Complaint management: The impact of post-complaint satisfaction on organizational behavior

Gerenciamento de reclamações: O impacto da satisfação pós-reclamação no comportamento organizacional

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of this research was to investigate satisfaction with the management of complaints through perceptions of organizational justice and its subsequent impact on organizational commitment, involvement, and engagement at work of internal customers in the shared services centers (SSC).

Originality/value: We used the model developed and tested by Tax et al. (1998), which in this study was adapted to the organizational context of the SSC. This approach is unprecedented and aims to reduce the defragmentation of academic literature in SSC (Richter & Brül, 2017), which is at an early stage of development (Knol et al., 2014).

Design/methodology/approach: This is a quantitative-descriptive cross-sectional study, whose data were collected from internal clients of SSC (employees of the branches) through a survey, resulting in 172 valid answers that were analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM).

Findings: The results obtained indicate that perceptions of distributive and procedural justice affect the satisfaction of internal clients with the management of complaints. Organizational commitment, involvement and engagement are directly influenced by satisfaction with the management of complaints.

Keywords: complaint management, justice, organizational commitment, involvement in work, engagement at work

Resumo

Objetivo: O objetivo desta pesquisa foi investigar a satisfação com o gerenciamento de reclamações por meio das percepções da justiça organizacional e seu impacto subsequente no comprometimento organizacional, no envolvimento e no engajamento no trabalho dos clientes internos em centros de serviços compartilhados (CSC).

Originalidade/valor: A relevância consiste na utilização do modelo desenvolvido e testado por Tax et al. (1998), que neste estudo foi adaptado para o contexto organizacional em CSC. Essa abordagem é inédita e visa reduzir a desfragmentação da literatura acadêmica de CSC (Richter & Brüll, 2017) que se encontra num estado embrionário de desenvolvimento (Knol et al., 2014).

Design/metodologia/abordagem: Trata-se de uma pesquisa quantitativo--descritiva de corte transversal, cujos dados foram coletados com clientes internos de CSC (funcionários das filiais) por meio de uma *survey*, resultando em 172 respostas válidas que foram analisadas por meio da modelagem de equações estruturais.

Resultados: Os resultados obtidos indicam que as percepções de justiças distributiva e processual afetam o nível de satisfação dos clientes internos com o gerenciamento das reclamações. Já o comprometimento organizacional, o envolvimento e o engajamento no trabalho dos clientes internos são diretamente influenciados pelo nível de satisfação com o gerenciamento das reclamações. Portanto, verifica-se que, por meio do gerenciamento de reclamações, é possível aumentar os níveis do comprometimento organizacional, do engajamento e do envolvimento no trabalho dos clientes internos, e consequentemente melhorar os índices de desempenho de CSC.

Palavras-chave: gerenciamento de reclamações, justiça, comprometimento organizacional, envolvimento no trabalho, engajamento no trabalho

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining quality in services is not an easy task, even the best suppliers of products and services are not entirely immune to failures that may occur. In services, some factors are difficult to control, as in many cases they are provided and utilized almost instantly, hampering, thus, quality management (Río-Lanza et al., 2013). Service failures compromise service quality levels, which, in turn, can lead to low levels of satisfaction with the work of the professionals who provide the service (Geisler et al., 2019). However, if service failures are inevitable, it is up to companies to be prepared to act effectively when failures occur. That is when complaint management comes into play, the main objective of which is to restore satisfaction and strengthen the relationship with the customer (Ding & Lii, 2016).

For a long time, justice theory has been the predominant theoretical lens in studies on complaint management, according to which clients evaluate whether the resolution was fair from the perspective of the three dimensions of justice – distributive, procedural and interactional (Kim et al., 2015). Service failures also occur in the organizational context of the shared service centers (SSC), and, as addressed by relationship marketing, internal customers may also be dissatisfied. Janssen and Joha (2006, p. 114) point out that "the SSC is not a panacea for everything, and the expected benefits depend on the combined advantages of centralized and decentralized models, which are often conflicting".

The implementation of the SSC model within organizations has been growing unchecked (Rudzioniene & Sakalauskiene, 2014) and has been a strategy adopted by the largest companies in the world. According to recent data, more than 75% of the companies listed on the Fortune 500 had adopted the SSC model (Richter & Brühl, 2017). However, if the topic has advanced in organizational practice, in the academic context, the SSC phenomenon is still in slow development (Knol et al., 2014). In a recent review of the SSC literature, Richter & Brühl (2017) highlighted fragmentation as the greatest deficiency in the SSC literature. In their research, the authors detected 25 different theories that were used in research on SSC, and the justice theory was not used in any research on the phenomenon. In the literature, it is possible to find only one study that addresses the satisfaction of services in SSC, which was developed by Marciniak (2013) and presented at the 1º World Congress of Administrative & Political Sciences (Adpol). The author identified that the service level agreement (SLA) was the only performance indi-

cator used to measure customer satisfaction in SSC and that it still had several limitations (Marciniak, 2013).

In this study, to investigate satisfaction with complaint management, the model developed by Tax et al. (1998) was used, but not in the context of marketing, as in the original research, but in the organizational context of the SSC. The impact of post-complaint satisfaction on organizational commitment, involvement and engagement at work was also investigated. This approach is justified from the organizational point of view, since, in SSC arrangements, activities that were formerly carried out within the branches or at the headquarters are consolidated into a "semi-autonomous" unit, where the SSC act as service providers for companies' other units, named, in this survey, internal customers (Joha & Janssen, 2014).

