

## Managing Emotions In Ongoing Service Relationships: New Intrinsic And Extrinsic Emotion Regulation Strategies

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the factors influencing the satisfaction of customer and customer loyalty in the fast food restaurant industry. A theoretical model, including hypotheses, has been proposed in this study. Data were assembled using convenient sampling method. The hypothesized model was verified with the data from 204 respondents. Principal component analysis and structural equation modeling approach were applied to analyze data. The results (significant at  $p < 0.01$  and  $p < 0.05$ ) exhibited that food quality, price and service qualities were positively linked to customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction was positively associated with customer loyalty. The empirical results found a contrary association between the location and environment of restaurant and customer satisfaction. Customer loyalty studies generally indicate that fast-food customers are not genuinely loyal to brands or products mainly because they function under low-switching cost conditions. The purpose of this research is to empirically study whether fast-food customers genuinely become loyal and, if so, how. The study adopts the theory and method of the satisfaction-trust-commitment-loyalty explanation chain and examines the consumer survey results obtained under conditions of low-switching costs. Analyses of the results indicate that the proposed relationships provide appropriate explanatory power for the phenomenon at hand and that fast-food customers truly become loyal despite conditions of low switching costs. The findings and the research and practical implications are thoroughly discussed.

## INTRODUCTION

Managing emotions in the workplace can be difficult for many people, especially in service contexts where employees are required to display certain emotions while serving customers, a concept

known as emotional labor (ER). However, the study of ER in ongoing service relationships is still in its early stages and the unique ER strategies used by employees in these relationships, as well as whether service relationships limit or enrich the choices of ER strategies, have not yet been established. The purpose of this study is to expand on workplace ER theories by gaining a better understanding of the ER strategies used in ongoing service relationships.

To do this, we have chosen to focus on the residential aged care context, as eldercare services often involve high emotional demands and a variety of employee-client relationships that are shaped by cultural norms and values. Managing emotions in these long-term relationships goes beyond displaying a smile and requires deeper emotional involvement with clients and their families.

Employees in aged care, for example, must manage their own emotions as well as those of their clients, including stress, worry, frustration, and grief, particularly during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The use of effective ER strategies is critical for enhancing employee well-being and service quality, as well as attracting and retaining a qualified and sustainable workforce, especially during a global pandemic when mental health challenges, long-term staffing shortages, and high staff turnover are particularly salient.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **RESEARCH GAP**

The research gap in managing emotions in ongoing service relationships lies in understanding contextual nuances, temporal dynamics, and the role of technology, while also exploring cross-cultural perspectives, employee emotions, and ethical considerations. The role of technology in service relationships is also an important factor to consider, as it can both facilitate and hinder emotional connections between service providers and customers.

### **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Managing emotions in service relationships is crucial to business success. Service interactions are inherently emotional experiences, and understanding how emotions are perceived, expressed, and managed can significantly impact the quality of these relationships. Effective emotional management can lead to enhanced customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. In today's highly competitive marketplace, where customer experience is a significant differentiator, businesses must grasp the intricacies of emotional dynamics to stay ahead.

With the increasing reliance on technology in service delivery, understanding the role of digital tools in responding to customer emotions is crucial. Cultural diversity must also be considered, as emotional expressions and management strategies can vary significantly across cultures. Furthermore, the emotional well-being of employees is vital, as their emotional state can directly impact customer interactions and overall service quality.

Moreover, ethical considerations such as the authenticity of emotional displays and the potential for emotional manipulation underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of emotional management in ongoing service relationships. Therefore, research in this area is essential for developing effective strategies that promote positive emotional experiences for both customers and

service providers. By focusing on emotional management, businesses can create long-lasting relationships with customers and set themselves apart from competitors.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

##### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Understand how intrinsic motivations and extrinsic factors shape satisfaction in service interactions. Manage emotions when intrinsic motivations conflict with extrinsic factors in service relationships. Consider implications for service delivery strategies.

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is a rational, systematic plan developed to direct a research activity. This is an attempt to find out more. Research is the process of applying scientific methods to analyze a natural or social event to find new information and correlate it with previously known information. Research design can be defined as the analytical approach and the strategies that is used in guiding the research project is known as research design.

