

INCREASE CUSTOMER AFFECTION: FOCUSING ON JUSTICE PERCEPTION EFFECT TO THE LOYALTY

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Abstract: This research was aimed to determine the direct and indirect effect of justice perception, which would be analyzed in this research and based on three dimensions as distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice to the customer affection and loyalty of patients in Xxx Hospital Malang. The research population covered the patients or families who have complained about service failure in the hospital. This data was based on the data from the public relation of Xxx Hospital Malang in 2018. The total sample was 232 respondents who had been selected through the saturated sampling method. The data was analyzed using the Partial Least Square PLS technique in the SmartPLS 3.0 program application. The research finding indicated that distributive justice did not significantly affect customer affection from the three construct dimensions of justice perception. In contrast, the interactional justice and procedural justice affected positively and significantly the customer affection, and then the customer affection affected positively and significantly patient loyalty. This result showed that patients' higher interactional justice and procedural justice would determine the higher customer affection of patients to Xxx Hospital Malang. The higher customer affection would determine the higher patient loyalty. For further research is recommended to re-explore the research variables that might affect the customer affection and loyalty directly on similar research objects or other hospitals, for instance, customer satisfaction, revisit intention, WOM, and other aspects. The next researches should also be done by developing the research model and using samples with different characteristics.



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The customer complaint is a point which must be dealt with in a business field. In the service industry, the complaint can appear hundred

times a day. Even the large companies that have survived in a competitive world cannot avoid having complaints because of the service failure. For instance, the delay of flight time from the flight schedule, steak which is not proper to the customer

order because the steak is overcooked, digital bank security which is hacked by the hacker that causes loss of customer money, annoying trouble on paid TV channel, and many more service failures that we or all people may find.

Service failure is a mistake or problem that consumers experience while shopping or communicating with companies (Maxham, 2001). More to the point, service failure leads to customer dissatisfaction and collapsing relationships with customers. Thus, service recovery has been a critical and effective business strategy to win back dissatisfied customers and maintain relationships with them (Maxham, 2001). Service recovery refers to the service providers' response and process in solving problems that result from service failures (Weun et al., 2004). Effective service recoveries enable service providers to regain customer satisfaction, maintain customer loyalty, and retain long-term relationships with customers (Kuo and Wu, 2012; Mccollough et al., 2000)

Based on the economic perspective, the business prospect of a hospital or private health clinic is pretty good. The hospital is also stated as a target of health effort that prioritizes healing and recovery of patient body and soul, which is implemented in an integrated manner through prevention and improvement of health status and gives referral effort. The increase of society awareness on health significance for their life and the government support implemented through policies to encourage the development of hospital and public health clinics to provide better business opportunities for the business of health service.

The perfectness of hospital service as a health service provider institution becomes a crucial aspect. Therefore, the hospital is required to provide quality service according to the standard and cover-up all society status (Utama, 2003). The qualified health service is regarded as a health service that can satisfy every user of service according to the average satisfaction level of society and the implementation is appropriate to the ethical code and standardization (Miller, 1987). This kind of service process has also occurred in Xxx Hospital. But, in the

middle of its process, Xxx Hospital cannot avoid the emergence of service failure and customer dissatisfaction. In addition, the service user or patient has the right to complain to the health service provider (Patel et al., 1995).

To get involved in the responsive restructuration of service, Xxx Hospital must consider the customer complaint as an opportunity. The service recovery is then employed by handling complaints, which is the first step to calm the customer, but it needs more efforts and strategies to ensure that the customer will not have more reasons for his complaint. Hence, the service recovery is more than just handling the direct problem from the customer. Moreover, effective service recovery must settle down the causal factor of problems and ensure that similar problems and complaints will not happen in the future (Brown et al., 2008).

The theory of justice is a framework that aims to learn the procedures of service recovery as a base to understand the process and the output or outcome. The theory of justice appears as a dominant theoretical analysis in the service recovery context (Tax et al., 1998). The evaluation of customer perception on the fairness aspect of service recovery is determined by three factors: the outcome, procedural justice, and interactional treatment (Goodwin and Ross, 1992; Smith et al., 1999; Tax et al., 1998).

