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경영학 석사 학위논문

How Service Recovery
Transparency for Unreasonable
Requests Influences Virtually
Presented Others' Intention of
Opportunistic Claiming Behavior

불합리한 요청에 대한 서비스 보상 행위 투명성이
타 고객의 기회주의적 요구 행동에 미치는 영향

2023년 8월

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유철이

How Service Recovery Transparency for Unreasonable Requests Influences Virtually Presented Others' Intention of Opportunistic Claiming Behavior

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Abstract

How Service Recovery Transparency for Unreasonable Requests Influences Virtually Presented Others' Intention of Opportunistic Claiming Behavior

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This research investigates how service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests influences virtually presented others' (VPOs) intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. There are two studies conducted to test the relationship between consumers' dysfunctional behavior and its influence on other consumers' intention of dysfunctional behavior. Study 1 aimed to investigate how the transparency of service recovery affects the likelihood of virtual presented others (VPOs) engaging in opportunistic claiming behavior,

taking into account the size of the firm as a moderator. In contrast, study 2 explored how service recovery transparency impacts the intention of VPOs to engage in opportunistic claiming when firms accept unreasonable requests. Additionally, the moderating role of relationship norms was examined. Both studies employed experimental designs, with Study 1 set in a pizza delivery service and Study 2 set in a laundry store. Findings in the research contribute to enhance our understanding of the factors influencing consumers' opportunistic claiming behavior and the role of the transparency of service in shaping their intentions.

Keywords: service recovery transparency, unreasonable request, virtually presented others, VPOs, opportunistic claiming behavior

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Chapter 1. Introduction

The proliferation of online reviews in today's digital era has made them a crucial source of information for consumers. Consumers rely on these reviews to make informed decisions about products and services, and they also play a significant role in shaping consumers' perceptions of businesses. Consequently, managing online reviews has become a critical task for firms aiming to enhance their online reputation and attract more customers.

One important aspect of online reviews is the response of firms to consumer feedback, particularly when it involves service failures or unreasonable requests. Firms face the challenge of determining the most appropriate way to handle such situations. They must decide whether to provide compensation or additional services requested by consumers, and whether to handle the issue publicly or privately. The level of transparency in the service recovery process becomes a crucial factor that can impact the perceptions and behaviors of virtually presented others (VPOs), who observe how the firm responds to consumer feedback.

Research has highlighted the impact of service recovery transparency, such as increasing intention of WOM and purchase intentions among VPOs when the service recovery is successful. However, transparency service recovery' s impact for unsuccessful case are

still not clear. It is hypothesized that higher transparency in unsuccessful service recovery situations is probably leading to negative outcomes, as VPOs observe the firm's inability to meet customer expectations.

Positive online reviews are considered beneficial for firms, as they enhance customer satisfaction, attract VPOs, and contribute to a positive online reputation. However, negative reviews can be categorized into two groups: reasonable and unreasonable. Reasonable negative reviews typically arise from service failures, where consumers share their experiences and may request compensation or recovery. On the other hand, unreasonable negative reviews involve consumers making excessive or unjustified demands, often driven by the anonymity provided by online platforms.

Humans are social animals. We live with others, seeing how others act, and follow how others do. How will other consumers act when seeing others requests for unreasonable extra service. Will they follow this action and ask for extra service too? Or will they see them as an example that they should not follow with? This is the main topic of this research. We will discuss the outcome of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention to engage in opportunistic claiming behavior. That is, if firms handle consumers' unreasonable request more transparent, VPOs can see more detail process of how the unreasonable request be handle, will make VPOs want to follow the opportunity claiming

behavior, asking for what they should really get.

Furthermore, it is hypothesized that certain factors may moderate effect of the transparency of service recovery for unreasonable requests on intentions of virtually presented others for doing opportunistic claiming behavior. Two potential moderating factors explored in this research are firm size and relationship norm. Firm size is expected to influence the degree to which service recovery transparency affects VPOs' behavior. Additionally, the relationship norm between consumers and the firm may also shape VPOs' responses to transparent service recovery.

By exploring these factors, we aim to increase the knowledges of the dynamics between service recovery transparency, VPOs' opportunistic claiming behavior, and the moderating factors involved. The findings from this research can provide valuable insights for firms in managing online reviews and devising effective strategies to handle unreasonable requests.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Virtually Presented Others in Service Recovery

Virtually Presented Others (VPOs) are other consumers who are virtually presented in the social media environment and observe the

service recovery experiences of other consumers (Hogreve, Bilstein, & Hoerner, 2019). Numerous researches have focused the impact of observing other consumers in service interactions, focusing on both online and offline shopping environments (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Argo, Dahl, & Manchanda, 2005; Lamberton, & West, 2012; Jiang, 2010; Baker & Wakefield, 2012; Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2013; Zhang, Beatty, & Mothersbaugh, 2010; Colm, Ordanini, & Parasuraman, 2017; Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016).

With the development of the Internet, online reviews have gained increasing importance. More and more consumers choose to shop online and rely on the reviews of other consumers before making a purchase. This is because, unlike shopping offline, online consumers cannot physically touch or try the products, so they depend on the reviews of others to gain more information about the products. Additionally, consumers may also look at reviews to understand how firms handle other consumers' requests or problems.

Having seeing what other consumers complain for and how firms deal with consumers' request and complaint, VPOs are said to understand more about how the firms will react to consumers' request. Besides, VPOs' consuming experience and evaluation to the firms do be influenced by other consumers' experience (Colm, Ordanini, and Parasuraman 2017). According to Hogreve & Hoerner (2019), service recovery transparency does have influence on VPOs' intention of WOM and purchase intention. Our research is going to evaluate from

this research and finding out that what would VPOs do while seeing the unreasonable request by other consumers and how firms deal with this issue.

2.2. Signaling Theory

Service recovery transparency is defined to be the degree of how a firm's recovery efforts & results or consumer's reactions towards the recovery action can be observed by virtually presented others (Hogreve, Bilstein, & Hoerner, 2019). It encompasses three facets: (1) how consumers perceive the problem or failure, (2) how the firm responds to the consumer's request or complaint, and (3) the consumer's evaluation to the firm's response. In our research, we will focus on the second facet, the firm's response to consumers' requests and complaints, and how it influences VPOs' intentions of opportunistic calming behavior.

Firms have various ways of reacting to consumers' requests and reviews. Higher service recovery transparency allows VPOs to observe the entire process of how firms handle consumers' requests or problems. In a high service recovery transparency condition, VPOs can see how firms handle other consumers' requests, including whether the problems have been resolved, how they were handled, and what kind of service failure recovery measures were implemented by the firms. This provides consumers with more information about the firms' reactions to consumer reviews, including their attitude and

level of generosity towards consumers. Conversely, in a low service recovery transparency condition, VPOs cannot see the process and outcome of the complaint or request. For example, firms may only request consumers to direct message them for more details about the problems. In such situations, VPOs cannot observe how the problems are handled and cannot gather more information about the firms.

For VPOs, service recovery transparency is considered a significant signal to know about the firm's capabilities of service through observation, which aligns with theory of signaling (Hogreve, Bilstein, & Hoerner, 2019). By observing how firms handle other consumers' requests, VPOs can more easily predict the firm's reactions. Information asymmetry is a common issue in consumption, where consumers can only understand what firms choose to communicate to them. High transparency in service recovery can help overcome the problem of information asymmetry (Spence, 1973). When recipients are unable to receive signals, such as not being able to observe how firms handle consumers' requests, VPOs becomes more challenging to know about the firms (Connelly et al., 2011). Therefore, by offering details about the firm's service and capability, service recovery transparency decreases consumers' uncertainty and influences VPOs' subsequent actions. For example, VPOs' purchase intention is influenced by service recovery transparency (Liu et al., 2015).

2.3. Social Learning

According to Bandura (1971), it is suggested that individuals have the ability to develop behavioral patterns and emotional responses by observing others' behavior and outcomes, even though they don't directly experience those situations themselves. From childhood, people learn to act by observing their parents' actions and following their lead. As they grow up, they follow the behavior of teachers, classmates, and friends. Humans are social animals and often learn by observing the actions of those around them (Bandura, 1971). In the context of the Internet, people can not only learn from others in their daily lives but also learn from individuals in online communities. While shopping online, there is a wealth of consumption-related data available on online platforms that allow VPOs to easily and accurately observe and learn from other consumers' behaviors (Libai et al., 2010). Therefore, service recovery transparency is important for VPOs, as it influences their evaluations of firms and also affects their actions, such as purchase intention or opportunistic claiming behavior (Libai et al., 2010).

