Research Article **Open Access**

Alei (Aileen) Fan, Hubert B. Van Hoof*, Sandra Pesantez Loyola, Sebastián Calle Lituma, Marlene Jaramillo Granda

The impact of other customers and gender on consumer complaint behaviour in the Ecuadorian restaurant setting

DOI 10.1515/ejthr-2016-0003
received June 25, 2015; accepted October 5, 2015

Abstract: Customer complaint behaviour, in response to service failures, has been shown to vary based on numerous factors, such as the nature of the service encounter, the setting, culture, gender and the presence of others. The gender-based study reported in this paper demonstrates the impact of two of these factors, i.e. the presence of others and gender, on the intent of Ecuadorian customers to voice their complaints about service failures in a restaurant setting. Employing a theoretical framework of impression management and cultural orientation, and with specific reference to Hofstede's work on cultural differences, this study found that Ecuadorian customers were less likely to complain in the presence of other customers than when they were alone. Impression management and concern for others were shown to be more significant among women than men. Women were found to be more motivated to manage their public image and create positive impressions in other people's minds, leading to less intent to complain in the presence of other customers than when they were alone. Male customers, on the other hand, exhibited less concern for others and did not show any significant difference in their complaint intentions, whether they were alone or in the presence of others.

Keywords: Customer complaint behaviour, Impression management, Cultural orientation, Gender, Ecuador.

***Corresponding author: Hubert B. Van Hoof,** Penn State School of Hospitality Management, 219 Mateer Building, University Park, PA 16802, USA, E-mail: hbv1@psu.edu.
Alei (Aileen) Fan, Penn State School of Hospitality Management, University Park, PA 16802, USA
Sandra Pesantez Loyola, Marlene Jaramillo Granda, Facultad de Ciencias de la Hospitalidad
Universidad de Cuenca, Ecuador
Sebastián Calle Lituma, Departamento de Turismo, Universidad del Azuay, Cuenca Ecuador

1 Introduction

Customer complaint behaviours have been well studied and documented in the service literature (e.g., Day et al., 1981; Singh, 1988, 1990a, 1990b; Bodey and Grace, 2006; Lin and Mattila, 2006; Mattila and Ro, 2008; Mattila, Cho, and Ro, 2009; Gelbrich and Roschk, 2010; Wan, Hui, and Wye, 2011;Vaerenbergh et al., 2014). However, most of this research was conducted in the United States and in Western Europe, and more recently was extended into Asia for cross-cultural comparison purposes (e.g., Mattila and Patterson, 2004a, 2004b; Chan and Wan, 2008; Zhang, Beatty, and Walsh, 2008; Chan, Wan, and Sin, 2009; Kim, Wen, and Doh, 2010; Wan, 2013). Very little research has been done on the topic in the South American setting (for an exception, see Valenzuela et al., 2005). In order to fill this gap in research and to make a contribution to the theory on consumer complaint behaviour in the hospitality setting, in particular, the current study was conducted among restaurant customers in Ecuador, a country recognised not only for its masculine cultural tendencies but even more so for its extreme levels of collectivism (www.geert-hofstede.com).

Culture refers to a group of people identified by a shared history, values and patterns (Lindsey, 2009). The best-known cultural framework is Hofstede's (1980, 2001) five-dimensional structure: individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, long-term vs. short-term orientation, power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede defines culture as 'the collective mental programming of the human mind which distinguishes on group of people from another' (www.geert-hofstede.com).

Among the five cultural dimensions, the most frequently investigated in service research is the comparison between individualism and collectivism (Triandis, 1994). In Hofstede's culture index (www.geert-hofstede.com), Ecuador is described to be having one of the most collectivistic cultures in the world, scoring a low 8 on the individualism index, while the United States and the United Kingdom score as high as 91 and 89 by comparison. Compared with individualists, who tend to be more self-focused and independent, collectivists tend to have more interdependent self-construal levels: they tend to be more sensitive to the needs of others (Chan, Wan, and Sin, 2009) and try to maintain a harmonious atmosphere around them.

Previous research has shown that a society's individualist-collectivist orientation influences people's complaint behaviours (Liu, Furrer, and Sudharshan, 2001; Liu and McClure, 2001), and thus this study was conceived based on the belief that customer complaint behaviour in Ecuador, because of its extreme position on the individualism-collectivism rating scale, might be significantly different from that of consumers in the United States and Western Europe, where the majority of the research on the customer complaint behaviour topic has been conducted so far.