The relation between justice perception and customer affection from several years ago has been concluded that justice perception can affect customer affection positively (Chebat and Slusarczyk, 2005; Cheung and To, 2016; DeWitt et al., 2008; Jung and Seock, 2017; Matos et al., 2009; Wu et al., 2018; Yim et al., 2008). On the other hand, the other researches are done by Roschk et al. (2013) and Choi and Choi (2014) have asserted that no effects occur between the justice perception and customer affection. The inconsistency of this research finding attracts the recent researcher to research other variables, which are predicted to explain the relation of variables. Meanwhile, a lot of researches have investigated service failure and service recovery. Most previous studies focused on customer

satisfaction as the key variable to measure customer loyalty (Harris et al., 2006; Maxham, 2001; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; Stauss, 2010).

The customer satisfaction that has been examined in the context of service failure and service recovery most of them are related to the cognitive aspect which comes from the customer behavior as expectations, disconfirmations, and justice perception (Harris et al., 2006; Mccoll-Kennedy et al., 2003; Smith et al., 1999; Wirtz and Mattila, 2003). Although the satisfaction towards the service recovery is an essential factor in assuring customer loyalty, according to this literature, this literature may not be able to identify the role of customer emotional response in the service failure and service recovery (Chebat and Slusarczyk, 2005; DeWitt et al., 2008; Namkung and Jang, 2010; Weiss et al., 1999). Weiss et al. (1999) have argued that the rise of emotional responses as happiness, guilty feeling, and anger is due to service recovery procedures applied to the customer. Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005) have also stated that the justice perception can affect the emotional response, which in its turn, it will affect loyalty.

This study provides supporting evidence regarding Tax et al. (1998) statement that complaint handling strategies are essential in maintaining or managing relationships with consumers, especially in the service sector. The results of this study are expected to provide an overview of the handling of public complaints on Xxx Hospital services. As information to service providers to formulate management strategies to improve health quality services to meet community expectations.

Based on those explanations of empirical studies and existing phenomena found on the service provision in Xxx Hospital, this research aims to identify the effects of justice perception on loyalty through customer affection. Further, the dimension of justice perception has consisted of distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Justice Perception

The justice perception is a construction of three dimensions. They are distributive justice, interac-

tional justice, and procedural justice (Homburg and Fürst, 2005; Tax et al., 1998). The distributive justice concerns a perceived justice for the effort of service recovery, for example, discount, money refund, compensation, etc. next, the procedural justice is related to a perceived justice from the procedures which aim to perform the service recovery. The time response and speed of complaint handling are the significant aspects of procedural justice (Tax et al., 1998). Last, interactional justice refers to a behavior given during the customer dealing or treatment, which covers the following elements: politeness, honesty, and effort to deal with the customer by the service officer during the service recovery process.

Customer Affection

To explore the previous research findings, this recent research argues that customer affection must be considered in the study of service failure and service recovery. It is different from Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005), Dewitt et al. (2008), and Choi and Choi (2014), who have proposed a relation between the customer affection and justice perception before the relation between emotional responses and justice perception. Customer affection reflects a relation of affection built through a series of experiences from profitable experience (Yim et al., 2008). When the customer's affection for the company is built, it functions as an emotional bond that can maintain the relationship between the customer and company (Young, 2006).

Loyalty

In this research, the concept of customer loyalty refers to a theoretical framework that aims to understand the basic concept and measurement indicator of customer loyalty. Prior studies clearly show the role of service recovery in ensuring customer loyalty (Blodgett et al., 1997; Maxham, 2001; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; Smith et al., 1999). Sheth and Mittal (2004) have defined customer loyalty as a customer commitment to a particular brand. This literature suggests that successful recovery efforts strengthen a customer relationship (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; Tax et al., 1998), while poor

recovery attempts intensify the negative effects of failures (Blodgett et al., 1997). Tax et al. (1998) also noted that when retailers recover successfully from failures, customers feel a greater sense of trust and are more likely to patronize the service providers in the future and to share their positive experiences with others.