2.4. Consumer's unreasonable request

Consumer's unreasonable request refers to requests that do not align with the firm's service policy and involve asking for better benefits and compensation than what is offered to other consumers. For

example, a consumer may have received extra coffee during a past purchase due to an opening event at the shop. However, some consumers may continue to ask for the same benefits even after the opening event has ended. This is considered an unreasonable request because it does not align with the shop's service policy and is unfair to other consumers if the shop agrees to fulfill the request.

Research conducted by Rezabakhsh et al. (2006) has discovered that as consumers acquire greater knowledge about firms, their ability and willingness to exploit or take advantage of those firms also increase. In other words, the more consumers know about firms, the more likely they are to make unreasonable requests. This finding supports the hypothesis that service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests will influence VPOs' intentions of opportunistic behavior.

2.5. Opportunistic claiming behavior

Opportunistic behavior has been defined in various ways, including behavior that seeks self-interest with guile (Ping, 1993) or behavior that takes advantage of opportunities without much regard for principles or consequences (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary). Consumers engaging in opportunistic behavior tend to prioritize what they can gain from an opportunity rather than what they should do. They often exploit circumstances for their own benefit, sometimes unethically (The Free Dictionary.com).

There are different types of opportunistic behavior that have been studied, such as shoplifting (Cox, Anderson, & Moschis, 1993), wardrobing (a type of return fraud committed by legitimate shoppers who buy items with the intention of returning them; Harris, 2008; Chu et al., 1998), or customers who exploit service guarantees (Wirtz & Kum, 2004). Most of these behaviors fall under the category of customer dysfunctional behavior (CDB), which refers to behavior that is abusive for the organization, employees, and other consumers, such as vandalism or violence (van J., Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010).

While talking service recovery, opportunistic claiming behavior refers to consumers recognizing an opportunity as a chance to take financial advantage from a firm's service failure and recovery efforts (Berry & Seiders, 2008). In other words, it involves consumers asking for a higher amount of service failure recovery than what is warranted by the actual service failure.

2.6. Descriptive Norm

The first hypothesis in this research focuses on the consequence of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. According to Cialdini, Reno, and Kallgren (1990), people's actions can be influenced by two main social norms categories, one is injunctive norms and the other is descriptive norms. To begin with, injunctive norms refer to what should to be done. On the other hand, descriptive

norms are those what most people actually do. Initially, people tend to act according to injunctive norms. However, if individuals perceive others have lower standards of fairness, the possibility that they follow the unfair behavior may be highly increased (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). This finding aligns with the concept of social learning theory discussed earlier, where individuals acquire behavioral patterns and emotional responses through the observation of others' behavior and emotions, even in the absence of direct personal experience (Bandura, 1971).

A study by Jang & Chu (2012) examined the influence of descriptive norms on consumer behavior using the "Pay What You Want" pricing mechanism. They found that consumers who received information about the product cost and observed other consumers' descriptive norms which is not fair, such as others paying nothing, had a lower willingness to pay (WTP) ratio compared to consumers who only received information about the cost. Additionally, consumers who observed a fair price but were informed that most people paid nothing had lower WTP than the group that only observed the fair price. This research suggests that other consumers' dysfunctional behavior can influence VPOs' behavior.

Based on this, the first hypothesis states that service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests positively influences VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. In other words, the more VPOs can fully observe how the firm handles other consumers'

unreasonable requests, the highly possible they are to engage in opportunistic behavior.

Hypothesis 1: Service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests positively influences VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior

2.7. Firms size

The firm size is an important factor influencing consumers' inclination towards opportunistic behavior. Previous researches have examined the influence of firm size on opportunistic behavior, finding that consumers engaging in opportunistic behavior are sensitive to social utility and consider the consequences of their actions on the other party (Gneezy, 2005). Furthermore, studies have shown that individuals often feel protective of local stores but not large corporations, leading to differences in feelings of guilt when it comes to stealing from small, personal firms compared to large, impersonal ones (Cox, Cox, & Moschis, 1990; Smigel, 1956).

These differences are because of various factors, such as the nature of the relationship. Consumers tend to feel a greater sense of friendliness and closeness with small firms than with large firms. Additionally, the perception of the "degree of harm" has a significant role in shaping consumers' reaction towards large and small firms. The perceived degree of harm is associated with consumers' acceptance

of unethical behavior (Muncy & Vitell, 1992). Given that large firms possess greater financial power than small firms, consumers believe that their opportunistic behavior would inflict less harm on large firms than on small firms. Consequently, consumers tend to display a greater inclination towards engaging in dishonest behavior when interacting with wealthier counterparts, particularly large firms, as indicated by Mazar and Ariely (2006).

This phenomenon also applies to the context of service recovery. Consumers generally have higher expectations from large sized firms when it comes to recovering action for service failures. (Fullerton & Punj, 2004). Considering the aforementioned reasons, we propose that firm size moderates our first hypothesis. More specifically, the effect transparency of service recovery for unreasonable requests on the virtual private operators (VPOs)'s intention to engage in opportunistic claiming behavior is moderated by the firm size. We hypothesize that VPOs trading with large firms will exhibit a higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior compared to those trading with small firms.

Hypothesis 2: Firm size moderates the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. VPOs will demonstrate higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior when trading with large sized firm compared to trading with small sized firm

2.8. Relationship Norm

We can categorize the relationship between firms and consumers into two main types of relationship norms, one is exchange relationship and the other is communal relationship (Clark & Mills, 1979, 1993). An exchange relationship is defined by a lack of personal connection and is guided by the anticipation of receiving equivalent benefits in exchange or as a reciprocation for a prior payment, as outlined by Clark and Mills (1993). This type of relationship is most commonly observed in consumer transactions, where consumers expect the product or service to be worth the money they pay, and firms expect prompt payment from consumers in return for their offerings. In contrast, a communal relationship emphasizes the concept of "friendship" (Wan, Hui, & Wyer, 2011). In communal relationships, benefits are given as a result of demonstrating a genuine care and concern for the other person. Consumers in communal relationships are often motivated by feelings of appreciation rather than a sense of obligation, as suggested by Fong (2006) and Watkins et al. (2006). Even after receiving benefits, their responsibility to address the other person's needs remains unaltered. In summary, consumers in communal relationships have a closer and more intimate connection with firms compared to those in exchange relationships.

Fairness has been explored as an economic concept by economists and marketing scholars in the context of consumer-firm exchanges (Xia, Monroe, & Cox, 2004; Camerer & Thaler, 1995; Campbell, 1999,