This study, which was primarily gender-based, used impression management theory as its theoretical basis for discussion. Impression management refers to the process by which people attempt to control the images that others form of them (Leary and Kowalski, 1990; Schlenker and Weigold, 1992; Baumeister, 1998). After a review of the relevant theory on the topic, this article presents a discussion of the study methodology and its outcomes before highlighting its contributions to the theory and its practical implications.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 The social presence of other customers and impression management

As social psychology indicates, 'self' is not a single concept; it is a multi-faceted concept, which includes 'private self' and 'public self.' 'Private self' refers to how people know and understand themselves. 'Public self' is people's perception of how they are seen by other people (Baumeister, 1998). People may have a relatively stable self-concept and exhibit consequent behavioural codes that are chronically accessible, but they may also have multiple selves and their behaviours are activated by various social factors and may vary in different social situations (Aaker, 1999; Mandel, 2003; Zhang and Mittal, 2007; Alden, He, and Chen, 2010). Wyer and Gordon (1982) suggest that an individual presents himself/ herself differently based on his/her different social roles (e.g. professor, customer, parent or friend) and in different situations (e.g. at work, in a restaurant, at home or at a party).

One of the most influential factors in social contexts is the presence of others (Dahl, Manchanda, and Argo, 2001; Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda, 2005; McFerran et al., 2010; Karaosmanoglu, Bas, and Zhang, 2011). Previous research has demonstrated that people's judgments and behaviours are shaped in part by the 'actual, imagined, or implied presence of others' (Allport, 1985). In a service context, in particular, the presence of other customers can greatly impact the focal consumer's service experience and the consequent evaluation of that experience (Miao, Mattila, and Mount, 2011). Furthermore, it can alter the consumer's responding attitudes and behaviours (Dahl, Manchanda, and Argo, 2001).

As it is human nature, people usually try to create certain desired impressions of themselves in the eyes of others, because the impressions they make on others have implications on how others perceive, evaluate and treat them, and on how they view themselves (Leary and Kowalski, 1990). People constantly monitor their own behaviours, aiming to gauge the impressions that others form of them in order to ensure that their 'public selves' remain intact. This process is referred to as 'impression management' (Schlenker and Weigold, 1992) and it explains how people take actions to ensure that others see them the way in which they would like to be seen (Leary and Kowalski, 1990; Baumeister, 1998).

The impression management (or 'self-presentation') literature has been well established within the social psychology domain (e.g., Goffman, 1959; Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi, 1981). Goffman (1959) suggests that many social interactions may be influenced by each individual's need to effectively portray his or her desired 'self'; like an actor on a stage, a person may adopt behaviours, expressions or props that will communicate a desired role to a salient audience.

Puntoni and Tavassoli (2007) found that the social presence of others could lead to automatic activation of impression management behaviours, and that it therefore increases the accessibility of words and behaviours that are applicable to social desirability. Motivated to project a positive public self (Miller and Leary, 1992; Puntoni and Tavassoli, 2007), consumers usually refrain

from behaviours or activities that project negative images of themselves in public (Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda, 2005). People desire to make a good impression, and the fear of a negative evaluation becomes more salient when their behaviours are observed by others (Geen, 1989). Therefore, an important consequence of a social audience is how this influences the behaviours of consumers that are aimed at either making a good impression or avoiding a bad one (Geen, 1989).

Downstream or negative outcomes are likely to occur when one's social image is perceived as damaged in the eyes of others during a negative event (Dahl, Manchanda, and Argo, 2001; Webster et al., 2003; Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda, 2005; Wood and Hoeffler, 2013). In a service failure context (i.e. a negative event), complaint behaviours expressing negative emotions that reflect individual desires, such as anger, are discouraged and perceived as improper in collectivist cultures (Azuma, 1984; White and LeVine, 1986). In the culture literature, studies show that people from an individualist culture (e.g. United States and Western Europe) tend to have an independent self-construal (Singelis, 1994). Individualists are self-sufficient, autonomous and self-oriented (Hosted, 1980; Hui and Triandis, 1986; Markus and Kitayam, 1991; Triandis, 1994). In contrast, collectivists (e.g. China, Japan and Ecuador) tend to have a more interdependent self-construal and to view themselves as part of an encompassing social relationship (Hofstede, 1980; Hui and Triandis, 1986; Singelis, 1994; Triandis, 1994). Collectivists are other-oriented: the connection with others and fitting in a surrounding context are particularly important to them (Markus and Kitayam, 1991).