For SSC to function properly, it is important that conflicts with internal clients (e.g. complaint management) are well resolved, so that the relationship between SSC and internal client is peaceful and long-lasting (Banoun et al., 2016). Investigating organizational commitment, involvement and engagement at work is extremely important for the practice of management in SSC, since high levels of engagement result in better performance at work (Bakker et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2017). High levels of involvement promote better productivity rates (Sethi & Mittal, 2016; Jaiswal, 2018), inhibit the occurrence of burnout (Schaufeli, 2013) and reduce absences from work and the turnover rate (Blau & Boal, 1987). Through the development of better rates for these constructs, SSC managers can improve various indicators related to the performance, productivity, health, and well-being of employees and workers.

Therefore, according to the discussion above, this study aims to answer the main research question:

• What is the impact of satisfaction with complaint management on organizational commitment, involvement, and engagement of the internal clients' work in shared service centers?

The article is subdivided as follows: In the next section, the theoretical foundation of this study will be developed, including the hypotheses and the model to be tested. Then, the methodological procedures used in this research are presented. In the following section, the hypotheses are tested and all statistical analyses are performed on the collected data, and the results found are discussed. The last section presents the conclusions, research limitations and suggestions for future research.

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THEORETICAL REFERENCE

This article presents the literature review of the constructs covered in this study, which served as a basis for the construction of the tested model, as well as their respective concepts and development of the hypotheses to be tested.

Shared services center

It is not known for certain who was the author of the term SSC. What is known is that the model appeared in the United States in the 1980s and quickly spread to other countries (Ulbrich, 2003). In 1984, General Electric (GE) was the first private company to adopt the model, consolidating all its accounting activities in the United States (Davis, 2005). After decades of emergence, SSC have spread in such a way that it is very difficult, if not impossible, that any of the large global companies have not implemented it yet (Schulz et al., 2009). The creation of the ObamacareUSA.org program in 2011, by the then president of the United States at the time, Barack Obama, whose objective was to expand access to health through the sharing of services, can be highlighted (Tomasino et al., 2017).

The SSC is treated as a hybrid business model, as it has characteristics of the traditional centralized (gains in scale), decentralized (customer-oriented) and outsourcing (support services) models (Bergeron, 2003). As shown in Figure 1, an important characteristic that justifies this approach to SSC is the fact that it operates in a separate and semi-autonomous unit within the organization (Rothwell et al., 2011), with decentralized control for the internal customer (branches), that is, a hybrid governance structure (Meijerink et al., 2014). In the SSC model, the back office services of each business unit are reorganized internally (in-house) into a separate unit (Herbert & Seal, 2012). However, both the internal customer (branches) and the supplier (SSC) are an integral part of the "parent company" (Meijerink et al., 2014).

In the literature, it is possible to find different terminologies used for the concept in question, such as: "organization of shared services" (Grant et al., 2007), "shared services" (Wang & Wang, 2007), "shared services model" (Rothwell et al., 2011) and finally "shared services center" (Minnaar & Vosselman, 2013). As it is more up-to-date, in this research we opted for the use of the terminology "shared services center", which is used by researchers

such as Minnaar and Vosselman (2013), Knol et al. (2014) and Koval et al. (2016). Singh and Craike (2008) point out that the fragmentation of the literature is the main reason for the lack of consensus among researchers regarding a definition for SSC. Often the definitions of SSC are used as an "umbrella concept" in both public and private sector approaches, so it is necessary to be cautious when doing so, as there are idiosyncratic characteristics for each of the sectors (Schulz & Brenner, 2010).

Figure 1

Migrating to the shared services center model
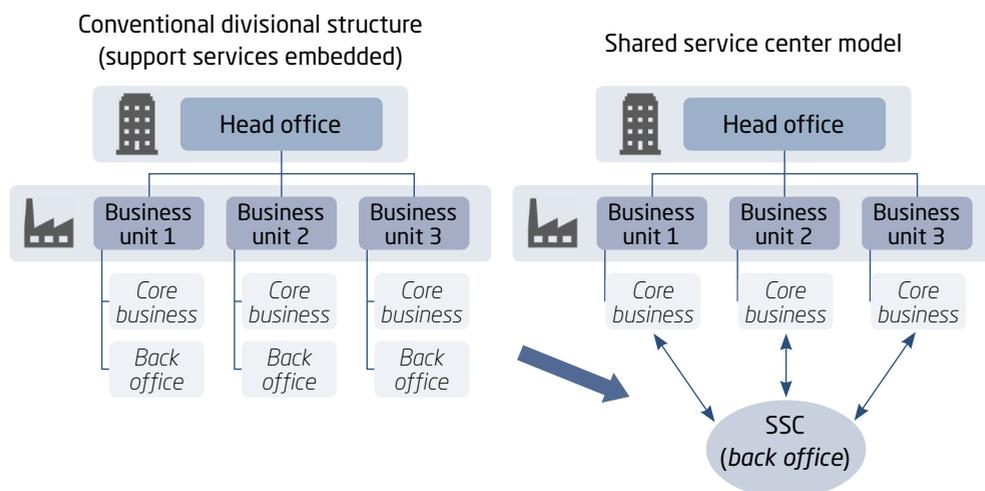
Source: Adapted from Herbert and Seal (2012).

Schulz and Brenner (2010) took up the idea of not having a consensus regarding the definition of SSC and sought to identify common characteristics among the existing definitions in the literature, which could help them in the construction of a definition. The authors selected the most common characteristics that were used in at least 50% of the literature on SSC between 1995 and 2009, and, based on them, came up with the following definition: SSC is an organizational concept that

> […] consolidates processes; decreases redundancies; offers support processes; it is a separate organizational unit within the group; is aligned with external customers; cost reduction is one of the main objectives of implementation; serves internal customers; and operates as a business (Schulz & Brenner, 2010, p. 217).