#### **RESEARCH TYPE: Descriptive in Nature**

##### **SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:**

To study emotional management in ongoing service relationships, a stratified sampling technique is effective. The population is divided into subgroups based on relevant criteria such as demographics or service industry. Random sampling ensures representation and reduces bias. Purposive sampling targets specific subsets of customers, such as those with varying emotional engagement levels.

#### **DATA COLLECTION METHODS:**

##### **Primary Data:**

Data on managing emotions in service relationships is collected through surveys, interviews, and observations. Surveys gather quantitative data while interviews allow for in-depth exploration of emotional dynamics. Observations offer real-time insights. These methods facilitate effective emotional management strategies.

##### **Secondary Data:**

The data analysis provides valuable insights into emotional dynamics in ongoing service relationships. It allows researchers to explore historical data and trends, which can inform research questions, hypothesis development, and theoretical frameworks. Overall, secondary data sources offer a rich foundation for understanding and managing emotions in ongoing service relationships.

Population: 100

SAMPLE SIZE: 50

SAMPLE UNIT: Kompally

##### **QUESTIONNAIRE:**

A structured questionnaire is used for gathering the data. Multiple choice are used in the survey.

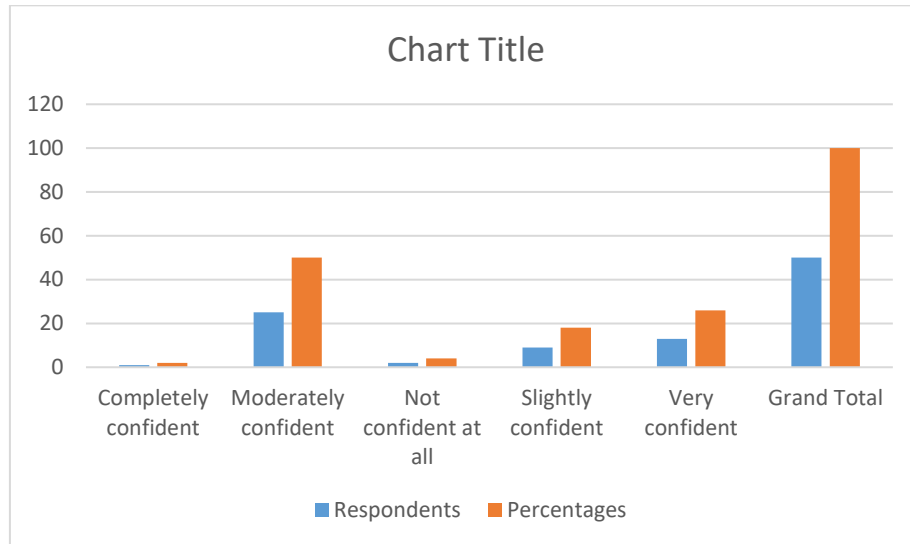
TOOLS USED: Google forms, Microsoft Excel, Charts, Bar graphs and Chi-square test.

#### **HYPOTHESIS**

H0: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of managing emotions in ongoing service relationships when implementing new intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies.

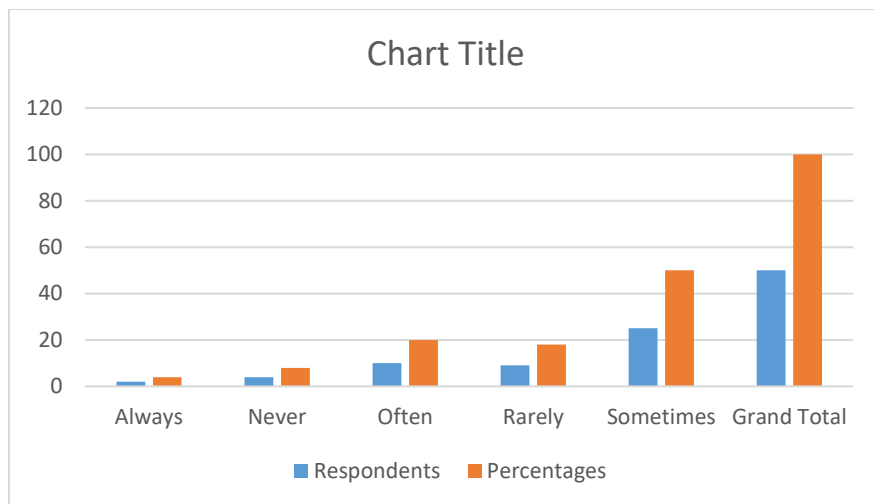
H1: There is a significant improvement in the effectiveness of managing emotions in ongoing service relationships when implementing new intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies.