Based on the individualism-collectivism dichotomy, previous studies in service research have found that consumers in a collectivist culture are less likely to show their dissatisfaction with a service failure as compared to consumers in an individualist culture (Liu, Furrer, and Sudharshan, 2001; Liu and McClure, 2001; Zhang, Beatty, and Walsh, 2008) because of the collectivist consumers' concern for social others. Therefore, this study argues that, in order to maintain a positive public image and a good impression in front of others, consumers in a collectivist culture may not be willing to voice their dissatisfaction with a service failure when other customers are around, as compared to when they are alone. Thus, this study proposes the following:

> **H_1**: In the collectivist society of Ecuador, consumers are less likely to complain in the presence of other customers than when they are alone.

2.2 Gender

According to Stephens and Gwinner (1998), consumers' reactions to service failures are rooted in their cognitive processes and influenced by both external factors such as the presence of other customers, as described above, and on internal factors such as individual traits and characteristics (e.g. demographics, personality and attitudes). Mattila, Cho and Ro (2009) found that consumers' gender has an impact on their satisfaction towards service failure recovery. In a similar vein, the current study proposes that, in a collectivist culture, the presence of other customers will influence their voiced complaint intentions, and that such intentions will vary across the two genders.

According to Hofstede's guidelines on the masculinity index, a highly masculine society tends to be driven by competition, achievement and success. Alternatively, a feminist society tends to exhibit higher levels of care for others and for the enhancement of the quality of life (www.geert-hoftsede.com). Ecuadorian culture exhibits masculine tendencies, according to Hofstede: its score of 63 is not extreme (for example, Sweden by comparison scores a 4 and Japan a 95), yet it is sufficiently high to conclude that Ecuadorian culture is status-oriented, competitive and collectivist, rather than individualistic and caring. Competition is directed to members of other groups rather than towards members of one's own in-group. Ecuadorians tend to seek membership in groups that give them status and rewards and tend to sacrifice leisure for work (www.geert-hofstede.com).

One of the fundamental gender differences in social psychology reflects females' communal tendency versus males' agentic tendency (Wood and Eagly, 2012; Meyers-Levy and Loken, 2015). Communal-agentic theory suggests that females are characterised by communal goals, whereas males are characterised by agentic goals (Bakan, 1966). Communal goals reflect women's 'other-orientation', thus leading to nurturing attitudes and behaviours. In contrast, men's agentic goals elicit a greater concern for self and are associated with self-focus, self-assertion and competitiveness (Bakan, 1966; Broverman et al., 1972; Bem, 1974; Zhang, Feick, and Mittal, 2014).

Applying the female 'other-orientation' vs. the male 'self-focus' to the current context, this study proposed that female consumers pay more attention to others around them than males. Consequently, impression management in the social presence of others has a greater impact on females, which may lead them to behave differently in public as compared to in private. Males, on the other hand, tend to focus on their own feelings and experiences,

rather than think about others' opinions of them. Thus, the following hypotheses are posited:

H_2: In Ecuador, female consumers show less complaint intentions in the presence of other customers (vs. alone).

H_3: In Ecuador, male consumers show no significant difference in complaint intentions in the presence of other customers (vs. alone).

3 Methodology

To test the proposed hypotheses, a 2 (other customer: alone vs. coworker) by 2 (consumer gender: female vs. male) between-subject quasi-experiment was conducted. Quasi-experimental design is employed when certain variables cannot be manipulated (i.e. gender in this study). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two manipulated service failure scenarios and gender was measured.

3.1 Participants

The study employed a snowball sampling technique to collect the necessary number of participants. Twenty-five participants (who were asked to envision themselves consumers in a restaurant setting) were first recruited fromtwo universities in Cuenca, Ecuador and they were employed in the universities. Additional participants from the general population were referred to the survey by this first batch of participants. The final usable sample for the study was composed of 118 participants. The average age was 26 and the gender split was 43.2% female and 56.8% male. About 96.4% of the respondents indicated they had at least some form of college education.

3.2 Stimuli

The service experience employed in this study featured a hypothetical service failure in a casual dining restaurant. The context was chosen because of its relevance and familiarity to general consumers. The service failure and the social presence of other customers were manipulated through two different service failure scenarios.