The Sample

This research was conducted at xxx Hospital Malang using a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection using Google Forms distributed via email and cell phone numbers recorded in the Hospital Medical Record. The research population covered the patients or families who have complained about service failure that they have in the hospital. This data was based on the data from the public relation of Xxx Hospital in 2018. The total sample was 232 respondents who had been selected through the saturated sampling method. The following is a description of the characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, gender, education, and occupation of the respondents.

Table 1. Characteristics Sample

Characteristics	Total	%
Age distribution		
18 - 20	129	55,6
21 - 30	39	16,8
31 - 40	53	22,8
41 - 50	6	2,6
≥ 51	5	2,2
Gender		
Men	122	52,6
Women	110	47,4
Education		
Diploma	48	20,7
Bachelor	115	49,6
Master	46	19,8
Doctor	23	9,9
Profession		
Student	60	25,9
Bureaucrat	40	17,2
Private employee	77	33,2
Entrepreneur	37	15,9

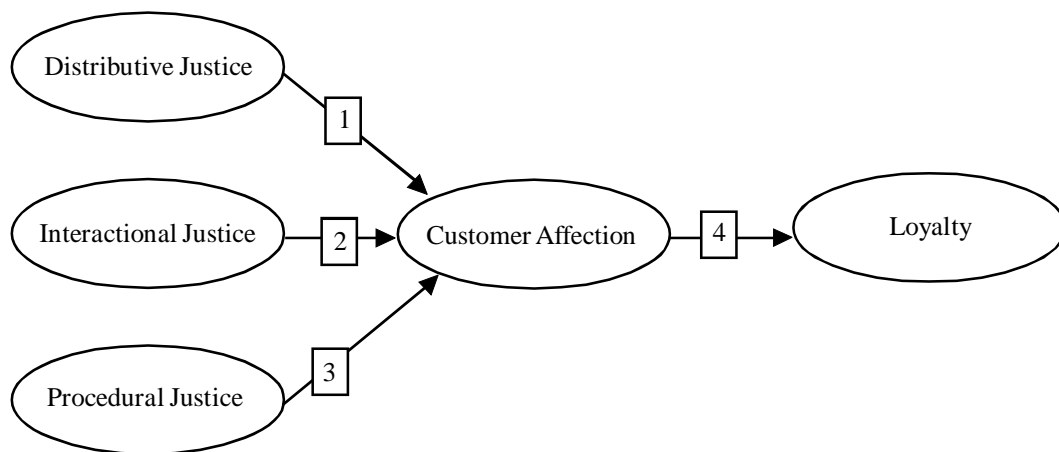


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Justice Perception and Customer Affection

Previous research has stated that the justice perception from service recovery is one of the main

factors used by consumers to evaluate a company's service performance (Tax et al., 1998). Justice perception is a three-dimensional construction, including distributive justice, interactional justice, and pro-

cedural justice (Homburg and Fürst, 2005; Tax et al., 1998). Distributive justice focuses on the perceived fairness of recovery efforts results such as compensation, discounts, refunds, credit/installment payments, etc. Procedural justice is related to perceived justice in terms of procedures where recovery efforts are carried out. Timeliness and speed in handling complaints (Tax et al., 1998). Interactional justice refers to how customers are treated, which includes elements such as respect, politeness, and efforts in dealing with customers by service personnel during the service recovery process. Some emotions are triggered by perceptions of fairness (Weiss et al., 1999). Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005) and DeWitt et al. (2008) showed that justice perception from service recovery efforts had a significant effect on positive emotions and negative emotions, which in turn affected loyalty. In an effort to develop previous research, this study argues that customer affection should be considered in the study of service failure and recovery efforts. Therefore,

- H1:** The perception of distributive justice affects positively and significantly to the customer affection after the recovery from service failure.
- H2:** The perception of interactional justice affects positively and significantly to the customer affection after the recovery from service failure.
- H3:** The perception of procedural justice affects positively and significantly to the customer affection after the recovery from service failure.

