Frontline Employee Involvement and High-star Hotel Service Recovery Performance

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Abstract

The characteristics of service, which are invisible, heterogeneous, synchronous and storable, determine the inevitability of the service failure. Setting the industry of high- star hotel as an example, this paper critically examines the effect of frontline employee involvement on service recovery performance. We investigate 209 Chinese high-star hotel organizations and find that the involvement of frontline employee can positively influence the performance of high-star hotel service recovery. Frontline employee involvement also positively affects organizational commitment. The results suggest that high-star hotels should pay more attention to normative commitment in the application of the hotel management.

Keywords: frontline employee involvement,organizational commitment,service recovery, recovery performance

1.Introduction

High-star hotels have influenced the innovative consumption models and life style of people based on emerging upscale accommodations and services (Perry, 2015). Good service recovery performance is regards as a core criteria to maintain booking orders and keep customers loyal to the brands (Miller et al., 2000). Thus, it is becoming increasingly important for service provider to avoid service failure, which requires frontline employees to keep customer satisfying via service recovery (Miller et al., 2000;Jung, N. Y. 2017).

Frontline employees are the important driving forces in the process of service recovery in high-star hotel (Miller et al., 2000;Spreng, R. A.,1995). Particularly, it's an important issue to find the most effective way of service recovery when service failure occurs (Jung, N. Y. , & Seock, Y. K.,2017). Despite the common sense that frontline employee involvement is related to service recovery, it is still relatively insufficient in research that how this influence differs between various dimensions of frontline employee involvement in high-star hotel industry.

However, previous studies have primarily focused on the typology and effects of service failure and recovery on customers' responses in several industry; few studies have involved frontline employees view(Jung, N. Y. , & Seock, Y. K.,2017). The paper investigates service recovery performance in high-star hotel, and regards it as any change that affects one or more terms of high-star hotel service characteristics (Mu.Y.,2018).

Indeed, this paper provides an significant understanding of the thought of service recovery in its partnering with frontline employees in its operational management. High-star hotels should realize that the good performance of service recovery needs a strategically scientific mechanism of management to do well with frontline employees.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The second section presents the hypotheses and research model. The third section elaborates the method, and the results of the study follow in the next section. The fifth section discusses research findings, managerial implications, limitations, and future research recommendation.

2.Hypotheses development and Research model

2.1 Frontline employee involvement and organizational commitment

Almost all organizational behavior research literature thought, in view of the frontline employees sufficient information sharing helps to enhance employees' identity and sense of belonging to the organization. Second, the advice as a form of organization for the employee recognition, emotion and behavior can strengthen and guide the frontline employees to the organization. Service marketing research also suggests that when service failure occurs, if the frontline employees who usually solve customer complaints are ignored, they may complain about organization and the job itself. If so, the high quality of service recovery is almost impossible.

In addition, employee empowerment has always been considered to be an useful way to transfer employees organizational trust. Authorized employees can make a better chance to provide satisfactory service to the customer when the frontline employees are capable and willing to appear in the service failure. Meanwhile, authorized employees can provides positive and effective service recovery. To a certain extent, the extent of authorization will dissolve work stress and negative emotions, especially when they encounter unforeseen complain. It means flexible employee empowerment can help them.

To sum up, put forward the following hypothesis.

H1: Frontline employee involvement has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

2.2 Organizational commitment and service recovery performance

The attitude of model points out that emotional level of frontline employees directly affects service recovery performance. High level of organizational commitment can not only deliver high quality service, but also can offer good service recovery. Similarly, the loyal sense to the organization as well as emotional input to the organization can positively influence the performance of service recovery. Some discussions about the relationship between organizational commitment and service recovery performance can prove the frontline employees' organizational commitment has an significant explanatory power on service recovery performance.

To sum up, this paper puts forward the following hypothesis.

H2: Organizational commitment has a positive effect on service recovery performance.

2.3 The moderating effect of organizational commitment

Frontline employees involved in management as a kind of "people-oriented" management style, management of information sharing embodies the leadership of employees' support and recognition.It all greatly meet frontline employees' psychological needs. Authorized employees are also involved in scientific decisions. They usually come up with suggestions, and this can increase their great sense of identity and responsibility. In addition, from the literature review of organizational commitment, frontline employees' organizational commitment has an significant positive influence on service recovery performance.

Therefore, this paper puts forward the following hypothesis.

H3: Organizational commitment fully mediates the effect of frontline employee involvement on service recovery performance.

3.Research Design

3.1 Measurement and Variables

Measurement items of scale used existing scales and it shown reliability and validity in previous studies. Meanwhile, this paper employed five-point Likert-style scales (1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree'). This article studies the frontline employees involved in the impact on service recovery effect, so the frontline employees involvement plays an important role in this paper. In the second chapter has been clear in the literature review, a line of employee involvement includes three dimensions, namely: sharing information, advice and scientific authorization. On organizational commitment, this paper adopted the Mowday (1982), the definition of the organizational commitment. It is an attitude to the organization or positive inner orientation, is a person for a particular organization of emotional attachment and participate in the organization's relative degree. Its dimensions by Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed the organizational commitment of the three-dimensional structure model, namely:

affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, three dimensions. Refer to the Spreng (1994) the definition and measurement method of service recovery performance.It is to be thought as perceived expectations when the result of the service recoveryfrom frontline employees in this paper.