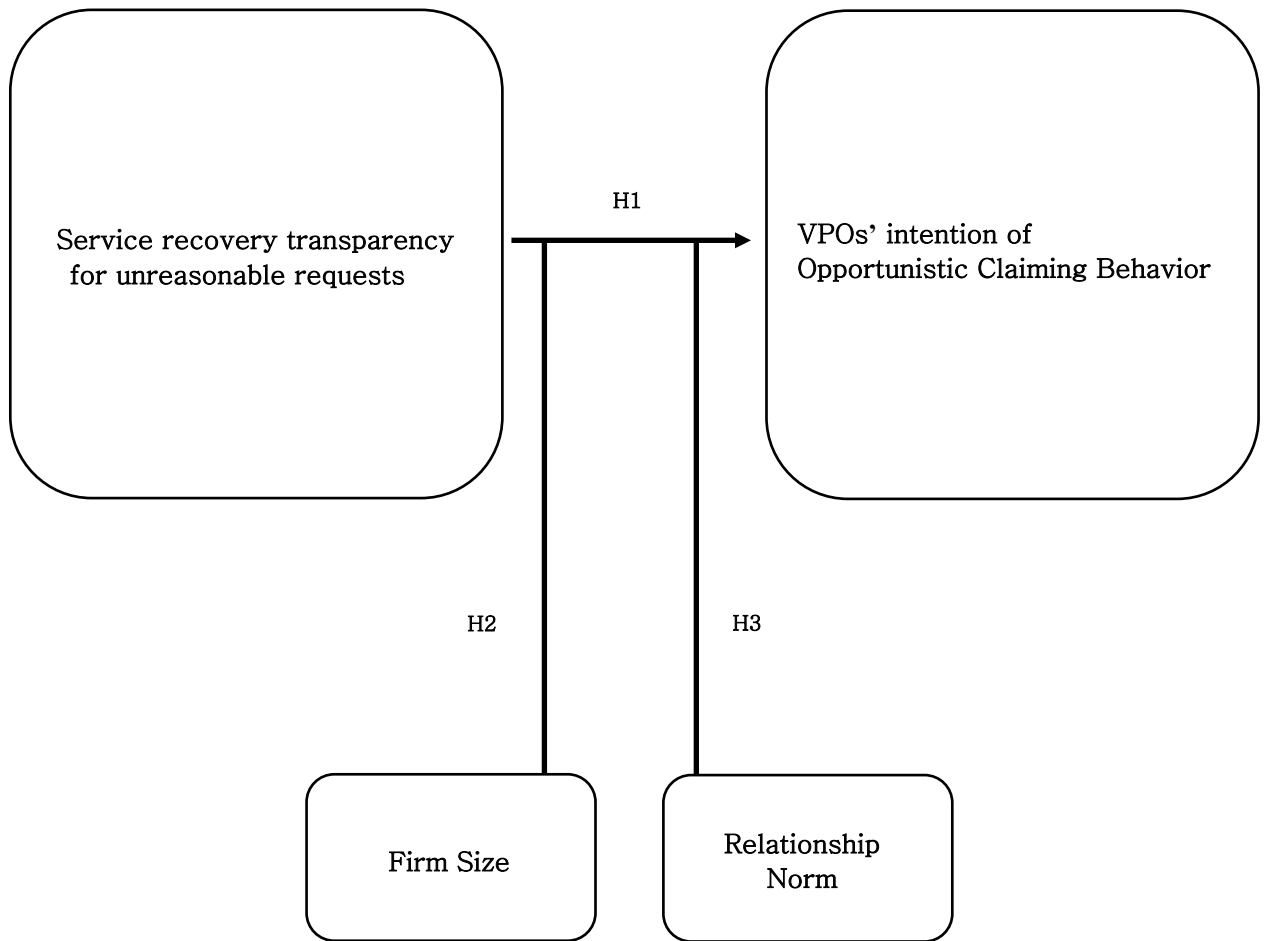
2007; Bolton, Warlop, & Alba, 2003; Rabin, 1993). Numerous studies have focused on how fairness perceptions of firms influence consumer behavior, including the perception of inequity and subsequent complaints to management in the case of service failures (Goodwin & Ross, 1990).

Fairness is also a crucial factor in the context of service recovery. When consumers seeing others ask for unreasonable requests, it is likely to be perceived as unfair, leading to feelings of betrayal. As mentioned earlier, consumers in communal relationships have a closer bond with firms compared to those in exchange relationships. Consequently, a strong and close relationship can shield firms from potential damages resulting from service failures (Berry, 1995). However, this dynamic changes drastically when consumers perceive unfairness. When consumers perceive low levels of fairness in both the outcomes and the process of consumption, the sense of betrayal is heightened, particularly in relationships of higher quality between consumers and firms, as noted by Grégoire and Fisher (2008). Consumers who have established strong relationship quality are more prone to feeling offended if they are subjected to unfair service recovery practices (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008). In other words, when consumers perceive unfair treatment, particularly in close relationships, such as those with a strong sense of cohesion or a close relationship with the transgressor, they experience heightened negative emotions (Moreland & McMinn, 1999; McCullough et al., 1998). It is suggested that when consumers perceive unfairness, their

intention to engage in opportunistic claiming behavior is enhanced. Considering the reasons mentioned above, we propose that the relationship norm moderates our hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship norm moderates the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on VPOs' intention to of opportunistic claiming behavior. VPOs in communal relationships will exhibit a higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior compared to VPOs in exchange relationships with the firm

2.9. Hypothesis model



Hypothesis 1: Service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests positively influences VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior

Hypothesis 2: Firm size moderates the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. VPOs will demonstrate higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior when trading with large sized firm compared to trading with small sized firm

Hypothesis 3: Relationship norm moderates the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on VPOs' intention to of opportunistic claiming behavior. VPOs in communal relationships will exhibit a higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior compared to VPOs in exchange relationships with the firm

Chapter 3. Study

Overview

Based on the theoretical background outlined above, our research aims to investigate the influence of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. In other words, we aim to explore whether consumers' dysfunctional behavior can affect the intention of other consumers to engage in similar dysfunctional behavior.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted two studies. Study 1 focused on testing Hypotheses 1 and 2, examining the influence of transparency of service recovery for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, and how firm size moderates this effect. Also, in study 1, we divided high service recovery transparency into two groups, seeing if firms accepted or rejected the unreasonable requests moderate the result. In contrast, Study 2 sought to examine Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3. Different from study 1, the high service recovery transparency group in study 2 was specifically set on the scenario that firms accepted the unreasonable requests. Additionally, the study investigated whether the relationship norm moderates Hypothesis 1. Both studies employed experimental designs, with Study 1 set in a pizza delivery service scenario and

Study 2 set in a laundry store scenario.

3.1. Study 1 – Pizza delivery service

Study 1 focused on examining the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, and how firm size moderates this effect. In this study, participants were presented with a scenario and asked to put themselves in the situation and respond to questions. The use of scenarios in experiments has been shown to offer high external validity and allows researchers to manipulate variables for internal validity (Bendapudi and Leone, 2003). Furthermore, previous research has demonstrated that asking participants to imagine themselves in a situation can elicit reactions similar to those experienced in real-life situations (Montes and Zweig, 2009, p. 1253). Hence, our method is credible in predicting real-life effects.

Method

In study 1, a 3 x 2 between-subjects factorial design was employed, with three levels of service recovery transparency, and two levels of firm size. The scenario of study 1 is set in the situation of pizza delivery. Participants were shown the situation that they have ordered a pizza& french fries set through pizza delivery, and already

paid for the full amount of the set, including price of a pizza & french fries. However, because of the shop's mistake, french fries didn't come with the set, they only got a pizza.

The independent variable (IV) of study 1 is the service recovery transparency for the unreasonable requests. Besides, the dependent variable (DV) of study 1 is VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. Lastly, the moderator of study 1 is the size of the firm.

Three levels of service recovery transparency include high service recovery transparency while firm accepted the unreasonable requests, high service recovery transparency while firm rejected the unreasonable requests, low service recovery transparency (Appendix A). Participants in the high service recovery transparency group will be shown the photo of the full process that the firm handle with other consumer's unreasonable request, including the result that the firm accept the unreasonable request or not. In contrast, in the low service recovery transparency group participants will also be shown the photo of other consumer's unreasonable request, however, while replying to the consumer, firm only replied "Please send us a private message to let us know more about the problems.". That is, in the low service recovery transparency situation, participants will not see the full process that how the firm handle with the unreasonable request, and also, they will not know that if the firm accepted the unreasonable request or not. Two levels of firm size include big sized firm and small sized firm (Appendix A). Big sized firm is called

" BHC Pizza", with more than 120 branches in the US, and over 1000 employees. On the contrary, the small sized firm is called " Home Pizza", with no other branches in the US, and only 5 employees in total. To prevent form the difference of price, the price of the products will be set at the same price, (\$28).

To do the manipulation check for the image used in Study 1, a pretest was conducted with 25 participants. The pretest included two items to assess the effectiveness of the manipulation, including asking participants if they were able to fully observe how the request was handled by the firm to check for the service recovery transparency and "I think this request is unreasonable" to check that the request is unreasonable. Image used in high service recovery transparency group do get higher score than it used in low service recovery transparency group ($M_{\text{High}} = 6.24$, $SD_{\text{High}} = .879$; $M_{\text{Low}} = 3.96$, $SD_{\text{Low}} = 1.268$; $p < .05$). Also, the request is considered more unreasonable than the control group.