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As seen in the definition proposed by the authors, cost reduction stands out as one of the main objectives when implementing SSC; however, it is also necessary to deliver value to customers, to be attentive to competitors and the best practices of the marketplace. For the purpose of this research, we decided to use the definition proposed by Schulz and Brenner (2010), because it was built through an extensive literature review.

Complaints management

Service provider organizations seek, through strong customer orientation and the use of quality tools, to prevent failures in their services. However, this is inevitable, and, in the worst case, the experience of consumer dissatisfaction caused by the failure in the service can make the customers look for suppliers in the market (Kelley & Davis, 1994). The consumer's decision-making process regarding whether or not to complain takes into account the costs and the possibilities of gains involved. In other words, dissatisfaction as a result of failure motivates consumers to seek available and viable alternatives for complaints, as well as their advantages and possibilities for success (Day, 1984).

Kim et al. (2015) conducted a study in order to integrate two strands of the literature on service failures, which are consumer complaint behavior and service recovery. This study also aims to assist managers of service providers in the process of managing consumer complaints. According to the authors, the initial dissatisfaction involves the cognitive assessment of the consumer, which will lead to the choice of the coping strategy (Kim et al., 2015). From the possibilities of coping, the consumer can choose inertia (not to complain), complain to a third party (negative "word of mouth") or voicing a complaint. Among the options presented, only in the voiced complaint exists the possibility of reimbursement for the service, because when receiving the complaint, the supplier can transform the customer's dissatisfaction into satisfaction.

The treatment given by managers to customer dissatisfaction can positively or negatively affect the organization's brand and image. A quick and cordial response to dissatisfaction can be the best to handle the situation, eliminating negative word of mouth or even converting it into a positive word of mouth (Richins, 1983). Both in the view of relationship marketing and service quality literature, organizations must offer dissatisfied customers efficient responses to complaints received, with the aim of reversing the issue. Scientific discoveries have pointed out that, in the opinion of executives

and consumers, the handling of complaints is one of the five factors that most influence consumers (Singh & Wilkes, 1996).

Complaint management as a strategy for resolving service failures is also an issue addressed within the context of SSC. Bergeron (2003) suggests the creation of a specific system for handling complaints in SSC, which contains well-established policies, procedures, and standards, in order to minimize the negative impact of failures and quickly respond to customer complaints.

Justice theory and its dimensions

Justice theory has been widely used when failures in exchange relations occur, in order to provide a greater understanding of levels of consumer satisfaction with the management of their complaints by the suppliers (Tax et al., 1998; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Wu, 2013; Ding & Lii, 2016; Jung & Seock, 2017). There are three types of justice: distributive, procedural and interactional (Jung & Seock, 2017).

The concept of distributive justice or fair distribution of reward was born by the discussion about the existence of relative deprivation, a theme that has been investigated by researchers and philosophers since the time of Aristotle (Adams, 1965). Distributive justice refers to the perception of justice over the result obtained as a result of a negotiation, dispute or decision between two persons or more (Blodgett et al., 1997). The management of complaints to distributive justice relates to the tangible compensation that the supplier offers to the customer due to a failure (Tax et al., 1998).

Nikbin et al. (2015) found a positive effect of distributive justice on satisfaction with the management of complaints regarding failures in air services. In this segment, practices such as reimbursement, discounts, vouchers and free tickets are common strategies to reverse dissatisfaction (Nikbin et al., 2015). From the perspective of distributive justice, it is assumed that, in complaints for failures in SSC, the main objective of the internal customer will be the development of harmony in the relationship with the service provider (Seal & Herbert, 2013) – unlike failures in the marketing context, in which customers prefer a tangible solution for the failure (contribution rule). Furthermore, the equality rule of distributive justice (Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976) will be dominant in the assessment of post-claim satisfaction. Therefore, according to the results of previous studies, distributive justice positively and significantly impacted post-complaint satisfaction in the marketing context (Ding & Lii, 2016) and job satisfaction (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). Thus, we propose the first hypothesis (H1):

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H1: Perceptions of distributive justice will positively influence satisfaction with complaint management.

The second type of justice is procedural, initially developed by Thibaut and Walker (1978) through several studies carried out in judicial decision-making processes. The results showed that, in litigation, those involved judge the neutrality of the verdict and the procedures used by the court to allocate the results (Colquitt, 2012). In a process considered fair, even unfavorable results are accepted peacefully by litigants (Miles, 2012). The concept of procedural justice concerns the perception of justice of individuals in relation to the procedural provisions that make up the social system, which, in turn, serve as a rule for the process of allocation of results (Leventhal, 1976).

Procedural justice has been used to investigate satisfaction with complaint management, regarding how results are achieved (Tax et al., 1998). In the context of online commerce, Jung and Seock (2017) found positive and significant effects of procedural justice on satisfaction with complaint management. According to the authors, online shopping makes it easier for customers to assess procedural elements and, consequently, build a perception of justice (Jung & Seock, 2017).