| How confident are you in your ability to regulate your emotions during ongoing service interactions? | Completely confident | Moderately confident | Not confident at all | Slightly confident | Very confident | Grand Total |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Respondents                                                                                          | 1                    | 25                   | 2                    | 9                  | 13             | 50          |
| Percentages                                                                                          | 2                    | 50                   | 4                    | 18                 | 26             | 100         |



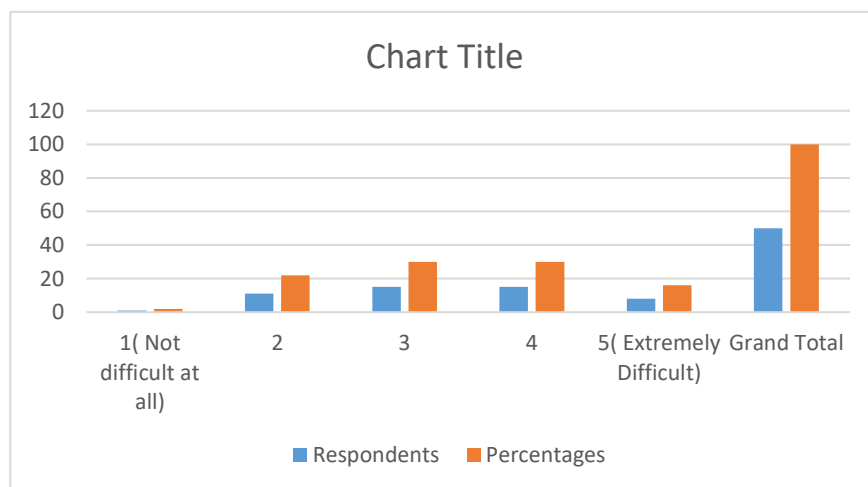
Interpretation: Most people are moderately confident enough to regulate their emotions during ongoing service interactions with 50%.

| When experiencing heightened Ongoing emotions during service encounters, how often do you engage in problem-solving behaviours to address the root cause of the emotional response? | Always | Never | Often | Rarely | Sometimes | Grand Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|-------------|
| Respondents                                                                                                                                                                         | 2      | 4     | 10    | 9      | 25        | 50          |
| Percentages                                                                                                                                                                         | 4      | 8     | 20    | 18     | 50        | 100         |



Interpretation: Majority of the respondents are 50% of sometimes engage in service encounters, with a significant portion occasionally resorting to problem-solving.

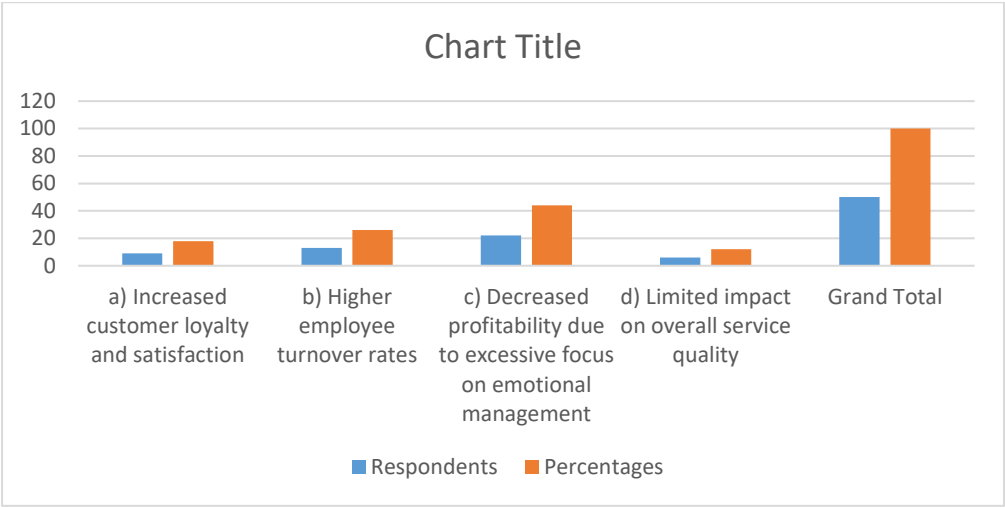
| On a scale of 1 to 5, how difficult do you find it to regulate your emotions during ongoing service relationships? | 1( Not difficult at all) | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5( Extremely Difficult) | Grand Total |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----|----|----|-------------------------|-------------|
| Respondents                                                                                                        | 1                        | 11 | 15 | 15 | 8                       | 50          |
| Percentages                                                                                                        | 2                        | 22 | 30 | 30 | 16                      | 100         |