There are 135 participants recruited from Prolific participated Study 1. Participants were randomly divided into six teams with different levels of service recovery transparency and firm sizes. Firstly, participants will first be shown the situation that the french fries they ordered didn't come with the set, and the information of the firm and price of the product. Then, participants were told that before calling the shop, they searched the shop review on google, and they were shown one of the three review photos (3 levels of service recovery

transparency). After that, participants were asked to choose from the two options that which service recovery option would they like to request the shop to compensate for their mistake. Two service recovery option includes “ask for a french fries’ coupon” and “ask for a pizza + french fries set coupon”. Among the two service recovery options, “ask for a pizza + french fries set coupon” is seen as the opportunistic claiming behavior because the value and price of it is more than the value of the service failure, which is the french fries in this experiment. In the end of the experiment, to check if participants have focused on the experiment, they were asked two manipulation questions, including “What's the problem that you faced in the situation?” and "What's the size of the shop?”.

Result

The purpose of study 1 was to test our hypothesis 1 and 2, investigating the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior and how firm size moderates this effect.

Manipulation Check

Before analyzing, we cleared the data of participants who didn’t pass the manipulation check. There are two manipulation check questions

to check that participants correctly identified the problem they faced in the situation (e.g., missing french fries) and accurately recalled the size of the shop, confirming that they have paid attention to the experiment.

Service Recovery Transparency

135 of participants were randomly divided into one of the three levels of service recovery transparency. There are 90 participants used to test hypothesis 1a, including 45 of them in high service recovery transparency where firm accepted the unreasonable requests group and the other 45 of them in the low service recovery transparency group.

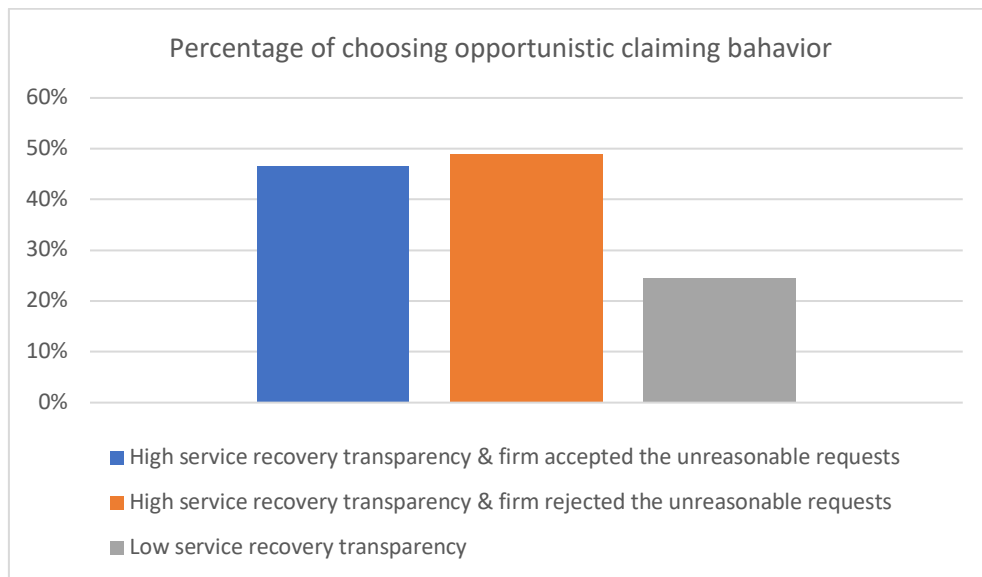
Firstly, we analyzed all the data together, analyzing the data of high service recovery transparency where firms accepted and rejected the unreasonable request, and low service recovery transparency together. A main effect of service recovery transparency on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior was observed ($F(2, 132) = 3.529, p < .05$). Percentage of choosing opportunistic claiming behavior are 24.44%, 46.67%, and 48.89%, individually for low service recovery transparency, high service recovery transparency where firms accepted the unreasonable requests, and where firms rejected them (Graph 1). The result supported our hypothesis 1.

Besides, we divided the high service recovery transparency into two different groups, seeing if firms accepted or rejected the unreasonable requests influences the effect. We firstly compared the situation of high service recovery transparency while firm accepted the unreasonable requests. In the situation that firm accepted the unreasonable request, a main effect of service recovery transparency on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior was found ($F(1, 88) = 5.011, p < .05$). In the high service recovery transparency group, about 46.67% of the participants have chosen the opportunity calming option for service recovery, while there are only 24.44% of the participants in the low service recovery transparency group chose it (Graph 2). The result revealed that in the group of high service recovery transparency condition, where the firm accepted the unreasonable request, participants showed a significantly higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior than participants in the low service recovery transparency group, where the firm provided limited information ($p < .05$).

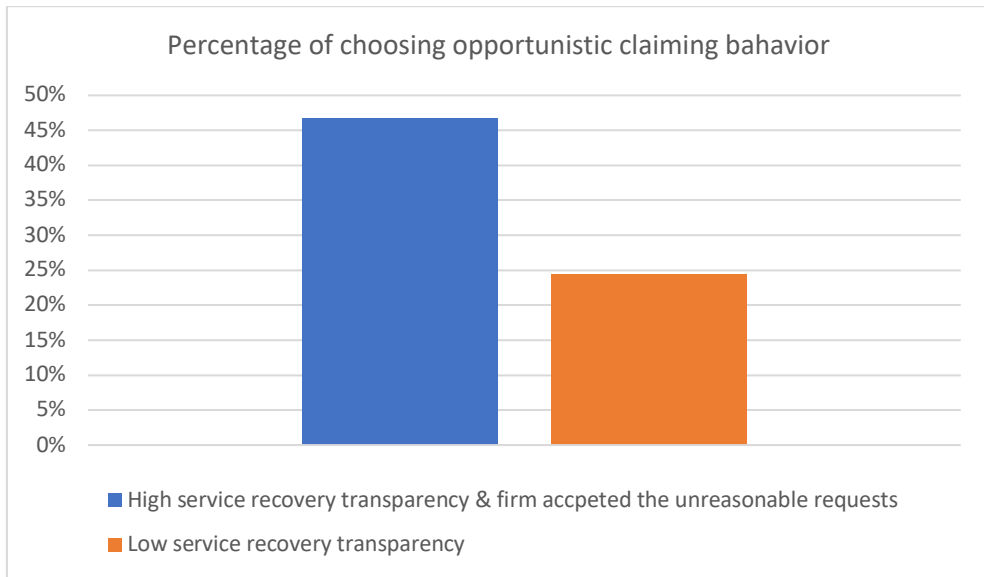
Also, we test the situation that firm rejected the unreasonable requests. A main effect of service recovery transparency where firms rejected the unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior was observed ($F(1, 88) = 6.050, p < .05$). In high service recovery transparency group, even the firm rejected the unreasonable requests, there are still about 48.89% of the participants chose the opportunity calming

option, while there are only 24.44% of the participants in the low service recovery transparency group (Graph 3). The result revealed that in comparison to participants in the low service recovery transparency group, where the firm provided limited information, those in the high service recovery transparency group, even the firm rejected the unreasonable request, showed a significantly higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior ($p < .05$).

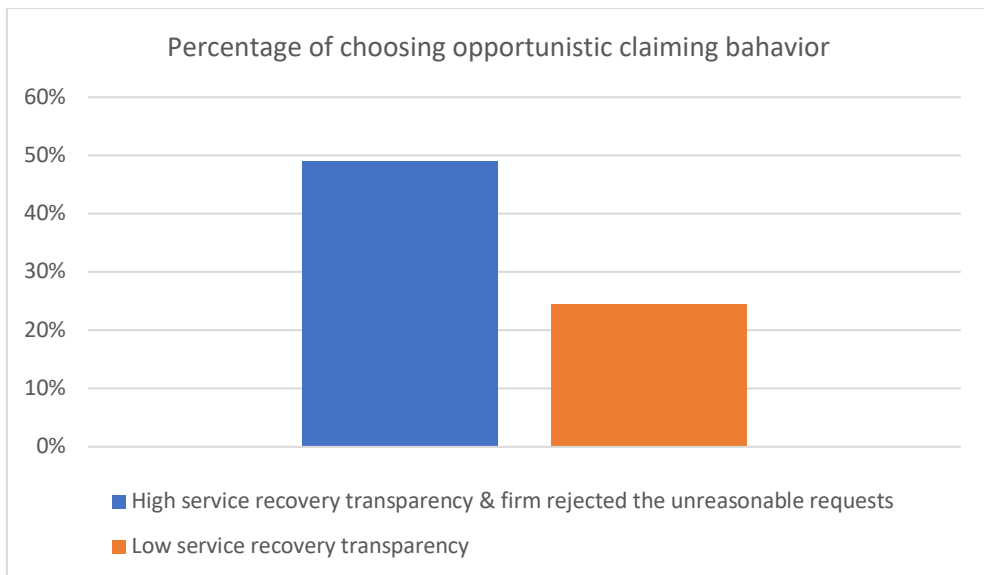
Surprisingly, in study 1, it is found that, in the high service recovery transparency group, participants in the group that firms rejected the unreasonable requests have higher intention than those in group that firms accepted the unreasonable requests.