Scenario 1: You decide to go out for a relaxing dinner *by yourself*. You enter the restaurant and are seated at the table. It takes the server 15 minutes to acknowledge that you are there. Once you place your order, you continue to wait patiently. The server never refills a drink for you and when the meal finally arrives, you realise that it is wrong. The server goes back to the kitchen and comes back with the correct order after 30 minutes or so.

Scenario 2: You decide to go out for a relaxing dinner *with your co-workers*. You enter the restaurant and are seated at the table. It takes the server 15 minutes to acknowledge that you and your co-workers are there. Once you and your co-workers place your orders, you continue to wait patiently. The server never refills drinks for you or your co-workers and when the meals finally arrive, you realise that they are wrong. The server goes back to the kitchen and comes back with the correct orders after 30 minutes or so.

In this study, co-workers were selected as the manipulation of 'other customers' to avoid the possible confounding effect caused by other types of manipulated 'other customers.' For example, if other customers were manipulated as family members, collectivist consumers might be more likely to complain as they might have fewer impression management concerns in front of intimate in-group members, or they might not complain because they would try to maintain a harmonious atmosphere with close family members around them (Fan, Mattila, and Zhao, 2015).

The scenarios and survey questions were initially written in English and then translated into Spanish by a native speaker of Spanish. After that they were back translated to English by two independent bilingual (English and Spanish) researchers and differences in syntax and meaning were addressed in the Spanish language version to ensure that it accurately reflected the original version in English (Brislin, 1970).

3.3 Measures

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two scenarios (alone or with co-workers). Next, they were directed to answer a questionnaire, consisting of several parts of questions. The questionnaire's first part captured consumers' complaint intentions. Questions were adapted from Singh's (1988) consumer complaint behaviour (CCB) scale. Three items were included: 'If I am in this scenario, I

will be likely to / be inclined to / definitely complain about the service failure' (Cronbach's α = .759). All questions were measured by 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

The realism of the scenario was also checked ('How realistic was the scenario you read?') with a 7-point Likert-type scale of 1=highly unrealistic and 7=highly realistic. Results of the realism check conveyed that, consistently across the two experimental conditions, participants found the scenario to be highly realistic (M = 5.390). In addition, as a manipulation check, participants were asked to recall whether any other customers were present in the scenario and what their relationship was to the focal consumer. Finally, demographic questions were asked, including age, gender and education levels.

4 Results

A 2 (other customer: alone vs. co-workers) by 2 (consumer gender: female vs. male) between-subject ANOVA was conducted to test the proposed hypotheses. The descriptive statistics of the experimental cells are exhibited in Table 1.

Results of the ANOVA test revealed a significant main effect on complaint intentions in the form of the presence of other customers (M_{Alone} = 6.036, $M_{Coworker}$ = 5.516; $F_{(1,114)}$ = 5.548, p-value = .020). Consumers were less likely to complain in the presence of co-workers than alone, and hence, H_1 was supported.

In addition, a marginally significant interaction effect emerged between the presence of other customers and focal consumer gender on consumer complaint intentions ($F_{(1,114)}$ = 3.861, p-value = .052). The ANOVA table is shown in Table 2. As visualised in Figure 1, in the presence of co-workers (vs. alone), female consumers showed a significantly lower level of intent to voice complaint (M_{Alone} = 6.462, $M_{Coworker}$ = 5.450; $F_{(1,114)}$ = 8.054, p-value = .005). Hence, H_2 was supported as well. Conversely, male consumers exhibited similar levels of intent to voice their complaints, regardless of whether they were alone or with others (M_{Alone} = 5.647, $M_{Coworker}$ = 5.556; $F_{(1,114)}$ = .091, p-value = .764). H_3 was therefore also supported.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Test Results
Dependent Variable: Complaint Intention

Other Customer	Consumer Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Alone	Male	5.647	1.393	34
	Female	6.462	.924	31
	Total	6.035	1.219	65
Co-worker	Male	5.556	1.160	33
	Female	5.450	1.605	20
	Total	5.516	1.331	53

Table 2: ANOVA Table for Complaint Intentions
Dependent Variable: Complaint Intention

Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	p-Value
Corrected Model	18.817	3	6.272	4.055	.009
Intercept	3763.412	1	3763.412	2432.871	.000
Scenario	8.583	1	8.583	5.548	**.020**
Gender	3.548	1	3.548	2.294	.133
Interaction Effect	5.973	1	5.973	3.861	**.052**
Error	176.347	114	1.547		
Total	4167.778	118			

Note: N = 118.