As stated by Patlán-Perez et al. (2012), workers who perceive the procedures involved in the payment of wages and benefits as fair will present better levels of job satisfaction. In other words, when the worker realizes that they can trust organizational policies, they feel more secure regarding the future of their employment, reflecting positively on their job satisfaction (Ouyang et al., 2015). Using the perspective of procedural justice, in the context of SSC, all the rules of the service provided must be described in its SLA. The SLA between the internal customer and the SSC is very similar to a negotiation between customer and supplier, in which the internal customer can assess whether the service provided by the SSC is in accordance with what is described in the SLA, and, in case of any failure, the client knows how and where to complain (Marciniak, 2013). The second hypothesis of this study is stated below (H2):

H2: Perceptions of procedural justice will positively influence satisfaction with the management of the complaint.

The third type of justice explored was interactional, discovered by Bies and Moag (1986) when analyzing perceptions of justice in contexts of recruiting people and in judicial decisions. In these contexts, the equity

perceived by individuals during interpersonal interactions could be assessed from the perspective of interactional justice (Miles, 2012). Interactional justice is achieved when the authorities communicate with litigants about the processes in a clear and respectful manner and when decisions are based on true and fair information (Colquitt, 2012). Interactional justice, within the context of complaints management, is used to explore customer-supplier relationships throughout complaint processes as a mechanism to analyze the way employees handle and communicate with customers who file a complaint (Tax et al., 1998).

A low perception of interactional justice can anger the customer, increasing the likelihood that they will not buy from the company again (Blodgett et al., 1997). In the context of online shopping, Wu (2013) found a positive and significant relationship between interactional justice and satisfaction with the management of complaints, but the impact was less than that of distributive justice, most likely due to the lack of personal contact in the online universe. Ding and Lii (2016) also found similar results in the online game trade, as users chose to complain on virtual platforms.

In the organizational context, the perception of interactional justice assessed under aspects of the methods used by the organization to communicate with its employees, together with the patterns of interactions between bosses and subordinates, directly impacts the employees' job satisfaction levels (Diab, 2015). In the context of SSC, the point of contact with the internal customer has a very important role in the relationship (Niehaves & Krause, 2010), since any interaction with the customer can influence their perception of the organization, positively or negatively (Bergeron, 2003). Consequently, in the context of SSC, the third hypothesis (H3) is:

H3: Perceptions of interactional justice will positively influence satisfaction with the management of the complaint.

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment, in the definition of Mowday et al. (1979, p. 226), "is the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a given organization". That is, individuals committed to the organization trust their purposes, are willing to strive for them and have a strong interest in remaining part of the organization (Mowday et al., 1979). The relationships between organizational commitment and other variables have received considerable prominence in the literature, and it is worth mentioning

the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2002).

In a study with information technology (IT) professionals in Malaysia, Valaei and Rezaei (2016) found that satisfied workers have greater organizational commitment. However, for this to happen, it is necessary for them to be satisfied with the salary, benefits, opportunities for promotion, relationships with colleagues and tasks performed (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). In a survey conducted with healthcare professionals in Sweden, Geisler et al. (2019) found that aspects similar to those found in job satisfaction, such as task quality, management policies, management support and of co-workers, promote better levels of organizational commitment from professionals.

In the organizational context, Culibrk et al. (2018) found significant relation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment rates, in a study applied to workers in the Republic of Serbia. An explanation for this result would be the high unemployment rate and the reduction in the purchasing power of Serbian citizens, which led them to give more value to jobs and wages (Culibrk et al., 2018). Thus, to investigate the impact of post-complaint satisfaction on the commitment of internal SSC clients, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Satisfaction with complaint management will positively influence the internal client's affective organizational commitment.

Work involvement

Another relational variable that was used in this study was work involvement. Work involvement, affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction are variables linked to positive and pleasurable work experiences. They form the structure of the model that assesses the psychological construct well-being at work (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008). The first authors who proposed a definition for involvement in work were Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The variable was defined as "the degree to which a person's work performance affects their self-esteem" (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965, p. 25).

Jaiswal (2018) points out that the characteristics of the work environment (e.g., organizational policies, organizational climate, communication, organizational support, autonomy at work) are predictors of work involvement. Culibrk et al. (2018) conducted a survey in the Republic of Serbia, in which a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and involvement was found, most likely due to satisfaction with the workers'

wages (extrinsic motivation). Thus, according to the results presented, the fifth hypothesis was formulated:

H5: Satisfaction with the management of the complaint will positively influence the involvement of the internal client at work.

Work engagement

Work engagement has become popular in academia, mainly in psychology and human resource management, based on Kahn's research (1990) on the individual's performance during the fulfillment of their "role" at work. According to the author, engaged individuals direct their physical, cognitive, emotional and mental efforts towards their work (Kahn, 1990). Individuals with high levels of engagement at work perform their job duties better. Therefore, organizations must strive to raise their employees' levels of engagement (Reijseger et al., 2017).

Both work satisfaction and work engagement are variables related to job performance (Schaufeli, 2017). Some of the aspects that make up the work satisfaction variable are: work promotions, relationship with the manager, relationship with colleagues, salary and benefits (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). On the other hand, engagement at work is strongly impacted by aspects very similar to those found in work satisfaction, such as: support from supervision, support from co-workers (Geisler et al., 2019), organizational support (Rich et al., 2010), diversity of skills, identification with the task, autonomy and feedback (Saks, 2006). Therefore, the sixth and last hypothesis is:

H6: Satisfaction with the management of the complaint will positively influence the engagement of the internal client at work.

Figure 2 shows the model used to guide this study, adapted from the original by Tax et al. (1998), applied in the United States and tested in Brazil by Santos (2001).