Graph1



Graph2



Graph3

Firm Size

The coefficient for the Firm Size variable is 2.798, with a significant ($p < .05$, CI[1.182, 4.413]). This indicates that firm size has a positive and significant effect on VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior.

Therefore, it can be concluded that VPOs have a higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior when trading with large firms compared to small firms, considering the positive influence of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests. Results suggest that the influence of service recovery transparency on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior is stronger for large firms, indicating that large firms are more susceptible to opportunistic claiming behavior from VPOs compared to small firms.

According to the results, our hypothesis 2, which states that firm size moderates the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable request on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, is supported.

3.2. Study 2 – Laundry service

Different from Study 1, the scenario of study 2 was focused on the situation that firms accepted the unreasonable requests. We aim to test whether VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior is influenced by their ability to clearly see the full process of the firm accepting the unreasonable request. We will test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3 in study 2.

Method

In Study 2, a 2 x 2 between-subjects factorial design was employed, with two levels of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests and two levels of relationship norm. Similar to study 1, participants were asked to imagine themselves in the scenario and respond to the questions.

The independent variable (IV) of study 2 is the service recovery transparency for the unreasonable requests, and the dependent variable (DV) of study 2 is VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. Lastly, the moderator of study 3 is the relationship norm.

Regarding service recovery transparency, there were two levels. In the high service recovery transparency group, participants were shown photos depicting the full process of the firm handling and

accepting other consumers' unreasonable requests. In contrast, those in the low service recovery transparency group were only shown that the firm asked the consumer to send a private message to discuss the problems, without revealing the full process.

Two types of relationship norms between the consumer and the laundry shop were considered (see Appendix B). In the communal relationship group, the laundry store was named "Jason Laundry." Participants were informed that Jason Laundry is a laundry store owned by their close friend "Jason," and they have been using its services for more than 3 years to support their friend's business. In contrast, in the exchange relationship group, the laundry store was named "YOUR NAME Laundry." Participants were told that they are not personally acquainted with anyone on the staff, but they have been using the store's services for more than 3 years because they believe the service is excellent. Both groups were presented with a situation where other consumers requested a 30% discount from the laundry store without any specific reasons.

To ensure the effectiveness of the image manipulation used in Study 2, a pretest experiment was conducted with 25 participants. The pretest included two questions to assess the effectiveness of the manipulation. We asked participants to point the extent that they can fully observe how the requests were handled by the firm to measure the transparency of service recovery and the extent they think that the requests are unreasonable to check if the request was perceived

as unreasonable. The image used in the high service recovery transparency group received higher score than the image used in the lower one group ($M_{\text{High}} = 6.44$, $SD_{\text{High}} = 0.96$; $M_{\text{Low}} = 3.18$, $SD_{\text{Low}} = 1.86$; $p < .05$).

A total of 100 participants from Prolific participated in the study. Participants were randomly assigned to four different groups. The scenario was set in a laundry store. At the beginning of the study, participants were presented with a situation where their BALENCIAGA T-shirt was damaged during the cleaning process. The T-shirt had been purchased 2 years ago. Participants were then provided with information about the laundry store, including the store name and their relationship with the store owner. Next, participants were informed that before contacting the shop, they had searched for shop reviews on social media and were shown one of two review photos (representing the two levels of service recovery transparency). Participants were asked to choose the amount they would like to ask the laundry store to compensate for the damaged T-shirt. Three prices for the T-shirt were offered as reference: the price of buying a "new" T-shirt (\$1,030), the price of a second-hand T-shirt identical to the participant's damaged T-shirt (\$550), and the price of a 5-year-old second-hand T-shirt (\$200). Participants could choose from five options: "More than \$1,030," "\$1,030," "\$550," "\$200," and "Under \$200." Participants selected one of the five amounts as the compensation they desired from the laundry store. Finally, to check if participants were attentive during the study, they

were asked, "What's the price of that T-shirt if you want to buy a new one?"

Result

In study 2, the main purpose of us is to test our hypothesis 1 and 3, checking the effect of service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior again and seeing that if relationship norms moderated this effect.

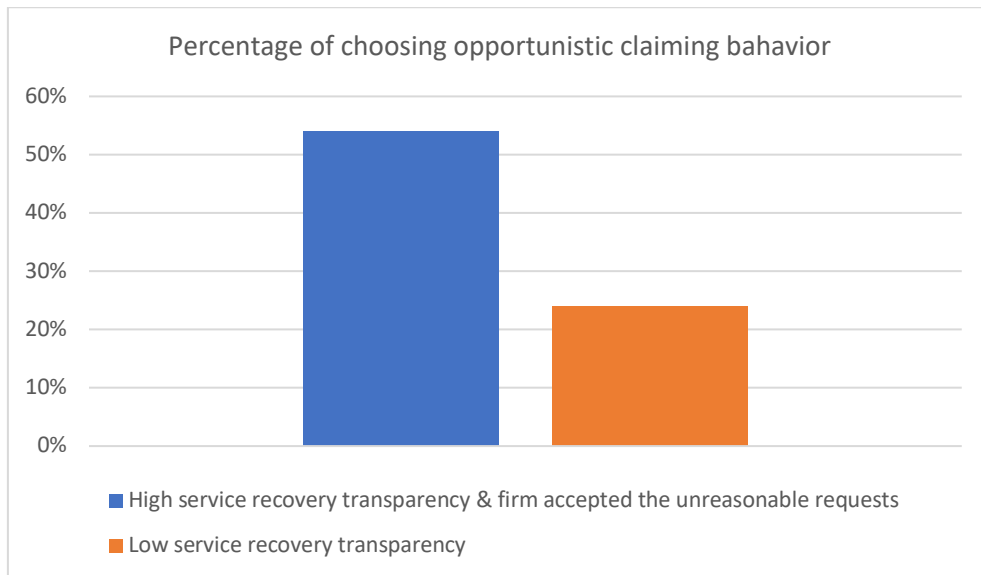
Manipulation Check

Same as what we did in study 1, we cleared the data of participants who didn't pass the manipulation check before we started analyzing. In study 2, there are one manipulation check question, asking them to choose the price of T-shirt if they want to buy a new one (e.g., \$550), confirming that they have paid attention to the experiment.

Service Recovery Transparency

We checked that if VPOs shown the review page with high service recovery transparency where firms accepted the unreasonable requests will have higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior than those in the control group. After clearing the data that did not

pass the manipulation check, there are 100 data used to analyze, including 50 participants in high service recovery transparency and 50 participants in the low service recovery transparency group. A significant main effect of service recovery transparency on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior was observed ($F(1, 98) = 10.237, p < .05$). In comparison with only 24% of participants in the low service recovery transparency group, about 54% of the those in the high service recovery transparency group chose the opportunity calming option for service recovery. (Graph 4). The result checked our finding in study 1 again that VPOs in the high service recovery transparency have a significantly higher intention of opportunistic claiming behavior compared to participants in the low service recovery transparency condition, where the firm provided limited information ($p < .05$), supporting our hypothesis 1.