Interpretation: While a significant portion 60% of respondents find it moderately to extremely difficult to regulate their emotions during ongoing service relationships, a minority 2% perceive it as not difficult at all.

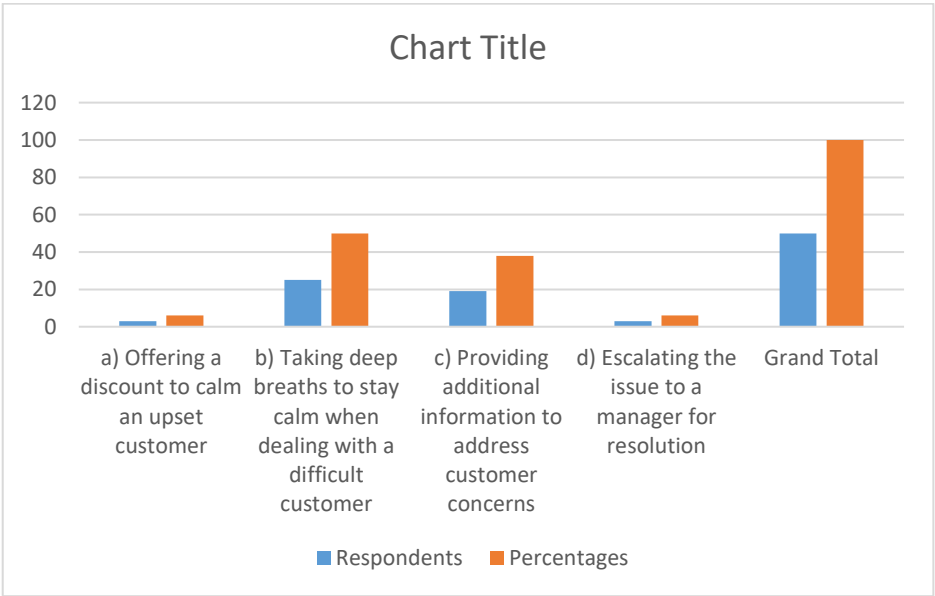
| In the context of ongoing service relationships, which of the following is a potential benefit of utilizing both intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies? | a) Increased customer loyalty and satisfaction | b) Higher employee turnover rates | c) Decreased profitability due to excessive focus on emotional management | d) Limited impact on overall service quality | Grand Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Respondents                                                                                                                                                             | 9                                              | 13                                | 22                                                                        | 6                                            | 50          |

|             |    |    |    |    |     |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Percentages | 18 | 26 | 44 | 12 | 100 |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|-----|



Interpretation: Combining intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies in ongoing service relationships can boost customer loyalty and satisfaction 44%, potentially with limited impact on service quality 18%.

| Which of the following is an example of an intrinsic emotion regulation strategy in a service relationship? | a) Offering a discount to calm an upset customer | b) Taking deep breaths to stay calm when dealing with a difficult customer | c) Providing additional information to address customer concerns | d) Escalating the issue to a manager for resolution | Grand Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Respondents                                                                                                 | 3                                                | 25                                                                         | 19                                                               | 3                                                   | 50          |
| Percentages                                                                                                 | 6                                                | 50                                                                         | 38                                                               | 6                                                   | 100         |



Interpretation: Most of the respondents are 50% are taking deep breaths as a typical example of an internal emotion regulation strategy while dealing with a difficult customer, among other choices extrinsic methods are most represented by the rest.

