Volume 69 Number 4 Winter 1993

The Effects of Perceived Justice on Complainants' Negative Word-of-Mouth Behavior and Repatronage Intentions

JEFFREY G. BLODGETT
Department of Management and Marketing
School of Business Administration
The University of Mississippi
University, Mississippi

DONALD H. GRANBOIS
Marketing Department
School of Business Administration
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

ROCKNEY G. WALTERS
Marketing Department
School of Business Administration
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

Previous research has found that dissatisfied consumers choose to seek redress, engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior, and exit (i.e., vow never to repatronize the retailer) based upon the perceived likelihood of successful redress, their attitude toward complaining, the level of importance they attach to the defective product, and whether they perceive the problem to be stable or to have been controllable. The authors extend previous research by modeling consumer complaining behavior as a complex, dynamic process, hypothesizing that once a consumer seeks redress, negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are dependent (primarily) upon the consumer's post-complaint perception of justice. As hypothesized, perceived justice was found to be the main determinant of complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and their repatronage intentions, and was found to mediate the effects of likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability and controllability on complaining behavior. The model fit the data very well, explaining 49.1 percent of the variance of negative word-of-mouth and 68.5 percent of the

variance of repatronage intentions. These findings point to the importance of customer service/customer satisfaction, especially since the cost of keeping a current customer satisfied is much less than the cost of attracting a new customer.

INTRODUCTION

The basic premise of the marketing concept is that marketers should strive to create customer satisfaction. Full implementation of this concept requires that marketers should also strive to remedy customer *dissatisfaction*. While satisfaction is assumed to lead to brand loyalty, goodwill, and repeat sales, dissatisfaction with products oftentimes leads to *redress seeking behavior* (i.e., a request for a refund, exchange, or repair, etc.). When a dissatisfied consumer seeks redress the retailer is given the opportunity to remedy the situation. Complainants who feel that justice has been served are likely to repatronize that retailer (and may even become more loyal customers), whereas complainants who perceive a lack of justice are likely to engage in *negative word-of-mouth behavior* (i.e., complain about the retailer to family and friends) and to *exit* (i.e., vow never to patronize that particular retail store again). In fact, one study found that dissatisfied consumers, on average, told nine others about their negative experience, and that some businesses may lose ten to fifteen percent of their annual volume each year because of poor service (Technical Assistance Research Programs, or TARP 1981). Considering that it costs five times as much to attract a new customer as it does to retain an old one (Desatnick 1988), it is essential that retailers pay attention to, and resolve, customer complaints.

The study of consumer complaining behavior has progressed steadily throughout the years (see Day and Landon 1976; Day and Bodur 1978; Day and Ash 1979; Day, Grabicke, Schaetzle, and Staubach 1981; Gilly and Gelb 1982; Bearden and Teel 1983; Richins 1983a, 1983b, 1985, 1987; Bearden and Mason 1984; Folkes 1984; Singh 1990). The focus of recent research has been to explain which particular type of complaint behavior—redress seeking, negative word-of-mouth, or exit—a dissatisfied consumer might choose (Singh 1990). Briefly, previous researchers have found that dissatisfied consumers choose to seek redress, engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior, or exit based upon the perceived *likelihood of successful redress* (Singh 1990; Richins 1987, 1985, 1983a; Granbois, Summers, and Frazier 1979; Day and Landon 1976), their *attitude toward complaining* (Richins 1980, 1982, 1983b, 1987; Bearden and Mason 1984), the level of *product importance* (Richins 1985), and whether they perceive the

problem to be *stable* or to have been *controllable* (Folkes 1984). Consumers who perceive a high likelihood of successful redress, who have a favorable attitude toward complaining (i.e., toward seeking redress), or who are dissatisfied with a product that they feel is important (or *worthwhile,* see Singh 1990) are more likely to seek redress, whereas those consumers who perceive little likelihood of success, whose attitude is such that they are not predisposed toward seeking redress, or who perceive the problem to be stable or to have been controllable are more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and to exit.