3.2 Sample selection and data collection

In order to test hypotheses, the paper collected empirical data from 209 respondents who are active in various high-star hotel. The demographics of responents, as shown in table 1.

Table 1 Respondents' demographic characteristics.

Gender			Age			Education			Work experience			Position		
Category	n	%	Category	n	%	Category	n	%	Category	n	%	Category	n	%
Male	119	56.9	<20	26	12.4	Middle school or less	60	28.7	<1 year	89	42.6	Ordinal Employee	166	79.4
Female	90	43.1	20–25	73	34.9	High school	67	32.1	1-3 years	71	34.0	The Foreman	24	11.5
			26–35	67	32.1	Some college	49	23.4	3-10 years	37	17.7	Director	19	9.1
			>35	43	20.6	Bachelor's degree	25	12.0	>10 years	12	5.7			
						Other	8	3.8						
Total	209	100	Total	209	100	Total	209	100	Total	209	100	Total	209	100

4.Results

4.1 Direct effects

Based on previous assumptions, respectively discusses the relationship between information sharing, taking advice and scientific authorization and affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Relevant analysis results as shown in table 2. From the correlation analysis ,we can concluded that the adoption of advice and information sharing is higher, its affective commitment is stronger; the adoption of recommendations and scientific authorization is higher, the higher its continued commitment is. Therefore, there are positive correlation between them , hypothesis H1 was supported.

Table 2 Correlation analysis of frontline employee involvement and organizational commitment

Frontline employee involvement	Affective commitment	Continued commitment	Normative commitment
Information sharing	.204 .040 .209	.085 .393 .209	.086 .388 .209
Taking advice	.303 .002 .209	.180 .070 .209	.198 .046 .209
Scientific authorization	.003 .979 .209	.139 .164 .209	.233 .019 .209

This paper discusses the relationship between affective commitment, continued commitment , normative commitment and service recovery performance. The results of the specific analysis as shown in table 3. From the correlation analysis, it can be concluded that the higher affective commitment, continued commitment and normative commitment, the higher its perception of satisfaction after service recovery and customer loyalty will be. Therefore, there is a positive correlation relationship between organizational commitment and service recovery performance, so the hypothesis H2 was supported.

Table 3 Correlation analysis of organizational commitment and service recovery performance

Service recovery performance	Affective commitment	Continued commitment	Normative commitment
Pearson	.031	.111	.178
Sig.	.753	.267	.043
N	.209	.209	.209

4.2 Moderating effects

This paper put organizational commitment into regression equation to test for the moderating effects. Compared with values in the direct effects model, the β values of service recovery performance in the moderating effects model decrease from 0.231 to 0.186. The results show that organizational commitment positively moderates the relationship between frontline employee involvement and service recovery performance. Thus, H3 was supported.

Table 4 Moderating effect of organizational commitment

	Models	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Standard Deviation	Trial Version		
1	(constant)	2.553	.441		5.790	.000
	Frontline Employee Involvement	.231	.112	.202	2.060	.042
2	(constant)	2.193	.523		3.539	.001
	Frontline Employee Involvement	.186	.117	.162	.702	.484
	Organizational Commitment	.242	.112	.131	1.274	.038

5.Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of research findings

The paper aimed to explore the effects of frontline employees involvement on high-star hotel service recovery performance under three dimensions of organizational commitment. The earlier research of Mu.Y.et al. (2018) underlined that there are extensive concerns about top managers' effects, but studies of frontline employees are scarce. Similarly, this study aimed to explore the relationship between frontline employee involvement and service recovery performance and examine the mediation role of organizational commitment.

This study enables to explain the role of organizational commitment that affects service recovery performance when frontline employees involve in. It indicates that frontline employee involvement has a positive influence on service recovery performance. As previously stated, organizational commitment positively moderates the effect of frontline employee involvement in service failure.

Overall, this study reveals that the impact on the organizational commitment becomes more significant when their psychological mind set is shifted from "executing command" to "puting forward to suggestions" or "sharing information". In other words, the ownership of frontline employees remains a central factor that determines the level of organizational commitment toward the performance of service recovery.

5.2 Practical implications

In hotel management, information sharing is the lowest level of communication.Therefore, frontline employees should be trained to upgrade communication skills. We can adopt the following methods, such as learning art of listening and understanding the simple communication in order to ensure the

high efficiency of communication. Besides, separate departments among employees and managers, or protect the complete message of hotel related tasks, and giving timely feedback by the work schedule for hotel managers. Hotel should set communication times and requirements for managers and frontline employee every month. Only in this way can frontline employees know the results of the communication timely.

If frontline employees have a good service recovery performance, managers should reward and parise them in the public. At the same time, it is recommended that frontline employees can put forward good suggestions which can reduce the probability of service failure. The findings find that a great deal of managers cannot empower frontline employees scientifically. Some managers even seem them a guaranteed fount of money, not people who can complete service recovery perfectly. Thus, they can establish a good mechanism of authorization management. Meanwhile,choose the right candidate for supervision and lay a good foundation for the later performance review.

5.3 Limitations and future research

This paper has its limitations. First, the scope of the investigate was geographically limited to Chinese high-star hotel context. Several variables influenced the scope,such as costs and limited people. Future research will benefit from extending the scope. Second, this paper can use a more varied methods of sources for data collection and can increase the quantity of respondents. It is recommended that researcher can interview more frontline employees face to face in the future.

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