and Taylor (1992), who argued that only performance perceived is important to evaluate the service quality. Farias and

Santos (2000, pp.110) argued that the no confirmation of expectations is the strongest variable in satisfaction, “maybe because expectation’ effect has time to weak through the interval purchasing”.

These scale proposed by the author was named “PerRec”. “Per” drifts from “perceptions” and “Rec” drifts from “recovery”. This name was chosen because it has the combination of the words “perception” and “recovery”, that shows perceptions is only that matters to a satisfied customer.

Conclusion

In this chapter it was explained the methodology that guided this work. Initially it was presented exploratory interviews that were very useful. From here it was removed important testimonies of customers that formed new categories about complaints. These new categories conjugated with literature review’ ones formed the eight categories used to build the questionnaire. The questionnaire was made after exploratory interviews, in order to test the eight categories as well as test a scale relatively to service recovery. Five scales were tested and the results were presented in the tables6, 7 and 8. From these five scales the author choose the best one that fulfilled the original purpose. Therefore, it was chosen the second scale that meet Cronin and Taylor (1992). The scale proped by the author is called “PerRec” and considers eight dimensions, that are, express anger, apologize, compensation, notify the customer, assume the gap, find the cause of the gap, be quick and request a solution.

Conclusion

This study aimed to understand how a firm can evaluate the customer satisfaction with a service recovery in a B2B market. As it has been said in the beginning, there is not literature about these theme in specific in the B2B market. Thereby, the major part of literature review made is about B2C market. Through literature review it was possible to understand what customers want when complained. Essentially, they want justice, fairness, celerity and some compensation.

With the exploratory interviews it was possible to understand the reality of B2B market relatively to complaints and service recovery. Through interviews' analyze it was possible to show that in B2B market, customers value some actions that were not described in the literature review. Through literature review and exploratory interviews it was build the questionnaire that helped to answer the research question. It was studied five scales, in order to choose only one. Therefore it was chosen the scale that only includes customer' perception. These scale namely "PerRec" is the answer for the research question. These scale shows that, the sample studied, values essentially the expression of anger by the complainers, demonstrating their dissatisfaction with the firm; the apology from the firm and they want a solution for the problem, they think that they must require a solution for the problem. In this research, "PerRec" scale is conditioned essentially by the small sample size.

The principal motivation to do this work was understand better B2B market recovery process, since it is not yet well studied relatively to complaints and firms' actions to make a good and satisfied service recovery. As there are Servqual and Servperf to test service quality and there is not a consensus in literature, in order to, use one rather than another both were analyzed. Similarly there is not a consensus between using a weighted or unweighted scale and on the form of how should weight a scale, it was analyzed unweighted scale and weighted multiplicative and weighted quotient. This way, this work also have a motivation to build a scale for B2B market, in order to test how a firm can evaluate the customer satisfaction in a B2B market with a service recovery. This scale may also be tested in a firm. This study also bring some novelty to the B2B market' literature because it covers a topic not studied yet.

This work also presents some limitations. The initial intent of the author was to do this study in only one firm. However, when the questionnaires were made, only few customers of that firm answered. This situation was not expected, so the author had to choose an alternative. This way, the questionnaires were sent to customers in our entire country. Nevertheless, few answers were received.

Other limitation felt was the limited time to finish this master dissertation. Taking into account the time the author had to work only with the answers received.

The small sample size also limited the work and surely the results.

In future investigations, it would be interesting to do this same study in only one firm. It would be also good to interview the responsible person for complaints in the company, in order to, compare the answers. Thus, through it, the conclusions can be more precise and objective. If it was doing this study applied to only one firm, the results would be really interesting to the firm because the firm could analyze and understand if their customers were satisfied with the service recovery and what points has a positive or negative contribution. The firm with that information also could improve the service provided.

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Annex

Questionnaire

O que espera um cliente de uma reclamação?

Este inquérito é realizado no âmbito da Dissertação de Mestrado em Gestão de Serviços, da Faculdade de Economia da Universidade do Porto.

“How can a firm evaluate customer satisfaction with a service recovery in a B2B market?” é a pergunta de partida deste trabalho, que visa perceber o que o cliente espera obter com uma reclamação e consequente recuperação de serviço.

Para além de aluna da Universidade do Porto, estou atualmente a trabalhar no Recheio (actual Caterplus) na plataforma do Porto. Com esta dissertação, espera-se também melhorar o processo de gestão das reclamações futuras. Com maior conhecimento sobre a importância, expectativa e perceção do cliente acerca das falhas do serviço, será possível oferecer um melhor nível de serviço.

Apresento-me, desde já, disponível para a divulgação dos resultados, se assim o desejar.

Qualquer dúvida, não hesite em contactar:

Ana Magalhães (aluna): arfariam@gmail.com; Tlm: 916909943

Raquel Meneses (professora orientadora): raquelcmbm@gmail.com; Tlm: 966435347

Obrigada pela sua colaboração!

Sexo

M

F

Idade

18-25

26-35

36-50

+50

Habilitações Literárias

9º ano

12º ano

Licenciatura

Mestrado

Doutoramento

Enquanto empresa, já sentiu alguma falha dos seus fornecedores?

Sim

Não

Nesta secção, tenciona-se avaliar a importância de cada um dos seguintes itens, perante uma falha de um fornecedor, face a um cliente empresarial.

Responda de 1 (discordo plenamente) a 7 (concordo plenamente):

1A – Os clientes sentem-se melhor depois de uma falha se mostrarem o seu descontentamento.