Although much progress has been made in our understanding of consumer complaining behavior current models are limited in that they treat complaining behavior as a static phenomenon. In contrast, the proposed model explicitly recognizes that consumer complaining behavior is a dynamic process, and that *once a consumer seeks redress* other complaining behaviors (e.g., negative word-of-mouth and exit) are dependent primarily upon the consumer's post-complaint perception of justice. Though other authors have implicitly recognized the important role perceived justice plays in the complaining process (see Singh 1990; Richins 1987; Day et al. 1981; Day and Landon 1976; Hirschman 1970), little published research to date has explicitly examined the impact of perceived justice on complaining behaviors such as negative word-of-mouth and exit (or, more accurately, *repatronage intentions*). Research that has been conducted suggests that perceived justice is indeed a major determinant of complainants' repatronage intentions and negative word-of-mouth behavior (Tax and Chandrashekaran 1992; Goodwin and Ross 1989; Gilly 1987; Gilly and Gelb 1982; TARP 1981).

The purpose of the present study is to develop and test a model of consumer complaining behavior in which complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are dependent, in large part, upon their perceptions of justice. More specifically, the purpose is to assess the effects of perceived justice on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions in relation to other, previously identified determinants of complaining behavior (specifically, the perceived likelihood of successful redress, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability and controllability attributions). Our model depicts complaining behavior as a complex, dynamic process in which complainants' perceptions of justice are in turn influenced by the perceived likelihood of successful redress, their attitudes toward complaining, the level of importance they attach to the defective product, and whether they perceive the problem to be stable or to have been controllable. The model is calibrated using data from a large sample of dissatisfied consumers who

sought redress from a number of different retailers (e.g., department stores, discount stores, specialty stores) concerning a variety of soft (e.g., apparel) and hard (e.g., small appliances) goods at differing price levels. We test the model using a structural equations modeling approach, thus permitting the identification of both direct and indirect causal effects.

This study has important implications for researchers studying consumer complaining behavior. Including perceived justice into models of consumer complaining behavior provides both researchers, and managers, with greater insights into *why* consumers engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and exit. Modeling complaining behavior as a complex, dynamic process strengthens the complaining behavior conceptual framework, which should enhance the model building efforts of marketing scholars working in the areas of complaining behavior and retail management. The model is also of practical importance; linking complainants' levels of perceived justice to their repatronage intentions and negative word-of-mouth behavior facilitates managerial efforts to measure the effectiveness of their complaint handling policies and procedures in terms of retail sales and profits. Remedying consumer complaints can then be looked upon as a key marketing variable, with an expected return, just like advertising and promotion. An understanding of the benefits (and costs) of this key marketing variable could motivate retail managers to develop better complaint handling policies and procedures to build customer satisfaction.

THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES

Theoretical Development

There is no single theory of consumer complaining behavior; rather, the study of complaining behavior is based upon several different theories from various fields of study. The confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver 1980) and Hirschman's (1970) theory of exit, voice, and loyalty provide the basic framework for the study of complaining behavior, while conceptualization by Day (1984) and Day, Grabicke, Schaetzle, and Staubach (1981) provides important insights into the role of dissatisfaction. Attribution theory (Folkes 1984) and equity theory (Adams 1965) also have important implications for the study of consumer complaining behavior. This section will briefly discuss and apply these various theories (and conceptualization) to the study of consumer complaining behavior, in the hopes of creating a more unified theory, or framework, of complaining behavior.

Confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm. Confirmation/disconfirmation is an evaluative process whereby a consumer compares a product's actual performance to his or her prior expectations of that product. Confirmation occurs when a product performs as expected. Positive disconfirmation occurs when a product performs better than the consumer expected, whereas negative disconfirmation occurs when a product does not perform up to the consumer's expectations (Oliver 1980; Oliver and Linda 1981; Churchill and Surprenant 1982; LaBarbera and Mazursky 1983). Negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction, which is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for complaining behavior (Day 1984). Bearden and Teel (1983) took the confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm a step further, applying it in the context of consumer complaining behavior. Their findings supported an *expectations → disconfirmation → dissatisfaction → complaining behavior* relationship, thus establishing the confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm as the conceptual foundation for the study of complaining behavior.