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Figure 2

Research model
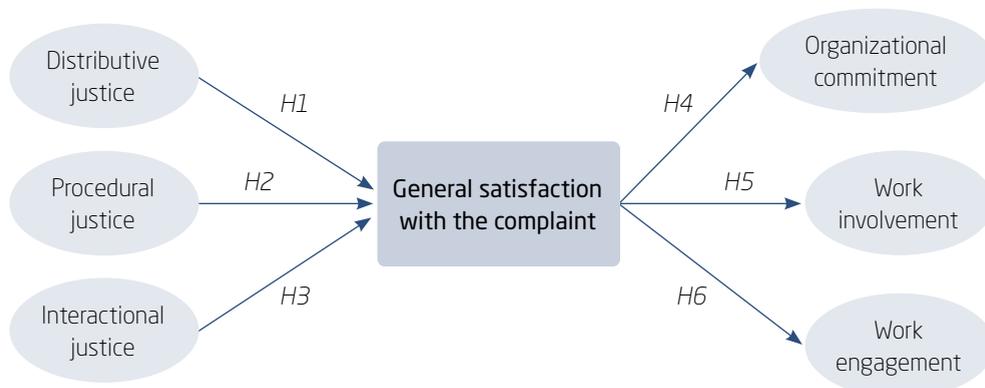
In the next section, all aspects related to the methodological procedures used in this research are presented.

METHOD

Population and sample

The target population of this study are national and multinational companies based in Brazil that have at least one SSC installed and operate in different segments. More than half of the companies operate in retail (55%), with the second highest percentage (35%) being services (health, insurance, finance, education, accounting, and communication), and, in third place, the industrial segment (9%).

The sample of this study is 172 internal SSC clients who answered the online questionnaire (survey). This sample size is in accordance with the size suggested by Hair et al. (2014), namely that the minimum sample for models with up to seven constructs, which is the case of this study, must be 150 respondents. The sampling technique used in this study was non-probabilistic for convenience, mainly due to its low cost and easy access to the sample elements (Malhotra et al., 2017).

Data collection instrument

The method for data collection used in this study is the survey, which aims to capture data or information about characteristics, attitudes or opinions of a sample representing the target population (Freitas et al., 2000). The developed questionnaire was divided into three stages. In the first stage, the respondent should fill in (with yes/no) if they had already "complained about failures in services provided by SSCs". If the answer was "yes" (focus of this study), the respondent would continue to fill out the questionnaire and, if it was "no" the questionnaire would be closed. In the second stage of the questionnaire, the respondent should fill in closed questions about perceptions of the three types of justice (dependent variables), satisfaction, organizational commitment, involvement and engagement at work (dependent variables). Lastly, in the third stage, there were questions about the respondents' demographic data (gender, income, education, company time).

After preparing the first version of the questionnaire, it was sent for evaluation by three PhDs in Administration, who were also professors at the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos). After making the adjustments detected in the content validation, the pre-test was carried out, applying the questionnaire to the target audience of this study (internal SSC customers) to a sample of 15 people between August 9 and August 16, 2018.

The measures

The scales used in this study to measure distributive, procedural and interactional justice and satisfaction with complaint management were developed and tested in the American context by Tax et al. (1998) and tested in the Brazilian context by Santos (2001). To measure organizational commitment, the scale developed by Siqueira (1995) and tested by Cavalcante et al. (2014) was used. The work engagement measure used in this study was developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and tested in Brazil by Cavalcante et al. (2014). To measure the variable engagement at work, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Uwes) was used, developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006) and tested in the Brazilian context by Magnan et al. (2017).

Five-point Likert scales were used, as they have greater reliability and the ability to accurately demonstrate the interviewee's opinion, in contrast to the three-point scale that was proven less efficient (Dalmoro & Vieira, 2013). The five-point scale has the same precision as the seven-point one,

but its use is easier and faster (Dalmoro & Vieira, 2013). In this study, we chose to use five-point scales to measure all variables.

Data collection

Data collection occurred through the provision of the link to complete the survey, which was posted on social networks (Facebook and LinkedIn), sent by e-mail to more than 90 higher education institutions and disclosed in two multinational companies installed in the city of Porto Alegre that have SSC in their operations. Data collection started in August 9, 2018 and ended in October 31, 2018 with the deactivation of the link to complete the questionnaire, reaching a total of 302 respondents. Of these, only 176 fitted the profile of the target population of this research, that is, they had already complained about failures in services provided by SSC.

Data analysis procedure

To analyze the results of this research, descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation, among others) was used in demographic variables, through the IBM SPSS 24 software. To identify outliers, univariate and multivariate analyses were used. In this research, the Z scores of each variable were calculated and forms number 1, 20, 23 and 168 were excluded from the sample, since they presented values higher than 3 (Hair et al., 2014). Multivariate analysis is the analysis of more than two variables at the same time (Hair et al., 2014). In this research the Mahalanobis calculation was used, but we did not find any extreme outliers to remove from the sample.

In the confirmatory factor analysis stage, the following measures were analyzed: factor loadings of the variables, composite reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity and explained variance. To measure the convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) of the items of each of the constructs was used with adequate values equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014). The discriminant validity, the Bartlett sphericity test and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion, which is a measure of sample adequacy (Malhotra et al., 2017), were also verified. Finally, the explained variance was evaluated, which represents the percentage explained by the factors used (Hair et al., 2014).

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was also used, which is a multivariate technique that encompasses multiple regression and factor analysis. Among the benefits of using this approach, the possibility of using a more

complex structure stands out, with the inclusion of latent and observable variables, allowing the analysis in a single moment of a group of interrelations (Hair et al., 2014). The SEM is composed of some measures used in order to fine tune (Hair et al., 2014). Some of the indicators used to analyze the model of this study were: chi-square, degrees of freedom, (χ^2/GL), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and comparative fit index (CFI).