Graph4

Relationship Norm

The coefficient for Relation was 0.211, suggesting a small positive effect on the log-odds of opportunistic claiming behavior. However, this effect was not statistically significant ($p = .750$). The coefficient for the interaction effect was 1.763, indicating a positive interaction effect between the transparency of service recovery and relationship norm on the intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. Although the p -value ($p = .058$) was marginally above the conventional threshold for statistical significance ($\alpha = .05$), it suggests a potential trend towards significance. That is, the interaction between Service Recovery Transparency and Relationship Norm may have some influence on VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. In summary, the results provide partial support for Hypothesis 3, indicating that the interaction between Service Recovery Transparency and Relationship Norm may have a meaningful impact on VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, although the effect size did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Further investigation with a larger sample size may be necessary to obtain more findings.

Chapter 4. General Discussion

4.1. Discussion

In our research, we investigated the impact of transparency of service recovery for unreasonable requests on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior. Through two studies, we aimed to understand the relationship between these variables and explore potential moderating factors.

In study 1, we discovered that the level of detail in which participants could observe the process of firms handling unreasonable requests had a significant influence on their intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior, regardless of whether the requests were accepted or rejected. Our findings indicated that higher levels of service recovery transparency were associated with higher intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior, thus supporting our hypothesis 1.

Furthermore, our study 1 results revealed that the effect of service recovery transparency was moderated by firm size, confirming our hypothesis 2. Specifically, participants who engaged with large firms exhibited a stronger association between service recovery transparency and their intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior compared to those interacting with small firms.

In study 2, we aimed to replicate and further investigate the findings from study 1. The results of study 2 provided additional support for our hypothesis 1, demonstrating that service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests positively influenced VPOs' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior.

Additionally, we examined the moderating role of relationship norm in study 2, but the results did not yield a significant effect. Although the finding was not statistically significant ($p = 0.058$), it suggests that further investigation with a larger sample size may be necessary to obtain more conclusive results. Nonetheless, our study partially supports our hypothesis 3, which proposed that relationship norm could moderate the relationship between transparency of service recovery and opportunistic claiming behavior.

Overall, our research highlights service recovery transparency's importance in shaping VPOs' intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior. It also emphasizes the role of firm size as a moderating factor in this relationship. Future studies could explore additional contextual factors and employ larger sample sizes to gain deeper insights into these dynamics.

4.2. Implications

The findings of our research have several practical implications for

firms and practitioners in the online review and service recovery domains.

First, our study highlights the importance of considering service recovery transparency when addressing unreasonable requests from consumers. Firms should carefully assess the level of transparency they provide during the service recovery process, as our results indicate that higher levels of transparency can lead to an increase in VPOs' intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior. To mitigate this effect, firms may consider implementing strategies to manage and control the disclosure of information related to service recovery. By striking a balance between transparency and protecting their interests, firms can reduce the likelihood of VPOs engaging in opportunistic claiming behavior.

Second, the moderating role of firm size underscores the need for different strategies when addressing service recovery transparency for unreasonable requests. Larger firms should be particularly mindful of the potential impact of transparency on VPOs' behavior. They may need to invest additional resources in carefully managing and communicating the service recovery process to minimize the risk of opportunistic claiming behavior. On the other hand, smaller firms may benefit from focusing on building strong relationships with their customers, as our findings suggest that the effect of service recovery transparency may be less pronounced in their case.

Lastly, our study emphasizes the significance of considering the role of relationship norms in the online review context. While our results did not yield significant effects, the findings suggest that relationship norms may have a nuanced influence on VPOs' responses to service recovery transparency. Firms can use this insight to tailor their communication and service recovery strategies based on the relationship norms established with their customers. Building and nurturing communal relationships with customers may help reduce the likelihood of opportunistic claiming behavior, even in the presence of high service recovery transparency.

In summary, our research provides practical guidance for firms to navigate the challenges associated with service recovery transparency and its impact on VPOs' intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior. By carefully considering these implications, firms can enhance their service recovery practices, cultivate positive customer relationships, and mitigate the potential negative consequences of transparency in the online review environment.

4.3. Limitations and Future Research

Although our study contributes valuable findings into service recovery transparency's effects on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, there are some limitations that should be acknowledged. These limitations point to opportunities for future

research to expand upon our findings and address important gaps in the literature.

First, our research focused primarily on the context of online reviews and virtual potential customers. Although this allowed us to investigate the specific dynamics of service recovery transparency in an online setting, it may limit the generalizability of our findings to offline or different customer segments. Future research could explore how the effects of service recovery transparency vary across different contexts, such as physical stores or different industries, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Second, our study relied on self-reported measures to capture VPOs' intentions of opportunistic claiming behavior. While self-report measures are commonly used in research, they are subject to biases and may not fully reflect actual behavior. Future studies could employ behavioral measures or observational methods to validate and extend our findings, providing a more objective assessment of VPOs' behavior in response to service recovery transparency.

Third, our sample size was relatively modest, which may limit the statistical power to detect smaller effects and generalize the findings to a larger population. Replicating our study with a larger and more diverse sample would strengthen the robustness and generalizability of the results. Additionally, examining potential cultural or demographic differences in the effects of service recovery transparency would be valuable for understanding the boundary

conditions of our findings.

Last but not least, while we examined the moderating role of firm size and relationship norms, there may be other contextual factors that influence the effects of service recovery transparency. Future research could explore additional moderators, such as customer characteristics, industry-specific factors, or cultural dimensions, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the boundary conditions and contingencies related to service recovery transparency.

In conclusion, while our research contributes valuable insights into the influence of service recovery transparency on virtually presented others' intention of opportunistic claiming behavior, there are limitations that should be considered. Addressing these limitations through future research will enhance the validity and generalizability of our findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics between service recovery transparency, consumer behavior, and firm outcomes.

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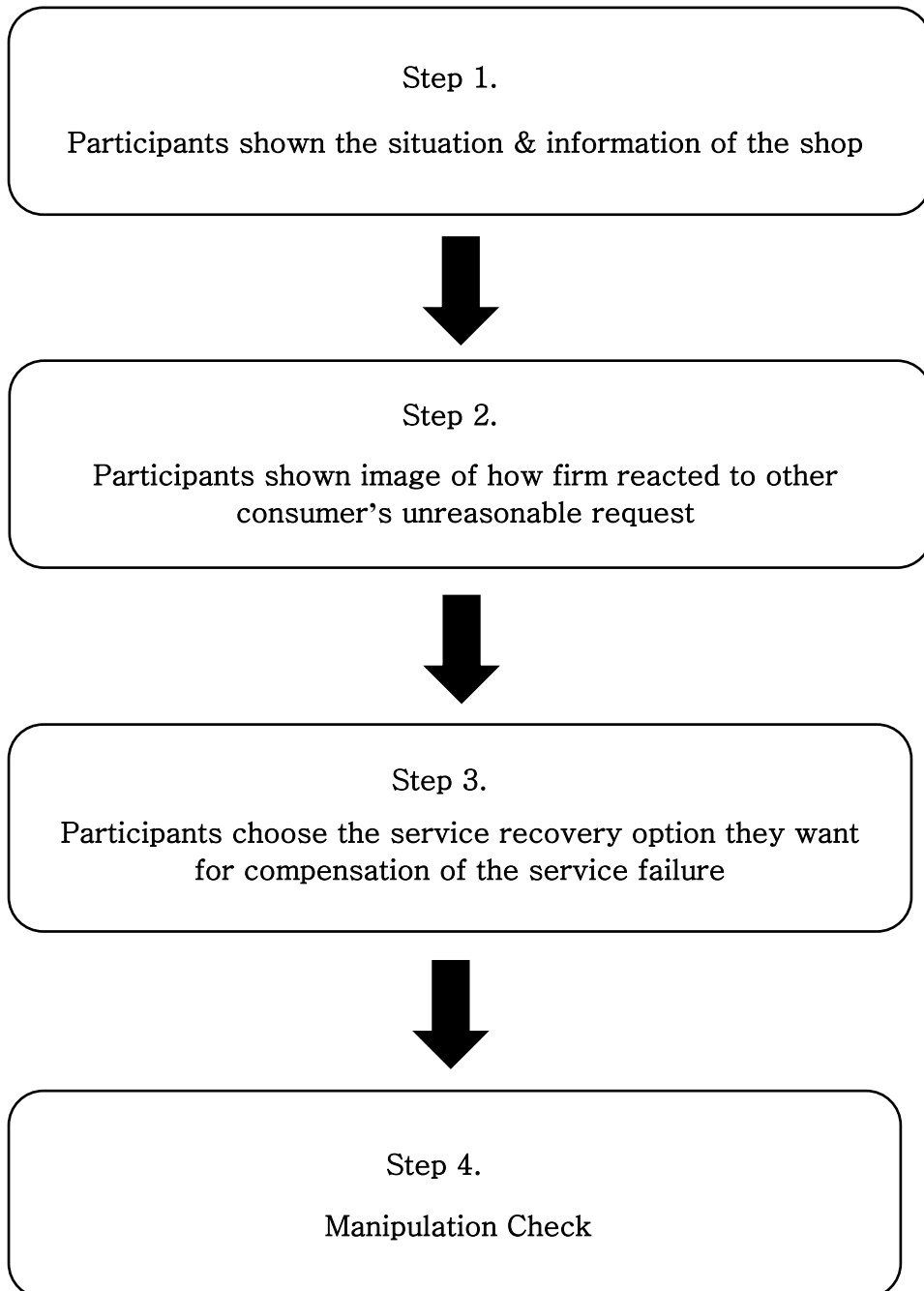
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Appendix