Dissatisfaction → complaining behavior. Dissatisfaction has been defined as a negative emotion, i.e., an affective response, in response to a specific consumption experience (Woodruff, Cadotte, and Jenkins 1983). Although dissatisfaction is a necessary condition for complaining behavior, dissatisfaction itself has been found to explain only a small percentage of complaining behavior. Day and Landon (1976) asked respondents what action(s) they took in response to their *most* dissatisfying consumer experience, and found that only 20–35 percent of these people complained to the seller, while Bearden and Teel (1983) found dissatisfaction to explain only 15 percent of the variance of complaining behavior. Day (1984) and Day, Grabicke, Schaetzle, and Staubach (1981) provide the most logical explanation of the role of dissatisfaction in complaining behavior. They state that dissatisfaction is motivational in nature and that high levels of dissatisfaction cause people to consider complaining, but in and of itself, does not guarantee complaining behavior. Rather, given dissatisfaction, the decision to complain is contingent upon situational and interpersonal factors. These situational and interpersonal factors are supplied by Hirschman (1970), in his theory of exit, voice, and loyalty.

Hirschman's (1970) theory of exit, voice, and loyalty. Hirschman's (1970) framework explains why some dissatisfied customers seek redress from the retailer (i.e., they voice their complaints) while others just silently vow never to shop there again and take their business elsewhere (i.e., these customers exit). Hirschman posits that consumer complaining behavior is contingent upon the "value of voicing the complaint" (i.e., product importance), the "probability that the complaint will be successful" (i.e.,

likelihood of success), and on "the ability and willingness to take up the voice option" (i.e., attitude toward complaining), and that exit is often a last resort after voice has failed. Consumers who are dissatisfied with a product of high importance, who perceive that their complaint will be successful, and who exhibit a general willingness to seek redress are likely to voice their complaints. If voice (i.e., redress seeking) is not successful (and consequently the complainant perceives a lack of justice) other types of complaining behaviors (i.e., negative word-of-mouth and exit) are likely to follow. In summary, Hirschman's framework provides the conceptual foundation for the inclusion of likelihood of success, product importance, attitude toward complaining, and perceived justice in the study of complaining behavior.

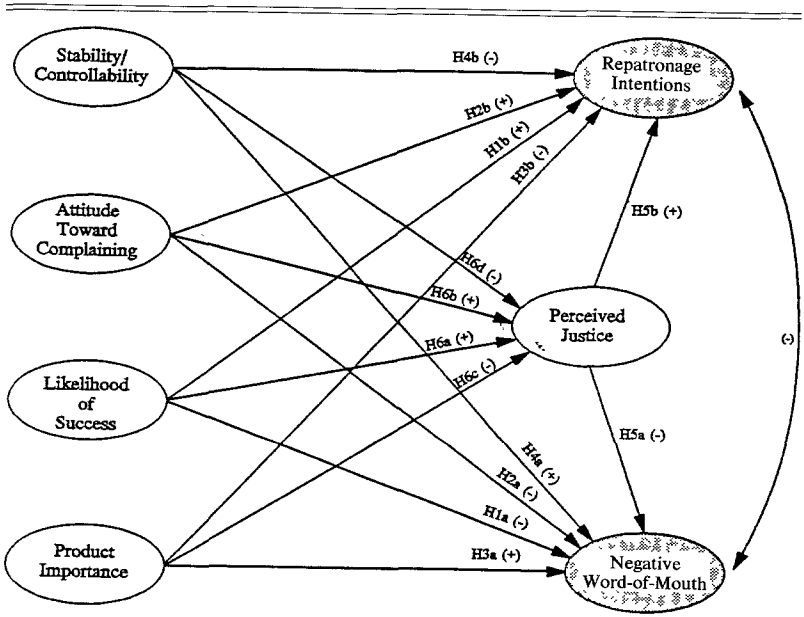
Attribution theory. Several authors have suggested an attributional approach to complaining behavior, most notably Folkes (1984), who stated that "the perceived reason for a product's failure influences how a consumer responds" (1984, p. 398). Folkes has shown attribution theory to be useful in explaining what types of redress (e.g., a refund, exchange, apology, etc.) dissatisfied customers prefer. In a larger context, attribution theory suggests that dissatisfied consumers who perceive the cause to be stable (i.e., similar problems are expected to occur in the future) or controllable (i.e., the consumer believes that the retailer could have prevented the problem) are more likely to exit and to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior than dissatisfied consumers who perceive that the problem is unlikely to occur again and that the retailer is not responsible for the problem. Because of their potential to explain why some dissatisfied consumers engage in negative word-of-mouth or exit, stability and controllability attributions are included in our model of complaining behavior.