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents, 58.7% were female and 41.3%, male. The percentage of respondents who have completed higher education was 38.4%, graduate education, 37.8% and those who are students of higher education represent 22.1% of the sample. In respect of the means used by respondents to register their complaints with the SSC, e-mail was the most used (43.6%), followed by telephone (27.9%), and intranet (14%).

In the factor analysis, all variables of the three dimensions of justice (distributive, procedural and interactional) presented loads much higher than the recommended minimum (> 0.5). A very popular measure of internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha, which ranges from 0 to 1, with an acceptable minimum limit of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2014). As shown in Table 1, all values found were much higher than the recommended minimum, thus confirming a satisfactory internal consistency (Malhotra et al., 2017).

Table 1

Internal consistency of the constructs

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha
V_1 Distributive justice	0.950
V_2 Procedural justice	0.948
V_3 Interactional justice	0.956
V_4 General satisfaction with the complaint	0.967
V_5 Engagement	0.959
V_6 Involvement	0.907
V_7 Organizational commitment	0.966

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The correlation matrix between the constructs is shown in Table 2. In addition to the composite reliability, it is also possible to check the results of the AVE, shared variance and convergent validity. AVE values greater than 0.5 indicate satisfactory convergent validity, that is, the latent construct explains 50% or more of the variation in the observed variable (Malhotra et al., 2017).

Table 2

Matrix of correlations between the constructs

Constructs	Composite reliability						
V_1 Distributive justice	0.973	**0.982**					
V_2 Procedural justice	0.953	0.757	**0.956**				
V_3 Interactional justice	0.961	0.788	0.849	**0.968**			
V_4 General satisfaction	0.982	0.891	0.825	0.807	**0.995**		
V_5 Work engagement	0.977	0.365	0.237	0.262	0.306	**0.971**	
V_6 Work involvement	0.945	0.316	0.368	0.234	0.312	0.477	**0.943**
V_7 Organizational	0.982	0.338	0.263	0.281	0.857	0.857	0.543	**0.995**

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The factorial loads of the measures of each latent variable showed significant loadings at 0.01. The indicators that appear diagonally in bold are AVE, the results of which are all significant and greater than 0.90, as well as showing higher values than the correlations between the other constructs, just below in the same columns (shared variance), all significant as suggested by Gilbert and Churchill (1979) and Malhotra et al. (2017), confirming the convergent validity for each construct. All composite reliability indexes also showed values above 0.9, demonstrating internal consistency of the individual indicators for each of the constructs (Hair et al., 2014).

The adjustment indexes of the tested model were also calculated, which were compared with the indexes proposed by Hair et al. (2014) and presented satisfactory results. The result of $\chi^2/GL = 2.542$ was within the reference values (< 5) and the CFI index $= 0.827$, slightly below the reference values (> 0.9). The RMSEA value (0.095) was slightly above the recommended values (between 0.05 and 0.08). However, according to Browne and Cudeck (1993), values between 0.08 and 0.1 are tolerable. Therefore,

according to the results presented, the tested model presented satisfactory adjustment indexes.

At the end of this step, we started to check the relationships of the constructs, calculating the standardized coefficient (β) and coefficient of determination (R^2) (Malhotra et al., 2017). As shown in Table 3, five out of the six hypotheses were confirmed as positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the positive relationship between distributive and procedural justice and satisfaction with complaint management (hypotheses 1 and 2, respectively) is confirmed, as well as satisfaction with complaint management and organizational commitment, involvement and engagement at work (hypotheses 4, 5, and 6, respectively). Only the relationship between interactional justice and satisfaction with the management of the complaint (hypothesis 3) was not significant.

Table 3

Hypothesis testing

Constructs			Standardized coefficient	Standard deviation	Z	P	R²
Distributive justice	→	Satisfaction	0.004	0.127	0.053	0.957	
Procedural justice	→	Satisfaction	0.592	0.067	9.073	***	10%
Interactional justice	→	Satisfaction	0.399	0.094	4.725	***	
Satisfaction	→	Commitment	0.329	0.050	4.307	***	38%
Satisfaction	→	Involvement	0.367	0.054	4.518	***	38%
Satisfaction	→	Engagement	0.350	0.057	4.638	***	50%

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

*** < 0.001.

Through the SEM analysis, the first hypothesis (H1) was confirmed with a significant and positive relationship (β = 0.399; z = 4.725; and p = 0.000). Likewise, the second hypothesis (h2) was also confirmed through the positive and significant relationship of procedural justice in satisfaction with the management of complaints (β = 0.592; z = 9.073; and p = 0.000). The R^2 at 0.103 indicates that, together, distributive and procedural justice explain a proportion of approximately 10% of the variance in the levels of satisfaction with the complaint management. The impact of interactional justice on satisfaction with complaint management (hypothesis 3), unlike

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what the justice theory proposes, was not confirmed in this research (β = 0.004; z = 0.053; and p = 0.957).

The fourth hypothesis (H4) predicted a significant and positive impact of satisfaction with the management of complaints on organizational commitment. Through the MEE analysis, the hypothesis was confirmed (β = 0.329; z = 4.307; and p = 0.000). The result of R^2, on the other hand, indicates an approximate explanation of 38% in the variance of the levels of organizational commitment. The fifth hypothesis (h5) predicted a positive and significant relationship between satisfaction with the management of the complaint and involvement in work (β = 0.367; z = 4.518; and p = 0.000). The R^2 of this relationship indicates an approximate explanation of 38% in the variance of the levels of involvement at work.