2 A – É importante os consumidores mostrarem às empresas quando estão desapontados com o serviço.

3A – É muito importante que a empresa perceba bem os problemas que uma falha pode causar.

4A – A empresa quando falha deve pedir desculpa ao cliente.

5A – Quando a empresa falha, os colaboradores devem ser extremamente cordiais e simpáticos.

6A – Quando a empresa falha, deve mostrar verdadeira preocupação e compreensão face ao cliente.

7A – A empresa, quando falha, deve compensar monetariamente o cliente.

8A – Quando a empresa falha deve oferecer um bónus ao cliente.

9A – Quando a empresa falha, deve oferecer descontos nas próximas compras.

10A – Quando há alguma falha na entrega da encomenda, a empresa tem obrigação de repor o produto o mais rápido possível.

11A – Quando há alguma falha, a empresa deve contactar o cliente e explicar o que aconteceu.

12A – A empresa, quando falha deve explicar pessoalmente a falha ao cliente.

13A – É importante a empresa assumir a falha perante o cliente.

14A – É muito importante que a empresa diga a verdade perante o cliente.

15A – É muito importante que a empresa consiga encontrar a causa da falha.

16A – A empresa deve dizer ao cliente a causa para a ocorrência da falha.

17A – É crucial que a empresa atue rapidamente no processo de reclamação.

18A – A empresa deve comunicar a solução para a resolução do problema, ao cliente.

19A – A empresa quando falha, deve devolver o dinheiro despendido ao cliente.

Qual foi a falha do serviço?

Não recebi a encomenda requerida

No ato da entrega, os produtos/serviços vieram trocados

Recebi produtos/serviços não pedidos

Faltaram produtos/serviços

A minha encomenda chegou fora de horas

Os produtos/serviços não estavam em condições

Não fui bem atendido pelo funcionário da empresa

Fez alguma reclamação?

Sim

Não

Quão importante é o fornecimento deste género de produtos na sua atividade?

Responda de 1 (nada importante) a 7 (extremamente importante)

Produtos perecíveis

Produtos não perecíveis

Produtos de Higiene e Limpeza

Serviços especializados

Serviços não especializados

Quais eram as suas expectativas face à reclamação?

Responda de 1 (discordo plenamente) a 7 (concordo plenamente)

1B – Pretendia que a empresa compreende-se o meu descontentamento

2B – Pretendia mostrar à empresa que estava desapontado com ela

3B – Pretendia que a empresa tivesse perfeita noção dos problemas que me causou

4B – Esperava que a empresa me pedisse desculpa

5B – Esperava que quem atendesse a minha queixa fosse extremamente cordial e simpático

6B – Esperava que a empresa estivesse verdadeiramente preocupada e compreendesse a minha situação

7B – Esperava uma compensação monetária, por parte da empresa.

8B – Pretendia receber algum bónus por parte da empresa.

9B – Esperava obter descontos em compras futuras.

10B - Esperava a reposição do produto que faltou, o mais rápido possível, sem problema.

11B – Pretendia ser contactado para me explicarem a falha

12B – Pretendia que alguém da empresa me explicasse a falha pessoalmente.

13B – Esperava que a empresa fosse capaz de assumir a falha que teve.

14B – Esperava que a empresa fosse verdadeira comigo.

15B – Pretendia que a empresa conseguisse encontrar a causa da falha.

16B – Esperava que a empresa me dissesse qual foi a causa para a ocorrência da falha.

17B – Pretendia que a empresa fosse célere no tratamento da minha reclamação.

18B – Esperava que a empresa me comunicasse uma solução para o problema.

19B- Esperava que a empresa me devolvesse o meu dinheiro despendido.

Qual a sua percepção face à reclamação?

1C – Com a reclamação consegui expressar o meu descontentamento

2C – Com a reclamação a empresa ficou bem ciente de quão desapontado eu estava

3C – A empresa ficou compreendeu muito bem os problemas que me causou

4C – A empresa pediu-me desculpa

5C – Os colaboradores da empresa foram muito simpáticos e cordiais comigo, em todo o processo de reclamação

6C – Senti que a empresa estava verdadeiramente preocupada e que tinha compreendido a minha situação

7C – Fui compensado monetariamente pela falha ocorrida

8C – A empresa ofereceu-me um bónus para me compensar.

9C- A empresa ofereceu-me descontos em compras futuras.

10C - A empresa repôs imediatamente o produto em falta.

11C – A empresa contactou-me e justificou-se perante a falha.

12C – Alguém da empresa explicou-me pessoalmente a falha ocorrida.

13C – A empresa foi capaz de assumir a falha que teve.

14C – A empresa disse-me a verdade sobre o que aconteceu.

15C – A empresa conseguiu encontrar a causa da falha.

16C – A empresa explicou-me qual foi a causa da falha.

17C – A empresa foi célere no tratamento da minha reclamação.

18C – A empresa foi capaz de me arranjar uma solução para o problema.

19C – A empresa devolveu-me o dinheiro despendido.

Ficou satisfeito com o processo de reclamação?

Sim

Não

Continua cliente desta empresa?

Sim

Não

Porque não reclamou?

Seria demasiado demorado

Demasiada burocracia

Não ia ser bem tratado

Não sabia como reclamar

Seria difícil apresentar a minha reclamação

Não iria receber nenhuma recompensa

Não iria obter resposta

A reclamação não seria bem vista por parte dos funcionários

A reclamação não seria bem-sucedida

É desagradável para mim

Sinto vergonha de reclamar

Porque só reclama quem não tem nada para fazer

Continua cliente desta empresa?

Sim

Não