Appendix A – Study 1

A-1. Experiment Process



A-2. Step 1 – Situation & Shop Information

Large Firm

Situation

Imagine that you have ordered a **pizza& french fries set** through pizza delivery.

You have **already paid for the full amount of the set** (\$28), including price of a pizza & french fries.

However, because of the shop's mistake, **french fries didn't come with the set**, you only got a pizza.

Shop Information

The pizza shop you have ordered from is called " BHC Pizza"

BHC Pizza is a **big sized business** with more than 120 branches in the US, and over 1000 employees.

Small Firm

Situation

Imagine that you have ordered a **pizza& french fries set** through pizza delivery.

You have **already paid for the full amount of the set** (\$28), including price of a pizza & french fries.

However, because of the shop's mistake, **french fries didn't come with the set**, you only got a pizza.

Shop Information

The pizza shop you have ordered from is called " Home Pizza"

Home Pizza is a **small sized business** with no other branches in the US, and only 5 employees.

A-3. Step 2 – Service recovery transparency

Situation

Before calling the shop, you searched the shop review on google. Below is one of the reviews that you have found, knowing how shop reacted to other consumer's request.

* Firm name on the top of the image was different between large firm group and small firm group

High Service Recovery Transparency & Firm Accepted the Request

BHC Pizza

250 W Nyack Rd #200, West Nyack, NY

 Edit your review

4.7  36 reviews 

Sort by: Most relevant ▾

All SEO 4 industry 4 news 3 team 3



Natalie Giroux
3 reviews

My family and I ordered delivery last night. What a letdown! You didn't give an extra french fries for service this time. Last time I got an extra french fries even though I didn't order for it. You really need to give me two extra french fries next time.

 1

Response from the owner a year ago

Hello Natalie,
we're very sorry that we've disappointed you. However, the extra french fries event has already ended last week and that's the reason why you didn't get an extra french fries this time. Thanks for your understanding.

Response from the reviewer a year ago

I didn't know that. I think you should still give me two extra french fries for compensation that you didn't tell me that the event have ended in advance.

Response from the owner a year ago

Hello Natalie,
We understand how disappointed you are. We would like to deliver you two french fries. Please send us a private message with your previous order details so that we can deliver the french fries to you. Thanks.

Response from the reviewer a year ago

I just sent you the previous order details.

Response from the owner a year ago

Hello Natalie,
We have just sent two french fries to your address. Hope you enjoy them.
Again, we are sorry about the disappointment we have made for you.
Thanks for your order in our shop. See you next time

High Service Recovery Transparency & Firm Rejected the Request

BHC Pizza

250 W Nyack Rd #200, West Nyack, NY

 Edit your review

4.7 ★★★★★ 36 reviews 

Sort by: Most relevant ▾

All SEO 4 industry 4 news 3 team 3



Natalie Giroux

3 reviews

My family and I ordered delivery last night. What a letdown! You didn't give an extra french fries for service this time. Last time I got an extra french fries even though I didn't order for it. You really need to give me two extra french fries next time.

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Response from the reviewer a year ago

I didn't know that. I think you should still give me two extra french fries for compensation that you didn't tell me that the event have ended in advance.

Response from the owner a year ago

Hello Natalie,
We understand how disappointed you are.
However, We still can't offer what you want because this is not fair to other consumers..
Hope you can understand about it. Thanks.

Response from the reviewer a year ago

I'll just have you know this is bullshit.
You can't treat your consumer in this way.

Response from the owner a year ago

Hello Natalie,
We are sorry about the disappointment we have made for you.
Thanks for your order in our shop. See you next time

Low Service Recovery Transparency & Firm Rejected the Request

BHC Pizza

250 W Nyack Rd #200, West Nyack, NY

 Edit your review

4.7 ★★★★★ 36 reviews 

Sort by: Most relevant ▾

All SEO 4 industry 4 news 3 team 3



Natalie Giroux

3 reviews a year ago

My family and I ordered delivery last night. What a letdown! You didn't give an extra french fries for service this time. Last time I got an extra french fries even though I didn't order for it. You really need to give me two extra french fries next time.

 1

Response from the owner a year ago

Hi Natalie,
Please send us a private message to let us know more about the problems.

A-4. Step 3 – Service Recovery

Situation

Which service recovery option would you like to **request the shop to compensate for their mistake?**

Participants choose between the two options

Option 1.

Ask for a "french fries coupon" that you can use next time

Option 2. (Opportunistic Claiming Behavior)

Ask for a "pizza + french fries set coupon" that you can use

A-5. Step 4 – Manipulation Check

To check that if you have focused on the study

Manipulation Check 1.

What's the problem that you faced in the situation?

- (a) Order a pizza, but get a pizza + french fries set
- (b) Order a pizza + french fries set, but only get a pizza
- (c) Order a pizza + french fries set, but only get a pizza

Answer: (b)

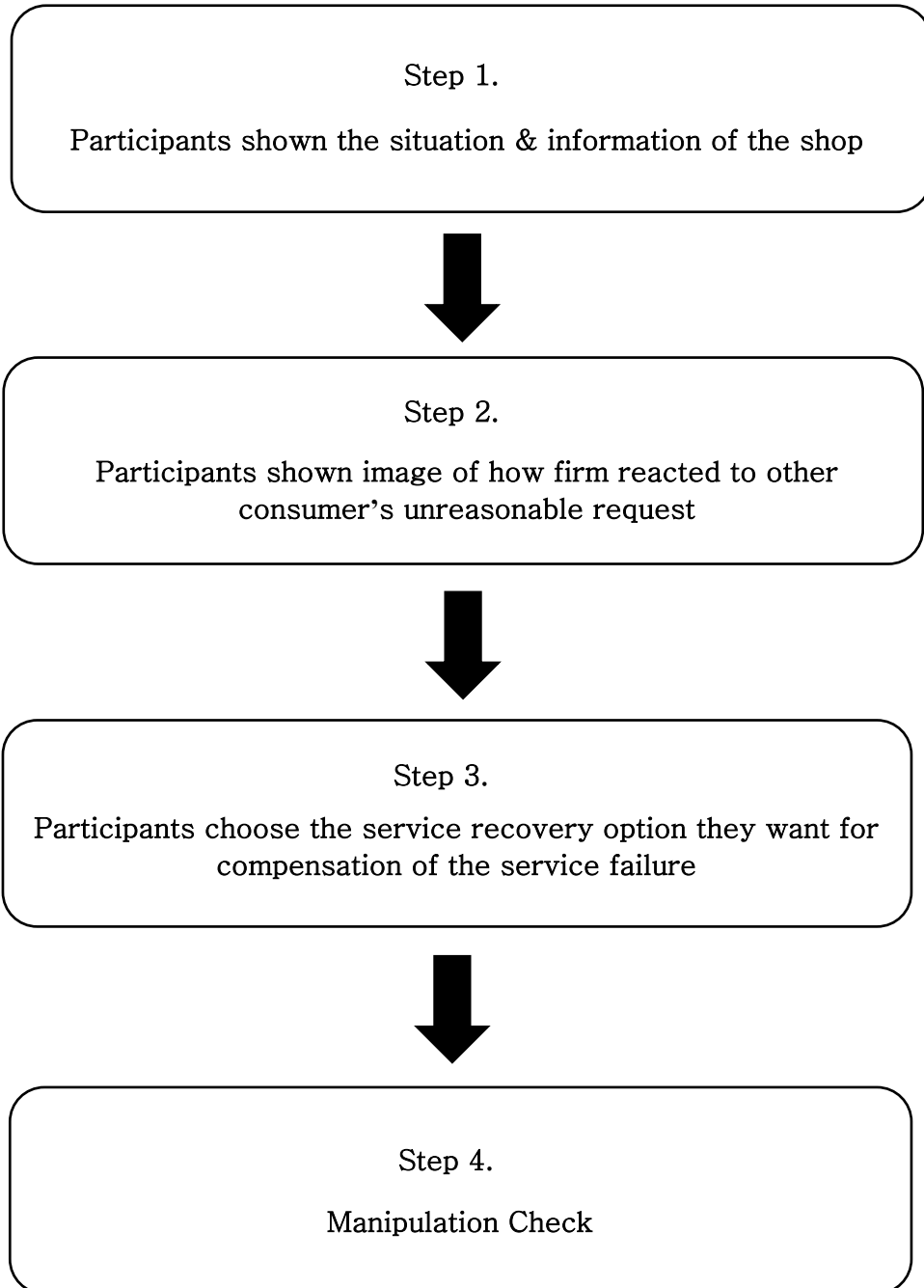
Manipulation Check 2.