Customer Affection and Loyalty

Companies often fail to build strong customer loyalty because they cannot create a strong love bond with their customers (Fournier, 1998; Yim et al., 2008). Therefore, fostering a sense of customer love with a company or brand is very important in building customer loyalty (Choi and Choi, 2014). Therefore,

- H4:** Customer affection affects positively and significantly the loyalty after recovery for service failure.

Mediation Effect

Customer satisfaction and affection have an essential role in building loyalty to the brand. Customer

affection is distinct from satisfaction in its nature, formation, and effect (Oliver, 1980; Thompson et al., 2005; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Firms often fail to build strong customer loyalty because they cannot create strong affectionate ties with their customers (Fournier et al., 1998). Previous research in interpersonal relationships also suggests that emotional attachment such as affection is likely to forgive the mishaps committed by the partners and help a couple remain loyal to the relationship. Schoefer and Diamantopoulos (2008) investigate the role of emotions in translating perceptions of justice into subsequent post-complaint behaviors. Results support that emotions mediate the relationship between perceived justice and post-complaint behaviors. That emotions and trust have important mediating roles during the service recovery (DeWitt et al., 2008). In a similar vein, Varela-Neira et al. (2008) suggest that emotions indirectly affect overall satisfaction through cognitive evaluations of the recovery process. Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005) examine how positive and negative emotions mediate the effects of justice on loyalty in a retail banking context. Results indicate that interactional justice plays a predominant role, distributive justice affects the behavior through the symmetrical mediating effects of negative and positive emotions, and procedural justice has asymmetric effects on emotions and behavior. Choi and Choi (2014) When customers believe the outcome is greater than or equal to their expectations, positive affection is likely to occur, thus enhancing the customer's emotional tie with the firm. Extending the line of research, In this study, customer affection is an intervening variable that mediates the effect of distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice to the loyalty. To test the significance of this indirect effect, Therefore,

- H5:** Customer affection will mediate the effect of perception of distributive justice on loyalty.
- H6:** Customer affection will mediate the effect of perception of interactional justice on loyalty.
- H7:** Customer affection will mediate the effect of perception of procedural justice on loyalty.

METHOD

This research applied a quantitative approach and was included in an explanatory research design. The study was conducted by distributing the questionnaire to the patients who have submitted complaints in 2018 and received complaint handling from Xxx Hospital. The total respondents were 232 patients. Furthermore, this research used a non-probability sampling method, while the population and sample determination were saturated sampling. The data was measured on a Likert scale and then analyzed through SmartPLS 3.0 version.

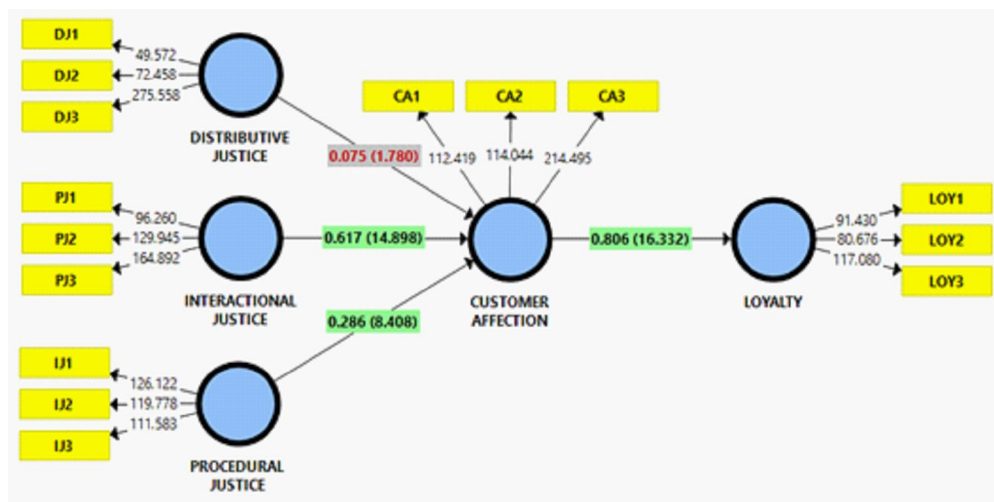
RESULTS

Based on the result of path analysis from each variable, this research showed the determinant coefficient (R^2), which would be displayed in Table 2 below:

Table 2. The Result of Determinant Coefficient (R^2)

Variable	Determinant Coefficient (R^2)
Customer Affection	0,685
Loyalty	0,649

Source: The result of data analysis in SmartPLS 3.0 (2020)



After identifying the determinant coefficient (R^2), the next step was to calculate Q-square of predictive relevance:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q^2 &= 1 - (1 - R^2) (1 - R^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0,685) (1 - 0,649) \\
 &= 1 - (0,315) (0,351) \\
 &= 1 - 0,11057 \\
 &= 0,88944
 \end{aligned}$$

The researcher concluded that this research model was categorized into a solid model based on the calculation result. It was meant that approximately 88,945 loyalty variables could be predicted by justice perception and customer affection vari-

ables. The rest, 11,06%, could be explained by the other variables that were not included in this research model.

The analysis result of the direct effect hypothesis test in Table 2 indicated that the first hypothesis was rejected or disapproved. It referred that the distributive justice did not significantly affect the customer affection, since t-statistics value $< 1,96$ and p-value $< 0,05$. The other three hypotheses indicated that the result of t-statistics value $> 1,96$ and p-value $< 0,05$; in other words, the three hypotheses were approved. Then, it could be summed up that interactional justice and procedural justice could affect the customer affection, which the customer affection could also affect loyalty.

Table 3. The Analysis Result of Direct Effect Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Relation Among Variables		Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Explanation
	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable				
H1	<i>Distributive justice</i>	<i>Customer affection</i>	0.075	1.780	0.076	Not Significant
H2	<i>Interactional justice</i>		0.617	14.898	0.000	Significant
H3	<i>Procedural justice</i>		0.286	8.408	0.000	Significant
H4	<i>Customer affection</i>	<i>Loyalty</i>	0.806	16.332	0.000	Significant

Table 4. The Analysis Result of Indirect Effect Hypothesis Test

Hypothesized Path	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Result
DJ → CA → LOY	0.060	0.034	1.782	0.075	Not Significant
IJ → CA → LOY	0.497	0.047	10.661	0.000	Significant
PJ → CA → LOY	0.231	0.031	7.328	0.000	Significant

Based on the table above, first, Customer affection cannot mediate the effect of distributive justice on loyalty (p value = $0,075 > 0,05$). Second, interactional justice has a significantly impact on customer affection (mediator), and customer affection also significantly influences loyalty (p value = $0,000 < 0,05$). Finally, procedural justice significantly impact on customer affection (mediator), and customer affection also significantly influences loyalty (p value = $0,000 < 0,05$).

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Distributive Justice on the Customer Affection

This research finding showed that distributive justice did not significantly affect customer affection. In other words, the distributive justice that the customer has perceived after they got recovery for the service failure could not affect the customer's affection to the hospital directly. This research finding was not in line with the previous studies done by Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005), DeWitt et al. (2008), Yim et al. (2008), Matos et al. (2009), Cheung and To (2016), Jung and Seock (2017), Wu et al. (2018). Overall, those previous studies asserted that the di-

rect effect relation between distributive justice and customer affection was significant. Blodgett et al. (1997) in Kau and Loh (2006) stated that distributive justice significantly affected customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth. Smith et al. (1999) also referred that the company's willingness seriously intended to handle the service failure. Thus, the customer would certainly expect compensation for their loss.