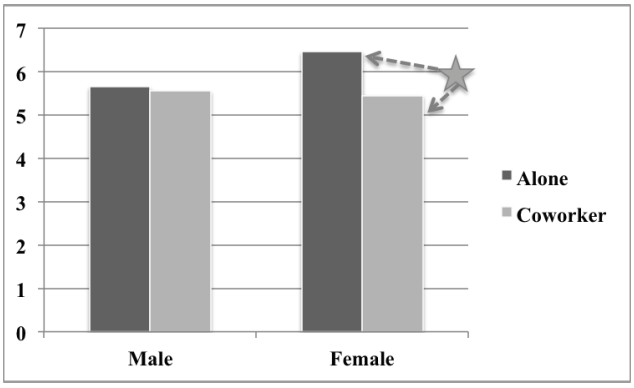

Figure 1: Complaint Intention

5 General discussion

5.1 Theoretical implications

According to He, Chen and Alden (2012), the process of internalisation suggests that an individual will be particularly sensitive to the outcome of a service encounter when there is a social audience. Consequently, due to the heightened alertness produced by the presence of others (Zajonc, 1980), an individual's reaction to a service encounter will be more pronounced with a social audience. That is, consumers may feel more dissatisfied when a negative service encounter happens in the presence of other customers (vs. alone).

This study demonstrated a behavioural intention pattern inconsistent with the above attitudinal pattern: the social presence of other customers (vs. no other customers) resulted in a lower level of voiced complaint intention. The reasons identified in this study were found in people's impression management in public, as well as Ecuador's collectivist culture, as defined by Hofstede (www.geert-hofstede.com). People from a collectivist culture are prone to interdependency and have great concern of others' opinion in the social network, which makes the impression management concept salient in the social presence of othersThis study also contributes to gender study in consumer research, which is relatively scarce in the field of hospitality and is often light on theory, despite its importance and relevance (Meyers-Levy and Loken, 2015). With reference to Hofstede's masculinity dimension, it demonstrated that gender moderates the impact of the presence of others on consumers' intent to voice their complaints: impression management and concern of social others were shown to be more significant among women than men. Due to their focus on social processes and their 'other-orientation', women are more motivated to manage their public image and to create positive impressions in other people's eyes. As a result, female consumers showed less complaint intention in the presence of other customers than when they were alone. However, this impression management effect does not impact men the same way as it does women: true to the masculine-cultural orientation of Ecuadorian society, male consumers showed no significant difference in complaint intentions, no matter whether they were alone or in the presence of other customers.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Hospitality companies have always strived to increase consumers' service satisfaction through improving the 'software' of service quality and the 'hardware' of the physical service environment (e.g. Servicescapes, Bitner, 1992). This research provides hospitality practitioners with another perspective to look at consumer service satisfaction: the social environment (He, Chen, and Alden, 2012), and, in particular, the social presence of other customers during the service encounter. The current study shows that the social environment (i.e. the presence of other customers) could change consumers' reaction to service failures: collectivist Ecuadorian consumers are reluctant to voice their complaints in front of other customers in order to keep a positive social image in public. Therefore, to encourage consumers to voice their dissatisfaction, which could help hospitality companies to improve their future service efforts and engage in service failure recovery, hospitality practitioners may provide a more private and dyadic interaction between the focal consumer and service personnel to attenuate consumers' impression management concerns in the presence of other customers. Hospitality practitioners could change the social environment by modifying the physical environment and/or complaint handling procedures. For instance, after a service failure, a restaurant manager could invite the individual consumer who has experienced service failure to a more private space for service communication and complaint handling.

Furthermore, the gender difference discovered in this study provides hospitality practitioners with a simple, practical guideline for service delivery, complaint handling and training as the social presence effect is stronger for women than for men in a collectivist, masculine environment. An effective management of the social environment is even more important when providing service to female consumers, and hospitality practitioners may pay more attention to female consumers, as they tend to be more sensitive in public.

6 Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations. First, it used hypothetical scenarios as stimuli. A field study is needed to fully understand the gender differences across the two service failure modes. Second, its measures were limited to the intent to voice complaint. Future studies could examine other vital forms of consumer complaint behaviours, such as negative word of mouth and switching to competitor companies.