### STATISTICAL TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

H0: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of managing emotions in ongoing service relationships when implementing new intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies.

H1: There is a significant improvement in the effectiveness of managing emotions in ongoing service relationships when implementing new intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies.

| Never         | Rarely          | Sometimes      | Often         | Always          | Row Totals      |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Male          | 2 (1.44) [0.22] | 1(1.08) [0.01] | 3(3.24)[0.02] | 6(5.76)[0.01]   | 6(6.48)[0.04]   |
| Female        | 2(2.56) [0.12]  | 2(1.92) [0.00] | 6(5.76)[0.01] | 10(10.24)[0.01] | 12(11.52)[0.02] |
| Column Totals | 4               | 3              | 9             | 16              | 18              |

The chi-square statistic is 0.4485. The  $p$ -value is .978317. The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$ .

Since  $p$  value is less than 0.05, H0 Rejected and Accept H1. So, there is a significant improvement in the effectiveness of managing emotions in ongoing service relationships when implementing new intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies.

| RESULT        |                 |                 |                 |                  |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
|               | Never           | Rarely          | Sometimes       | Often            | Always          |
| Below 25      | 2 (3.20) [0.20] | 1(2.40) [0.82]  | 7(7.20)[0.01]   | 14 (12.80)[0.11] | 16(14.40)[0.18] |
| 25-35         | 1 (0.40) [0.90] | 1 (0.30) [1.63] | 1 (0.90) [0.01] | 1 (1.60) [0.23]  | 1 (1.80) [0.36] |
| Above 35      | 1(0.40) [0.90]  | 1 (0.30) [1.63] | 1(0.90)[0.01]   | 1(1.60)[0.23]    | 1(1.80)[0.36]   |
| Column Totals | 4               | 3               | 9               | 16               | 18              |

The chi-square statistic is 7.8125. The  $p$ -value is .451997. The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$

### FINDINGS

Majority of the people neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current strategies for ongoing emotions which is 58%.

Most people are moderately confident enough to regulate their emotions during ongoing service interactions with 50%.

Majority of the respondents are 50% of sometimes engage in service encounters, with a significant portion occasionally resorting to problem-solving.

While a significant portion 60% of respondents find it moderately to extremely difficult to regulate their emotions during ongoing service relationships, a minority 2% perceive it as not difficult at all.

Combining intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation strategies in ongoing service relationships can boost customer loyalty and satisfaction 44%, potentially with limited impact on service quality 18%.

Most of the respondents are 50% are taking deep breaths as a typical example of an internal emotion regulation strategy while dealing with a difficult customer, among other choices extrinsic methods are most represented by the rest.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- Conduct courses, training or training sessions to inform service providers and clients of effective techniques in emotion regulation.
- Include training on emotional intelligence in the induction program of service providers such that they understand the importance of showing empathy and support towards the clients.

These strategies focus on empowering people to learn how to deal with their emotions and thus meet many of the needs in a service relationship independently. Encouraging clients to engage in activities that promote emotional well-being, such as mindfulness exercises or self-reflection practices, creates a sense of control and efficacy that is related to managing one's feelings independently. By providing intrinsic strategies in addition to extrinsic interventions, service providers can facilitate approaches that have been shown to pay homage to the diverse emotional needs of clients, thereby strengthening the base of the service relationship and thus benefiting both parties from an emotional perspective.

## **CONCLUSION**

Intrinsic strategies involve the empowerment of the individual in internal recognition and modulation of their emotions. Encouraging clients in mindfulness techniques, deep breathing, or journaling can develop self-awareness and emotional control. Empowering clients with these tools allows them to navigate the complexity of their emotions autonomously, giving them a sense of control and empowerment.

Complementing these intrinsic techniques, extrinsic strategies provide shaping of the external environment to promote emotional well-being. Service providers may create feedback mechanisms that allow the expression of emotions and concerns to be enacted in an open and transparent manner. This promotes the timely resolution of issues, which demonstrate attentiveness and empathy, the ingredients of trust and satisfaction.

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