This research result followed the research done by Choi and Choi (2014). They said that the customer perceived distributive justice did not significantly affect the customer's affection. However, distributive justice would significantly affect the customer affection if only the service failure situation were very great or complex. This result implied that all forms of compensation or retribution as money refunds, etc. were possible if those steps were needed and provided by the hospital. It aimed to recover the perception of distributive justice and customer affection, particularly in the higher level of service failure.

The result of frequency distribution on respondent answers towards the question items of distributive justice showed that 56,9% of respondents

agreed that Xxx Hospital had offered the service reimbursement or compensation, reward in the form of special service and written apology as the consequence of service failure. But, this research finding represented that all forms of compensation that Xxx Hospital has offered were not able yet to reach the customer affection. Therefore, to improve the customer's affection for the service product, the hospital must develop the customer's perception of justice value, especially related to money refund, discount, reward, and other compensations. However, this research finding showed that the effect of distributive justice was not significant. This result was impacted by the research object, the hospital patient. Thus, the justice perception rarely occurred, which connected to the strategies of money refund, discount, or reward, and other compensations which the customer would perceive. This condition caused the distributive justice was not highly effective to the customer affection.

The Effect of Interactional Justice on the Customer Affection

Another finding in this research found that interactional justice could positively and significantly affect customer affection. This research finding was in line with the research findings done by Choi and Choi (2014), which said that procedural justice and interactional justice could significantly affect customer affection, except for distributive justice. In their research finding, DeWitt et al. (2008) have also stated that the justice perception could have a significant effect on positive emotion and negative emotion.

The interactional justice was focused on the interaction treatment between customer and officer during the service process. In the previous researches, they have indicated that the apology from the officer (company management) delivered a close connection between the customer perception and interactional justice (Smith et al., 1999). The interactional justice which the customer must perceive resulted in the following important statements: first, the customer wants to be treated honestly. Second, The customer wants to be treated respectably. Third, The customer wants to perceive maximal effort from

the service provider. Finally, the customer wants to get attention and care from the service provider. Thus, to improve the customer affection on Xxx Hospital, it needed the hospital treatment to the patient, which prioritized honesty, respect, and maximal effort to serve the patient. The patient should always get attention and care from the hospital.

The Effect of Procedural Justice on the Customer Affection

The next finding showed that procedural justice could affect positively and significantly customer affection. This research finding was following the research finding stated by Matos et al. (2009), which indicated that the perceived justice could result in positive and significant effects on satisfaction and WOM. In their research, Jung and Seock (2017) have also concluded that perceived justice (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice) could significantly affect satisfaction.

Procedural justice was an attribute that focused on the justice that the customer must perceive when they submitted a complaint according to the rule and policies established in the company. Moreover, procedural justice consisted of supervision, decision control, accessibility, time punctuality, and flexibility to handle a customer complaint. The procedural justice which the customer must perceive has resulted in the following important statements: First, the customer expects that their complaint will be soon handled. Second, The customer expects the company to be flexible in the procedure. Then the recovery effort can be fitted to the situation of the customer. Finally, the customer expects clarity, quickness, and freedom from procedural obstacles. Thus, the customer affection of the patient would improve and the hospital management should always be able to handle the customer complaint well. The hospital should be flexible in the procedure and the patient could have clarity, quickness, and freedom from the procedural obstacles.

The Effect of Customer Affection on the Loyalty

The last research finding referred that customer affection could positively and significantly affect

loyalty. The customer affection reflected affection which could be built through a series of experiences from favorable interaction (Yim et al., 2008). When the customer's affection for the company was created, it functioned as an emotional bond that could maintain the relationship between the customer and company (Young, 2006). Therefore, to realize the customer's high emotional bond to the hospital, the hospital management must be able to improve the customer's affection for the hospital.

Mediation Effect Analysis

Interactional justice and procedural justice positively influence loyalty both directly (*H2*, *H3*) and indirectly (*H6*, *H7*). The current study shows that customer affection acts as a mediator between justice perception and loyalty. The direct effect between justice perception and loyalty is greater than the indirect effect between justice perception and loyalty intention mediated by customer affection (0.617 vs 0.497). The direct path between justice perception and loyalty is more likely expected than the indirect path between justice perception and loyalty mediated by customer affection.