Equity theory: Perceived justice. Building upon the foundations of equity theory (Adams 1965), the literature in social psychology and organizational behavior suggests that individuals who are involved in conflicts or disputes base their perceptions of justice on several factors: the perceived fairness of the tangible outcome, or decision (i.e., distributive justice; Homans 1961), the perceived fairness of the procedures used in arriving at that outcome (i.e., procedural justice; Thibaut and Walker 1975; Lind and Tyler 1988), and the perceived fairness of the manner in which they were treated throughout the conflict resolution process (i.e., interactional justice; Bies and Moag 1986; Bies and Shapiro 1987). Research in the context of wage disputes, hiring and promotion decisions, labor relation disputes (Greenberg 1982), and in legal settings (Thibaut and Walker 1975) has shown that even if concerned parties do not receive the outcome desired they may still be satisfied *if* they perceive that the procedures used in

arriving at that outcome were fair (see Greenberg and Folger 1983), and if they perceive the interaction to have been positive (Bies and Moag 1986; Bies and Shapiro 1987). This body of research has direct implications for the study of complaining behavior. In the context of complaining behavior, the distributive component refers to the perceived fairness of the redress offered by the retailer (i.e., the amount of refund, whether an exchange was offered, free repair, etc.), the procedural component refers to the perceived fairness of the retailer's return and exchange policy, and the interactional component encompasses the manner in which the retailer responded to the consumer's complaint (i.e., whether the retailer responded in a timely and courteous manner, whether the consumer was given a chance to explain the circumstances, etc.). Based on the aforementioned literature, and on conventional wisdom, we argue that perceived justice is a critical factor that determines whether a complainant will repatronize that retailer or engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and exit, and that in building a valid model of complaining behavior perceived justice must be included as a key mediating variable.

FIGURE 1

A Proposed Model of Complaining Behavior (for those dissatisfied consumers who sought redress)



Proposed model. The model to be tested (as shown in Figure 1) hypothesizes that complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are dependent, in part, upon their perceptions of the likelihood of successful redress, their attitudes toward complaining, the level of importance they attach to the defective product, and whether or not they perceive the problem to be stable or to have been controllable. One of the key contributions of our study is that we extend previous research by hypothesizing that—*once a consumer seeks redress*—negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are dependent, in large part, upon the complainants' ensuing level of perceived justice. In addition to having direct effects, we also hypothesize that likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability and controllability *indirectly* affect complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions by influencing their perceptions of justice.

Hypotheses

Within the model a total of 14 hypotheses are tested. Eight of these are new hypotheses, whereas six have been examined in previous studies, but in a slightly different context (i.e., this study examines the complaining behavior of only those dissatisfied consumers who actually sought redress from the retailer).