And finally, the sixth and last hypothesis (h6) of this study predicted a positive and significant relationship between satisfaction with the management of complaints and engagement at work, a relationship that was confirmed through the MEE analysis (β = 0.350; z = 4.638; and p = 0.000). The R^2 of satisfaction on engagement at work was 0.498, indicating that satisfaction explained a proportion of approximately 50% of the variance in engagement levels. In Figure 3, below, it is possible to visualize the β and R^2 measurements of the relationships between the variables in the theoretical model of this study:

Figure 3

Proposed theoretical model and MEE results
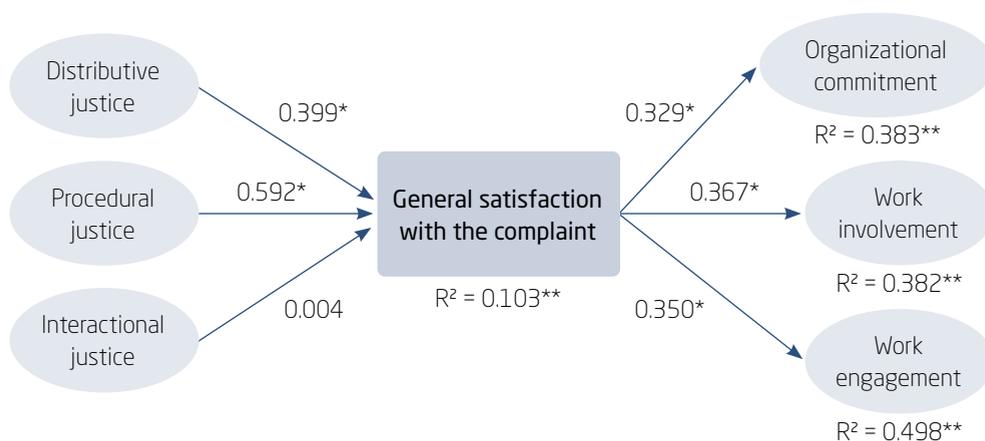
Source: Adapted from Tax et al. (1998).

* Significant β coefficients. ** R^2.

DISCUSSION

The confirmation of the first hypothesis corroborates the theoretical proposals that guided this study, in which the obtaining of results perceived as fair through the complaint, such as the return of money, delivery of vouchers, gifts and exchanges, impacts the final satisfaction of the customer with complaint management (Tax et al., 1998; Santos & Fernandes, 2007; Nikbin et al., 2015; Ding & Lii, 2016). From an organizational perspective, the greater impact of procedural justice on post-complaint satisfaction reflects the importance of procedural elements that are highlighted in the SSC literature, such as process reengineering, waiting time (Janssen et al., 2009), process control (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2013), and flexibility and customization of services (Bondarouk & Friebe, 2014). In other words, when SSC customers complain about a service failure, they likely expect to receive fast, flexible and personalized service.

In academic terms, the non-confirmation of the third hypothesis raises some questions about the importance of assessments of interactional justice in satisfaction with the management of complaints in the context of SSC. One might think that, for SSC customers, human interaction during a complaint process, accompanied by an apology or courteous, honest and empathetic treatment, will not reflect better levels of satisfaction. In this study, e-mail was the most used means for respondents to register their complaints (42.9%). According to the taxonomy developed by Knol et al. (2014) on the main challenges faced when implementing SSC, both the physical and psychological distance between SSC and customers can cause negative effects on the perception of customers. This gap between SSC and branch can be overcome using remote channels (e-mail, chat, intranet and specific softwares) (Ulbrich, 2006). A reflection of this shift in service delivery is that some researchers have adopted the slogan of "Martini employees", referring to a 1970s beverage commercial, which says "Anytime, anyplace, anywhere" (Rothwell et al., 2011, p. 243).

The non-confirmation of the third hypothesis brings some reflections from the perspective of online retail, as it is very similar to the reality of SSC, in which human interaction is replaced by technology and remote channels. In this context, in previous research, the procedural and outcome aspects at the end of the complaint (distributive justice) were more important in the perception of customers (Lin et al., 2011; Wu, 2013; Ding & Lii, 2016). For SSC customers, as well as for online retail customers, it may be easier to assess the complaint management process.

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It is suggested that SSC managers provide their customers with a complaint management system that has an emphasis on processes, which is clear and offers quick solutions for customers dissatisfied with the failures (Nikbin et al., 2015). However, SSC managers must be aware of the quick technological changes that make the provision of back office services more flexible, enabling remote services and also assessing how dissatisfied customers adhere to the use of these services channels. Academic research on the use of technology in the interaction between customer and supplier in the management of complaints has not kept pace with the rapid advance of the phenomenon (Kim et al., 2015). For this reason, more research is suggested to assess the perceptions of customers in episodes of service failures through technology-based (remote) interactions.

The confirmation of hypotheses 4, 5 and 6 brings important reflections on the productivity and health of workers. Previous research has pointed out that workers with low levels of commitment are more affected by negative experiences at work, such as post-complaint dissatisfaction (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008), and low levels of commitment, can increase absenteeism and turnover rates (Blau & Boal, 1987). Therefore, the improvement in the levels of post-complaint satisfaction can be reflected in better rates of organizational commitment and reduced probability of absences from work or requests for dismissal (turnover) (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016).