The results of moderating effect analysis show that customer affection moderates the relationship between justice perception and loyalty. The perception of justice has a significant impact on loyalty only when there is an effort from the xxx hospital to focus on building positive emotion and particularly to increase customer affection. In the case of hospital service failure, ensuring distributive justice only may not be sufficient to enhance customer affection unless prioritized on honesty, respect, maximal effort to serve the patient, and the patient should always get attention and care from the hospital and hence interactional justice, and procedural justice is achieved. Service recovery may not need to include monetary compensation as ensuring interactional and procedural justice may be just enough to enhance customer affection. Most research on service failure and recovery has suggested satisfaction with service recovery as a solution to rebuild loyalty after service failures (Harris et al., 2006; Maxham, 2001; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002). Though there is no denying that satisfaction with recovery is a

critical factor in ensuring customer loyalty, recovery satisfaction may not be sufficient to help customers to remain loyal after a service failure. Recovery satisfaction mostly taps the cognitive components (i.e., expectations, disconfirmations, justice perception)

(Harris et al., 2006; Mccoll-Kennedy et al., 2003; Smith et al., 1999; Wirtz and Mattila, 2003). However, a service failure often evokes strong emotional responses from customers (e.g., angry, frustrated, irritated, etc.) and the affective responses have a significant influence on customers' evaluation of the organization's service recovery effort (Andreassen, 1999). Therefore, service recovery efforts are highly likely to affect customers' emotional ties with firms. Choi and Choi (2014) suggest that Enhancing customer affection in service recoveries is critical to engender loyalty. But given that loyalty also has other antecedents such as recovery satisfaction and trust (Yim et al., 2008), the xxx hospital should design the most effective way to enhance customer loyalty after managing customer affection.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the hypothesis testing, discussion result, and research finding, this research proposed these conclusions: First, distributive justice, which the customer has perceived, was not able yet to affect the customer affection to Xxx Hospital in a direct way. This result indicated that the service reimbursement, reward in the form of special service on a particular product, and official apology statement which has been given to the customer were not always able to increase justice and customer affection to the hospital. Second, The procedural justice that the customer from Xxx Hospital has perceived could affect the customer affection directly. Further, the customer could have clarity regarding SOP, the high speed, and flexibility of complaint handling practice according to the customer expectation and justice. Third, The interactional justice that the customer from Xxx Hospital has perceived could affect the customer affection directly. In addition, the aspects of empathy, honesty, communication, respect or politeness, apology, and right

explanation became the justice for the customer. And last, customer affection was able to directly affect loyalty to Xxx Hospital. The customer confidence in justice perception, which Xxx Hospital than other competitors has offered, could result in deep positive emotions and bound feelings with Xxx Hospital. Therefore, the appearance of a stronger feeling could affect the customer loyalty to the hospital.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research finding and conclusions that have been asserted in the previous section, the researcher could suggest to the next researchers and management of Xxx Hospital: for the next similar researches, it needed to re-explore the research variables which might be able to affect the customer affection and loyalty directly on similar research object or other hospitals, for instance, the customer satisfaction, revisit intention, WOM, and other aspects. The next researches should also be done by developing the research model and using samples with different characteristics.

It was important for the management of Xxx Hospital to be fair to all sorts of patients in order to raise higher customer affection and loyalty to the hospital. The good interaction between the officer and customer during the complaint handling process must be well-maintained. Moreover, interactional kindness could produce a significant effect to realize customer affection. The continuous improvement regarding customer complaint handling procedure should be customer-oriented and give easy access to the customer to submit their complaints and a clear period of complaint handling.

The management of Xxx Hospital should be consistent and keep developing activities that could improve the customer affection for the customer of health service users since this strategy raised the relation quality, which would be a significant aspect of building customer loyalty to the hospital.

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