Effects of likelihood of success on complaining behavior. Likelihood of success refers to the consumer's perception of the retailer's willingness to remedy the problem (e.g., grant a refund, or offer an exchange, etc.), without a hassle (Hirschman 1970). Researchers have consistently found that dissatisfied consumers who perceive a high likelihood of success are apt to seek redress (Singh 1990; Richins 1987, 1985, 1983a; Granbois et al. 1977; Day and Landon 1976), whereas dissatisfied consumers who perceive the probability of success to be low are likely to exit and to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior (Singh 1990), possibly as an attempt to "get even" with the offending retailer. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H1a: Likelihood of success will have a negative effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior.

H1b: Likelihood of success will have a positive effect on complainants' repatronage intentions.

Effects of attitude toward complaining on complaining behavior. Attitude toward complaining refers to an individual's predisposition toward seeking redress from retailers when dissatisfied with products (Richins 1980, 1982, 1983b, 1987; Bearden and Mason 1984). Some people are

assertive and will seek redress whenever they are dissatisfied with a product, while others are reluctant to seek redress even when highly dissatisfied. Because Day and his colleagues (Day and Ash 1979; Day and Bodur 1978; Day and Landon 1976) have shown that consumers who are reluctant to seek redress are more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and to exit than consumers who have positive attitudes toward complaining, it is hypothesized that:

H2a: Attitude toward complaining will have a negative effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior.

H2b: Attitude toward complaining will have a positive effect on complainants' repatronage intentions.

Effects of product importance on complaining behavior. The concept of product importance recognizes that consumers attach more "worth" to some products than to others (see Bloch and Richins 1983; Laurent and Kapferer 1985; McQuarrie and Munson 1987; Zaichkowsky 1985). It is reasonable to assume that consumers who are dissatisfied with products they feel are important (or worthwhile, see Singh 1990) will experience higher levels of stress, frustration, and anger than consumers who are dissatisfied with products of lesser importance. Because of their anger, consumers who are dissatisfied with an "important" product are likely to want to "hurt" the offending retailer (Folkes 1984), possibly by engaging in negative word-of-mouth behavior and by vowing never to repatronize the retailer (Singh 1990). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H3a: Product importance will have a positive effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior.

H3b: Product importance will have a negative effect on complainants' repatronage intentions.

Effects of stability and controllability on complaining behavior. Given dissatisfaction with a product, Folkes (1984) posits that consumers will then ask themselves whether the retailer could have foreseen and thus prevented the problem (i.e., controllability) and whether similar types of problems are likely to occur in the future (i.e., stability). Consumers who feel that the retailer could have prevented the problem will be angry, and consequently may seek to inflict damage on the offending retailer by vowing never to shop there again, and by warning friends and family not to patronize the retailer. Likewise, consumers who perceive that similar problems will occur in the future are likely to avoid that retailer in the future (i.e., exit), and to warn friends and family about the retailer.

We argue that it is the interaction of stability and controllability that determines whether a dissatisfied consumer will engage in negative word-of-mouth or exit. That is, a dissatisfied consumer will most likely exit and engage in negative word-of-mouth when the underlying cause is perceived to be stable *and* controllable. When the product failure is perceived to be controllable, but not stable (or stable, but not controllable), negative word-of-mouth and exit are somewhat less likely to occur. Finally, when the cause is perceived as neither stable nor controllable the consumer is not likely to exit or to complain to friends; in this latter situation the consumer should be willing to give the retailer another chance. Based on these arguments, it is hypothesized that:

H4a: The interaction of stability and controllability will have a positive effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior.

H4b: The interaction of stability and controllability will have a negative effect on complainants' repatronage intentions.