Work involvement is an especially important variable in the organizational context, because conceptually it is defined as the degree of psychological identification of the individual with their work and how important it is for the satisfaction of their needs (Gorn & Kanungo, 1980). Individuals engaged with their work show greater interest in their activities and identify with them, thus promoting their job satisfaction, motivation, and effort (Vieira, 2012). Workers with higher levels of engagement show better productivity rates at work (Jaiswal, 2018).

The confirmation of the sixth hypothesis brings with it some considerations about performance and well-being at work, since engaged professionals present better performance in their work activities (Bakker et al., 2008). It is also worth mentioning the existence of an inverse relationship between burnout and engagement, in which professionals with high levels of engagement have low levels of burnout (Schaufeli, 2013). In an attempt to improve the productivity, health and well-being rates of SSC workers, complaint management is a topic that should not be overlooked by managers, as an improvement in customer satisfaction levels through complaint management will trigger an increase in employee engagement levels, while also

improving aspects related to the performance and well-being of internal customers.

As discussed so far, in the context of SSC, only the perceptions of interactional justice do not have a positive impact on post-complaint satisfaction, contradicting, in part, the theoretical assumptions that served as the basis for this study. This result was different from expectations that perceptions of fair interactions within the organizational environment would influence job satisfaction (Diab, 2015) and the post-complaint satisfaction of online retail customers (Ding & Lii, 2016). Thus, it is expected that this study has contributed to the advancement of research on this important organizational phenomenon called SSC by using a relationship marketing approach to investigate the impact of satisfaction with managing complaints on commitment, involvement and engagement at work, in the context of SSC.

Table 4 shows the results obtained in this research in the context of SSC, in comparison with the theoretical assumptions that served as a basis for the development of the hypotheses.

Table 4

Research results in the context of SSC

Relations between constructs	References in the organizational and marketing context	Results in the context of SSC
Perceptions of distributive justice positively influence post-complaint satisfaction.	Tax et al. (1998), Nikbin et al. (2015), and Ding and Lii (2016).	Confirmed hypothesis
Perceptions of procedural justice positively influence post-complaint satisfaction.	Tax et al. (1998), Patlán-Perez et al. (2012), and Jung and Seock (2017).	Confirmed hypothesis
Perceptions of interactional justice positively influence post-complaint satisfaction.	Tax et al. (1998), Wu (2013), Diab (2015), and Ding and Lii (2016).	Unconfirmed hypothesis
Post-complaint satisfaction positively influences organizational commitment.	Valaei and Rezaei (2016), Geisler et al. (2019), and Culibrk et al. (2018).	Confirmed hypothesis
Post-complaint satisfaction positively influences work involvement.	Jaiswal (2018) and Culibrk et al. (2018).	Confirmed hypothesis
Post-complaint satisfaction positively influences engagement at work.	Valaei and Rezaei (2016) and Geisler et al. (2019).	Confirmed hypothesis

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The use of justice theory in the context of SSC is extremely relevant for academic literature, since the branches that use the services provided by the SSC are treated as their clients (Bergeron, 2003; Ulbrich, 2003, 2006; Janssen & Joha, 2006; Schulz & Brenner, 2010; Marciniak, 2013). According to the results presented, the adaptation of the model proposed by Tax et al. (1998) proved to be effective in investigating the impact of perceptions of justice on satisfaction with complaint management in the context of SSC. This was the main academic contribution of this study, as the services provided by the SSC, together with the service that originated the complaint episode, have a direct impact on the work activities of internal clients, and, consequently, on their behaviors in relation to work.

This unprecedented approach in the SSC literature also covers gaps identified, such as the scarcity of studies using statistical methods of analysis, investigation of non-financial results (Richter & Brühl, 2017), impact of work experiences on the behavior of back office professionals (Howcroft & Richardson, 2012) and the investigation of satisfaction with the management of complaints as a predictor of organizational commitment, involvement, and engagement at work (Cavalcante et al., 2014). This study also provides evidence that, by investing in fault resolution and complaint management, managers of SSC and services providers can achieve better levels of organizational commitment, involvement, and engagement at work, making the service sector more attractive for taking on and retaining talent. This issue is quite relevant from a managerial point of view, because, according to the results found in this study, approximately 50% of SSC customers are not satisfied with the management of their complaints.

Taking on and retaining talents (Koval et al., 2016), together with the reduction of labor costs (Tomasino et al., 2014; Paagman et al., 2015), have been some of the main challenges for SSC managers. However, these are conflicting challenges, as the pressure to reduce costs and improve financial performance can negatively affect the health and well-being of workers and, consequently, cause a reduction in their levels of productivity (Howcroft & Richardson, 2012). There is also evidence that engaged workers perform better (Bakker et al., 2008) and workers with high levels of involvement at work have better productivity rates (Jaiswal, 2018). It can be seen here that, through the management of complaints, it is possible to increase the levels of engagement and involvement of internal customers and, consequently, to improve the performance and productivity indexes in the SSC.

When considering the academic and managerial contributions that emerge from this research, it is also suggested to weigh them according to the limitations of this study, presented below. One of the limitations of this research was the use of non-probabilistic sampling, as the results cannot be generalized. Therefore, it is recommended that, in future studies on complaint management in SSC, longitudinal collections should be used, in order to explore the behavior of clients and SSC over time. Another limitation of this study is related to the diversity of the segments in which SSC operate and in which the failure occurred. In this study, national and multinational companies installed in Brazil that operate in the retail, services and industry segments were analyzed. This diversity of segments was reflected in the respondents' assessments due to different organizational cultures, customer expectations and complaint management strategies. Besides, in future research, it is suggested to collect data in SSC that operate in the same segment, so that, afterwards, the segments can be compared and investigated regarding their relationships and specificities.

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