A fruitful avenue for future research may be the nature of the various other customers. Facing service failures, people may have different attitudes and behaviour intentions when they have a different social distance to other customers. For example, collectivist Chinese consumers have different complaint patterns when they are with in-group family members as compared to when they are in the presence of out-group strangers (Fan, Mattila, and Zhao, 2015). Thus, future studies may explore how Ecuadorian consumers respond when they are with different groups of other customers.

7 Conclusion

Using the theoretical frameworks of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1980, 2001) and impression management (Leary and Kowalski, 1990; Schlenker and Weigold, 1992; Baumeister, 1998), this study demonstrated the joint impact of the presence of other customers and gender on consumers' intent to voice their complaints in a collectivist, masculine hospitality service environment. The study found that Ecuadorian consumers were less likely to complain in the presence of other customers than when they were alone. Specifically, female customers showed less complaint intention in the presence of other customers (vs. alone) as compared to male customers who did not show any significant difference in complaint intentions when they were either alone or in the presence of other customers.

References

[1] Aaker, J. L. (1999). The malleable self: The role of self-expression in persuasion. Journal of Marketing Research, 36(1), 45-57.

[2] Alden, D. L., He, Y., & Chen, Q. (2010). Service recommendations and customer evaluations in the international marketplace: Cultural and situational contingencies. Journal of Business Research, 63(1), 38-44.

[3] Allport, G. (1985). The historical background of social psychology. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), Handbook of social psychology (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 1-46). New York: Random House.

[4] Argo, J., Dahl, D., & Manchanda, R. (2005). The influence of a mere social presence in a retail context. Journal of Consumer Research, 32(2), 207-212.

[5] Azuma, H. (1984). Secondary control as a heterogeneous category. American Psychologist, 39(9), 970-971.

[6] Bakan, D. (1966). The duality of human existence: An essay on psychology and religion. Oxford, England: Rand Mcnally.

[7] Baumeister, R. F. (1998). The Self. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, and G. Lindzey, (Eds.) The Handbook of Social Psychology (4th ed., pp. 680-740). Boston: McGraw-Hill Co.

[8] Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 42(2), 155-162.

[9] Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. Journal of Marketing, 56(2), 57-71.

[10] Bodey, K., & Grace, D. (2006). Segmenting "service complainers" and "non-complainers" on the basis of consumer characteristics. Journal of Services Marketing, 20(3), 178-187.

[11] Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1(3), 185-216.

[12] Broverman, I. K., Vogel, S. R., Broverman, D. M., Clarkson, F. E., & Rosenkrantz, P. S. (1972). Sex-role stereotypes: A current appraisal. The Journal of Social Issues, 28(2), 59-78.

[13] Chan, H., & Wan, L. C. (2008). Consumer responses to service failures: A resource preference model of cultural influences. Journal of International Marketing, 16(1), 72-97.

[14] Chan, H., Wan, L., & Sin, L. (2009). The contrasting effects of culture on consumer tolerance: Interpersonal face and impersonal fate. Journal of Consumer Research, 36(2), 292-304.

[15] Dahl, D., Manchanda, R., & Argo, J. (2001). Embarrassment in consumer purchase: The roles of social presence and purchase familiarity. Journal of Consumer Research, 28(3), 473-481.

[16] Day, R. L., Grabicke, K., Schaetzle, T., & Staubach, F. (1981). The hidden agenda of consumer complaining. Journal of Retailing, 57(3), 86-106.

[17] Fan, A., Mattila, A. S., & Zhao, X. (2015). How does social distance impact customers' complaint intentions? A cross-cultural examination. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 47, 35-42.

[18] Geen, R. G. (1989). Alternative conceptions of social facilitation. Psychology of group influence (2nd ed., pp. 15-51). Hillsdale, NJ, England: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

[19] Gelbrich, K., & Roschk, H. (2010). A meta-analysis of organizational complaint handling and customer responses. Journal of Service Research, 14(1), 24-43.

[20] Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. Garden City, NewYork: Doubleday.

[21] He, Y., Chen, Q., & Alden, D. L. (2012). Consumption in the public eye: The influence of social presence on service experience. Journal of Business Research, 65(3), 302-310.

[22] Hofstede, G. H. (1980). Culture's consequences, international differences in work-related values. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.