Effects of perceived justice on complaining behavior. This study is based on the premise that complainants' repatronage intentions and negative word-of-mouth behavior are dependent, in large part, on their perceptions of justice. Complainants who subsequently perceive a lack of justice will react by engaging in negative word-of-mouth behavior and by vowing never to repatronize the offending retailer. These arguments are supported by research which shows that consumers who were dissatisfied with the retailer's response engaged in twice as much negative word-of-mouth behavior than did consumers who were satisfied with the retailer's response (TARP 1981), and by Gilly and Gelb (1982), who found that complainants' levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the retailer's response had a significant impact on their repatronage intentions. Support also comes from Tax and Chandrashekaran (1992), who found that consumers who felt their complaint was handled poorly reported higher negative word-of-mouth intentions and lower repatronage intentions, and from Goodwin and Ross (1989, 1990), who found that complainants were willing to repatronize the offending service provider *if* they perceived the complaint procedure to be fair and the interaction to be positive. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H5a: Perceived justice will have a negative effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior.

H5b: Perceived justice will have a positive effect on complainants' repatronage intentions.

Effects of likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability on perceived justice. In addition to having direct effects on complaining behavior, likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability are hypothesized to *indirectly* affect complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions by influencing their perceptions of justice. Consumers who perceive little likelihood of successful redress, who have unfavorable attitudes toward complaining, or who are dissatisfied with products they feel are important are likely to experience high levels of stress and frustration when seeking redress, and consequently are likely to perceive the act of complaining as an injustice in and of itself. Because of their stress and frustration these complainants are more likely to perceive an overall lack of justice even *if* they receive the redress they desire. Complainants who perceive the problem to have been controllable are also likely to perceive the act of complaining as an injustice in and of itself because the problem should never have occurred in the first place. Likewise, complainants who perceive the problem as being stable are likely to perceive a lack of justice, because despite their efforts at seeking redress similar problems are expected to occur in the future. Because they are likely to perceive a lack of justice, these complainants consequently are more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and are less likely to repatronize the offending retailer. Based on these arguments the following hypotheses are presented:

H6a: Likelihood of success will have a positive effect on perceived justice.

H6b: Attitude toward complaining will have a positive effect on perceived justice.

H6c: Product importance will have a negative effect on perceived justice.

H6d: Stability/Controllability will have a negative effect on perceived justice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Unit of Analysis

Since the primary purpose of this study was to examine the effect of perceived justice on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions *this study included only those dissatisfied consumers who sought redress from the retailer.* (Dissatisfied consumers who did

not seek redress would not have experienced a post-complaint feeling of justice, or a lack thereof; therefore, they were excluded from this study.) Respondents were asked to report on their most recent dissatisfying experience (that occurred within the last twelve months) regarding a product purchased at a retail store. The instance of dissatisfaction was to be one in which the consumer was truly dissatisfied with the product (i.e., because the product did not perform to expectations) rather than an instance in which the consumer returned a product because it was the wrong size, color, etc.

Method

A total of 201 useable surveys were collected. The data were collected via a self-report questionnaire administered to staff employees at two large universities (a midwestern university, and a university in the mid-south), and to households in a large midwestern city. Given Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) recommendation of a minimum sample size of 150 when testing a structural model via LISREL, a sample size of 201 appears to be adequate. Based on a more stringent requirement of an n of 5 for each item, plus an additional n of 5 for each structural parameter to be estimated, 175 subjects were needed to obtain meaningful parameter estimates; our sample size exceeded this level.

Descriptive Statistics

Respondent demographics. Of the 201 respondents, 83.6% were female and 16.4% were male. Ninety-four percent were Caucasian and six percent were African-American, Asian, or Native American. Approximately 11% were between the ages of 18–24, 27% were between the ages of 25–34, 37% were in the 35–44 age group, 21% were in the 45–65 age group, and 3% were age 65 or older. Forty-eight percent reported earning household income between $20,000 and $34,999, 26% earned between $35,000 and $44,999, 22% earned between $45,000 and $64,999, and 3.5% earned in excess of $65,000. Approximately 25% reported that their highest educational level was high school graduate, while 40% had attended some college, 22% were college graduates, and 13% had done graduate work. Approximately 14% held professional and 10% held white collar jobs, while 69% worked in clerical positions, and 7% worked in skilled, blue collar, or other occupations. Ninety percent reported buying the prod-

uct for themselves or their family, while 10% purchased the product as a gift.