What's the size of the shop?

- (a) Big sized business with about 1000 employees
- (b) Small sized business with only 5 employees

Appendix B – Study 2

B-1. Experiment Process



B-2. Step 1 – Situation & Shop Information

Communal Relationship

Situation

Imagine that you have dropped your T-shirt in **Jason Laundry** for laundry service.

However, you have got a phone call from the laundry store, telling you that **your BALENCIAGA T-shirt was broken** while cleaning.

Information of the laundry store

The laundry store you have visited is called " **Jason Laundry** "

Jason Laundry is a laundry store that owned by your close friend "Jason"

You have used its service for more than 3 years because that you want to **support your friend's business**.

Exchange Relationship

Situation

Imagine that you have dropped your T-shirt in **YOUR NAME Laundry** for laundry service.

However, you have got a phone call from the laundry store, telling you that **your BALENCIAGA T-shirt was broken** while cleaning.

Information of the laundry store

The laundry store you have visited is called " **YOUR NAME Laundry** "

You are not close to anyone staff in the store although you have used its service for more than 3 years because that you think its service is great.

B-3. Step 2 – Service recovery transparency


Situation


Before calling back to the laundry store, you searched the store review on its social media.


Below is one of the reviews that you have found, knowing how store reacted to other consumer's request.

* Firm name on the top of the image was different between large firm group and small firm group

Low Service Recovery Transparency & Firm Rejected the Request




Home Like Pics **Reviews** More  Message

 **David Yang** ► **YOUR NAME LAUNDRY**

Hi sir,
I have been used your service for more than three months.
I do really like your service but I think that it is still too expensive for me even though you give all the cusomters a 15% discount!
I know you guys make a lot of profit, so I want to ask that if you can give me a 30% discount?

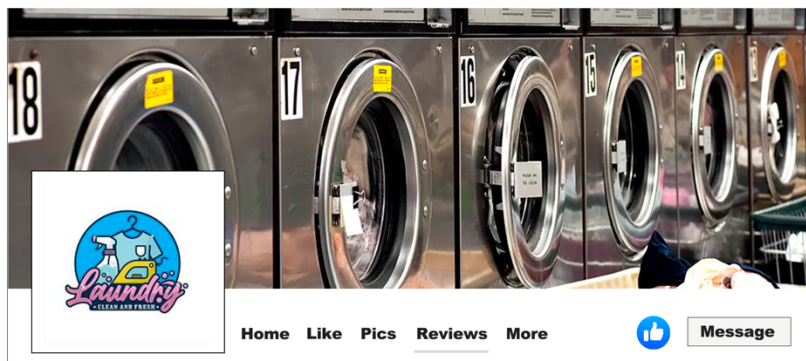
[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#) a week ago

 **YOUR NAME LAUNDRY**

Hi David,
Please send us a private message to let us know more about the problems.

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High Service Recovery Transparency & Firm Accepted the Request



David Yang ► **JASON LAUNDRY**

Hi sir,

I have been using your service for more than three months.

I do really like your service but I think that it is still too expensive for me even though you give all the customers a 15% discount!

I know you guys make a lot of profit, so I want to ask that if you can give me a 30% discount?

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JASON LAUNDRY

Hi David,

It's not about our profit.

We are selling at a predetermined margin and we are not the ones who decide it.

We are just selling products on behalf of the manufacturer."

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#) a week ago



David Yang

I don't care;

you will have to give me the discount which I want.

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#) a week ago



JASON LAUNDRY

Hi David,

I am really sorry, But that is not possible.

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Share](#) a week ago



David Yang

What do you mean not possible?

Is this how you treat your customers?

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JASON LAUNDRY

Hi David,

Sorry for making you feel bad.

We would like to give you a 30% discount this time although we are not supposed to do that.

Please send us a private message with your detailed information of the order. Thanks.

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David Yang

I just sent the information to you. Thanks for the discount

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B-4. Step 3 – Service Recovery

Price of the T-shirt

The broken BALENCIAGA T-shirt was bought in 2 years ago.

The price of the T-shirt if you want to buy a **new one** is \$1030

The price of the T-shirt if you want to buy a **second hand one that have been used for 2 years** is \$550 (same as yours)

The price of the T-shirt if you want to buy a **second hand one that have been used for 5 years** is \$200

Participants choose between the five options

Choose the amount that you would like to ask the laundry store to compensate for

- (a) More than \$1,030 (Opportunistic Claiming Behavior)
- (b) \$1,030 (Opportunistic Claiming Behavior)
- (c) \$550
- (d) \$200
- (e) Under \$200

B-5. Step 4 – Manipulation Check

To check that if you have focused on the study

Manipulation Check.

What's the price of that T-shirt if you want to buy a new one?

- (a) \$1,030
- (b) \$550
- (c) \$200

Answer: **(a)**

국문초록

본 연구는 불합리한 요청에 대한 서비스 보상 행위 투명성이 타 고객들의 기회주의적 요구 행동 의도에 영향을 미치는지를 조사한다.

본 연구는 두 가지 실험을 통해 가설을 검증하였다. 첫번째 실험에서는 불합리한 요청에 대한 서비스 보상 행위 투명성이 가상적으로 제시된 다른 사람들의 기회주의적 요구 행동 의도에 미치는 영향과 회사 규모가 이 효과를 조절하는지를 검증하였다. 반면, 두번째 실험에서는 첫번째 실험과는 달리 기업이 불합리한 요청을 수락하는 상황에 초점을 맞추어, 서비스 회복 투명성이 타 고객들의 기회주의적 요구 행동 의도에 어떤 영향을 미치는지 검증하였다. 또한, 관계 규범이 이 효과를 조절하는지도 검증하였다. 이 두 가지 실험을 통해 수행되었다. 첫번째 실험은 피자 배달 서비스 상황에서 시나리오를 설정하였으며, 두번째 실험은 세탁소 상황에서 시나리오를 설정하였다.

본 연구에서는 각 연구의 방법론, 참가자, 절차, 조작 확인, 결과 및 토의에 대해 설명하였다. 연구 결과와 분석은 첫번째 실험과 두번째 실험에 대해 별도로 분석하고 토의하였으며, 교차 연구 비교 및 토의도 진행하였다.

이 연구의 이론적 함의와 실무적 함의, 그리고 향후 연구에 대한 권고사항을 제시하였다. 마지막으로, 연구 결과의 요약, 이 분야에 대한 기여, 제한 사항 및 향후 연구에 대한 제안을 제시하였다.

키워드: 서비스 회복 투명성, 불합리한 요청, 기회주의적 요구 행동,

관계 규범

주요어: 서비스 보상 행위 투명성, 불합리한 요구, 기회주의적 요구 행동
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