[23] Hofstede, G. H. (2001). Culture's consequences: comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
[24] Hui, C. H., & Triandis, H. C. (1986). Individualism-collectivism: A study of cross-cultural researchers. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 17(2), 225-248.
[25] Karaosmanoglu, E., Bas, A. B. E., & Zhang, J. (2011). The role of other customer effect in corporate marketing. European Journal of Marketing, 45(9/10), 1416-1445.
[26] Kim, D., Wen, L., & Doh, K. (2010). Does cultural difference affect customer's response in a crowded restaurant environment? A comparison of American versus Chinese customers. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 34(1), 103-123.
[27] Leary, M. R., & Kowalski, R. M. (1990). Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. Psychological Bulletin, 107(1).
[28] Lin, I. Y., & Mattila, A. S. (2006). Understanding restaurant switching behavior from a cultural perspective. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 30(1), 3-15.
[29] Lindsey, R. B. (2009). Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.
[30] Liu, B. S., Furrer, O., & Sudharshan, D. (2001). The relationships between culture and behavioral intentions toward services. Journal of Service Research, 4(2), 118-129.
[31] Liu, R. R., & McClure, P. (2001). Recognizing cross-cultural differences in consumer complaint behavior and intentions: An empirical examination. The Journal of Consumer Marketing, 18(1), 54-75.
[32] Mandel, N. (2003). Shifting selves and decision making: The effects of Self-construal priming on consumer risk-taking. Journal of Consumer Research, 30(1), 30-40.
[33] Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. Psychological Review, 98(2), 224-253.
[34] Mattila, A. S., Cho, W., & Ro, H. (2009). The joint effects of service failure mode, recovery effort, and gender on customers' post-recovery satisfaction. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 26(2), 120-128.
[35] Mattila, A. S., & Patterson, P. G. (2004a). The impact of culture on consumers' perceptions of service recovery efforts. Journal of Retailing, 80(3), 196-206.
[36] Mattila, A. S., & Patterson, P. G. (2004b). Service recovery and fairness perceptions in collectivist and individualist contexts. Journal of Service Research, 6(4), 336-346.
[37] Mattila, A. S., & Ro, H. (2008). Discrete negative emotions and customer dissatisfaction responses in a casual restaurant setting. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 32(1), 89-107.
[38] McFerran, B., Dahl, D., Fitzsimons, G., & Morales, A. (2010). I'll have what she's having: Effects of social influence and body type on the food choices of others. Journal of Consumer Research, 36(6), 915-929.
[39] Meyers-Levy, J., & Loken, B. (2015). Revisiting gender differences: What we know and what lies ahead. Journal of Consumer Psychology, 25(1), 129-149.
[40] Miao, L., Mattila, A. S., & Mount, D. (2011). Other consumers in service encounters: A script theoretical perspective. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 30(4), 933-941.
[41] Miller, R. S., & Leary, M. R. (1992). Social sources and interactive functions of emotion: The case of embarrassment. Emotion and social behavior (pp. 202-221). Thousand Oaks, California, US: Sage Publications, Inc.
[42] Puntoni, S., & Tavassoli, N. T. (2007). Social context and advertising memory. Journal of Marketing Research, 44(2), 284-296.
[43] Schlenker, B. R., & Weigold, M. F. (1992). Interpersonal processes involving impression regulation and management. Annual Review of Psychology, 43(1), 133-168.
[44] Schlenker, B. R. (1980). Impression management: The self-concept, social identity, and interpersonal relations. Monterey, California: Brooks Cole Publish Company.
[45] Singelis, T. M. (1994). The measurement of independent and interdependent self-construals. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20(5), 580-591.
[46] Singh, J. (1988). Consumer complaint intentions and behavior: Definitional and taxonomical issues. Journal of Marketing, 52(1), 93-107.
[47] Singh, J. (1990a). A typology of consumer dissatisfaction response styles. Journal of Retailing, 66(1), 57-99.
[48] Singh, J. (1990b). Voice, exit, and negative word-of-mouth behaviors: An investigation across three service categories. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 18(1), 1-15.
[49] Stephens, N., & Gwinner, K. P. (1998). Why don't some people complain? A cognitive-emotive process model of consumer complaint behavior. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 26(3), 172-189.
[50] Tedeschi, J. T. (1981). Impression management theory and social psychological research. New York: Academic Press.
[51] Triandis, H. C. (1994). Culture and social behavior. New York: McGraw-Hill.
[52] Vaerenbergh, Y. V., Orsingher, C., Vermeir, I., & Lariviere, B. (2014). A meta-analysis of relationships linking service failure attributions to customer outcomes. Journal of Service Research, 17(4), 381-398.
[53] Valenzuela, F., Pearson, D., Epworth, R., Llanos, O., & Vilches, S. (2005). Consumer complaining behavior: The case of a South American country, Chile. Contemporary Management Research, 1(1), 3-12.
[54] Wan, L. C. (2013). Culture's impact on consumer complaining responses to embarrassing service failure. Journal of Business Research, 66(3), 298-305.
[55] Wan, L. C., Hui, M. K., & Wyer, R. S. (2011). The role of relationship norms in responses to service failures. Journal of Consumer Research, 38(2), 260-277.
[56] Webster, J. M., Duvall, J., Gaines, L. M., & Smith, R. H. (2003). The roles of praise and social comparison information in the experiences of pride. The Journal of Social Psychology, 143(2), 209-32.
[57] White, M. I., & LeVine, R. A. (1986). What is an Ii Ko (Good Child)? In Stevenson, H., Azunia, H., & Hakuta, K. (Eds.), Child development and education in Japan. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
[58] Wood, S., & Hoeffler, S. (2013). Looking innovative: Exploring the role of impression management in high-tech product adoption and use. Journal of Product Innovation Management, 30(6), 1254-1270.