Types of products and prior purchases. A wide cross-section of retailers were represented in the study, including mass merchants, department stores, discount stores, specialty stores, variety stores, and superstores. Complaints arose over a variety of products, including clothing (sweaters, dresses, jackets, etc.), small appliances (answering machines, irons, ceiling fans, etc.), shoes (basketball, jogging), jewelry (watches and rings), electronic items (vacuum cleaners, cameras, etc.), and other miscellaneous items (purses, playpens, toys, hampster cages, etc.). The average cost of the focal product was $90.72 (s.d. = $157.92). Approximately 93% of the respondents had made a purchase at the focal retail store prior to their dissatisfying purchase experience, while 7% were first-time customers. Respondents, on average, purchased $270 (s.d. = $361) worth of merchandise at the focal store within the last six months. This figure is in line with research by Sears, which found that its credit card holders spent, on average, $500 per year at its stores (DeMott and Nash 1984).

Negative word-of-mouth behavior. Approximately 75% of all respondents reported that they engaged in negative word-of-mouth behavior. Respondents, on average, told 4.88 (s.d. = 6.11) people about their dissatisfying experience. This figure is line with previous research by Richins (1983c, 1987), who found that dissatisfied consumers, on average, told approximately five other people about their dissatisfaction.

Measures

Scale development. After first specifying the domain of each construct, ad hoc scales were then developed. As recommended by Churchill (1979), Schwab (1986), and Nunnally (1978), multiple items were developed to measure each construct. Several of the items were taken from the relevant literature, while others were based on our exploratory interviews with consumers and store managers. A formal pretest of the questionnaire was conducted using a sample of 34 consumers who had experienced some dissatisfaction with a product purchased in the recent past. Based on statistical examination (including analyses of means and standard deviations, inter-item correlations, principle components factor analysis, and Cronbach's alpha) of the pre-test data several of the items were modified. In order to further purify our measures, several of the pre-test respondents were then asked to comment on these modified items. The questionnaire was then submitted to five "expert judges," as recommended by Churchill (1979) and Schwab (1986), who were asked to comment on the validity of

the items, and the readability of the questionnaire. Based upon their recommendations additional modifications were made. Once the final set of data were collected statistical analyses were again performed. A factor analysis, using LISREL VII (Joreskog and Sorbom 1990), was also performed to assess the convergent and discriminant properties of the constructs (the factor analysis will be discussed later in the paper).

The variables were measured using seven-point (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) scales. Several of the items were negatively worded in order to "minimize 'halo' effects and other response biases" (Sekaran 1984, p. 149). In order to further reduce response bias the independent measures were placed before the dependent measures, as suggested by Salancik and Pfeffer (1977).

Independent variables. A global scale measuring likelihood of success was developed based on interviews with both consumers and retail managers. A scale measuring attitude toward complaining was based, in large part, on Richins (1983b) scale measuring consumer assertiveness. Based on conceptualization by Bloch and Richins (1983) a global measure of product importance was developed; items were taken from scales developed by Zaichkowsky (1985), Laurent and Kapferer (1985), and McQuarrie and Munson (1987). Since no published scale was found measuring controllability and stability four items were developed to measure these two attributions, based on their conceptual definitions (Folkes 1984). Each controllability item was then multiplied by a stability item, thus creating two indicators of stability/controllability for causal modeling purposes. A global measure of perceived justice was created, reflecting the distributive, procedural, and interactional dimensions of justice (Greenberg 1982). Reliability for most of these constructs was fairly high, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .72 to .93 (see Table 1 for a listing of the final set of items, construct means and standard deviations, and Cronbach alphas.)

Dependent variables. Consistent with previous studies, negative word-of-mouth was defined as telling friends or relatives (that is, relatives not living in the consumer's home) about the dissatisfying experience, and was operationalized using a single item, seven-category ordinal scale. During pilot-testing some respondents stated that they definitely would not repatronize the offending retailer for *any* type of item, some respondents remarked that they would still shop at the offending retail store for basic items but would go elsewhere to purchase more "important" items, while others stated that they definitely would shop at that retail store in the future. In order to capture these varying degrees of repatronage intentions three seven-point Likert type items were developed. Cronbach's alpha for this scale equaled .87 (see Table 2).