[59] Wood, W., & Eagly, A. H. (2012). Biosocial construction of sex differences and similarities in behavior. Advances in experimental social psychology, 46(1), 55-123.
[60] Wyer Jr., R. S., & Gordon, S. E. (1982). The recall of information about persons and groups. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 18(2), 128-164.
[61] Zajonc, R. B. (1980). Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. American Psychologist, 35(2), 151-175.
[62] Zhang, J., Beatty, S. E., & Walsh, G. (2008). Review and future directions of cross-cultural consumer services research. Journal of Business Research, 61(3), 211-224.
[63] Zhang, Y., Feick, L., & Mittal, V. (2014). How males and females differ in their likelihood of transmitting negative word of mouth. Journal of Consumer Research, 40(6), 1097-1108.
[64] Zhang, Y., & Mittal, V. (2007). The attractiveness of enriched and impoverished options culture, self-construal, and regulatory focus. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33(4), 588-598.

Alei Fan is a PhD Candidate in the School of Hospitality Management at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. She holds a master's degree in hospitality management from Cornell University, USA. Her research interests include consumer behaviour, services marketing, self-service technology and cross-cultural studies. E-mail: auf152@psu.edu.

Hubert B. Van Hoof. Ph.D. is Professor of Strategic Hospitality Management in the School of Hospitality Management at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. Over the years, he has published extensively on strategic and management issues in higher education and in the hospitality industry. He has lectured on strategic management topics at universities in Ecuador, Argentina, the Netherlands, Germany and Asia. He received a PhD. from Arizona State University, USA and master's degrees from the University of Houston, USA and the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. E-mail: hbv1@psu.edu.

Sandra Elizabeth Pesántez Loyola, M.Sc. is a professor of financial analysis and research methodology in the College of Hospitality Sciences at the University of Cuenca, Ecuador. Prior to this appointment, she taught consumer behaviour and sales management at UNITA University and worked as a branch manager of Banco del Pichincha and as an auditor in the Internal Revenue Service of Ecuador. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, a bachelor's degree in accounting and auditing and a master's degree in dducation with a specialisation in curriculum and teaching. E-mail: sandra.pesantezl@ucuenca.edu.ec.

Numa Sebastián Calle Lituma, MSc is a professor of marketing in the School of Tourism at the Universidad del Azuay, Cuenca, Ecuador. His areas of teaching and research expertise are business development and management, tourism research, tourist markets and customer behaviour. He holds a B.A. in management and tourism development and a M.Sc. in tourism planning from The Universidad del Azuay (UDA). He is presently pursuing a Ph.D in tourism management at the Universidad de Las Islas Baleares in Mallorca, Spain. E-mail: scalle@uazuay.edu.ec.

Marlene Jaramillo Granda is a professor of Ecuadorian Cuisine at University of Cuenca, Ecuador, where she is also the director of the gastronomy program in the College of Hospitality Sciences. She teaches about Ecuadorian food traditions and customs and is the author of the textbooks Texto Guia de Cocina Ecuatoriana and Menús, Sabores Tentadores y Deliciosamente Sencillos. Ms. Jaramillo is a professional chef and is pursuing a master's degree in quality and food safety at the University of Azuay, Ecuador. E-mail: marlene.jaramillo@ucuenca.edu.ec.