RESULTS

Anderson and Gerbing (1988) recommend a two-stage approach to causal modeling, in which the measurement model is first confirmed and then the structural model is built. The measurement model provides an assessment of discriminant and convergent validity. Given that the measurement model provides an acceptable fit to the data, the structural model then provides an "assessment of nomological validity" (Anderson and Gerbing 1988, p. 411). This two-stage approach was followed using LISREL VII (Joreskog and Sorbom 1990) with maximum likelihood estimation.

Measures of Fit

Several measures were used to evaluate the model. The first of these is the chi-square statistic. Since some of the data violated the assumption of multivariate normality the *Satorra-Bentler chi-square statistic* was used rather than the maximum likelihood chi-square test statistic. When the data are nonnormal the maximum likelihood χ^2 is inflated, thus indicating a poorer fit than appropriate, while the Satorra-Bentler technique produces a χ^2 and corresponding *p*-value that more accurately reflect the fit of the model (Bentler 1989). The widely used *goodness-of-fit index* (GFI) was also employed. Since the GFI is a "stand alone" index (i.e., its value is based solely on the hypothesized model; see Marsh, Balla, and McDonald 1988) the *Tucker-Lewis* index (Tucker and Lewis 1973) was also used. The Tucker-Lewis index allows the researcher to determine the degree of improvement in fit of the hypothesized model over the null model (Marsh, Balla, and McDonald 1988). The Tucker-Lewis index takes into account degrees of freedom, and has been shown to reflect model fit very well at all sample sizes (Anderson and Gerbing 1984; Marsh, Balla, and McDonald 1988). The *squared multiple correlation* (SMC) is also used. SMC indicates the amount of variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the set of independent variables (i.e., the structural equation).

The Measurement Model

Following the recommendation of Anderson and Gerbing (1988) the measurement model was first confirmed. The measurement model included all of those items measuring both the independent constructs and those measuring the dependent constructs. The measurement model originally included 19 items; however, based on an analysis of the normalized residuals and modification indices two items were dropped from subsequent analyses (Churchill 1979; Schwab 1986). The final measurement

TABLE 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha's, and List of Items for Each Construct[1]

	Mean	S.D.	Alpha
Likelihood of Success:	5.46	1.31	.76
— This store encourages its customers to return items that they are not satisfied with.			
— When I bought this product, this store had a reputation for "Satisfaction guaranteed, or your money back!"			
— When this problem first occurred, I was confident that the store would let me exchange the product, give me a refund, or would repair the product.			
Attitude Toward Complaining*:	4.66	1.35	.73
— If a defective product is inexpensive, I usually keep it rather than ask the retailer for a refund, or an exchange.			
— I am usually reluctant to complain to a store regardless of how bad a product is.			
— In general, I am *more* likely to return an unsatisfactory product than most people I know.			
Product Importance:	4.65	1.46	.81
— I depend upon this product a great deal.			
— This product means a lot to me.			
— Compared to most products I buy, this was a fairly important product.			
Stability/Controllability[2]:	3.28	1.23	.72
— This type of thing probably happens all the time at this store.			
— This store hardly ever makes mistakes.			
— The retailer could have taken steps to prevent this problem from occurring.			
— If the retailer had just paid more attention to what it was doing, the problem never would have happened in the first place.			

Perceived Justice:	4.98	2.03	.93
— I was very *dissatisfied* with the store's response to my complaint!			
— Overall, I think that the store treated me fairly regarding my complaint.			
— When I complained to the retailer about this product, I got pretty much what I asked for (regarding a refund or exchange, etc.).			
Repatronage Intentions:	4.95	1.92	.87
— Knowing what I do now, if I had it to do it all over again, I would not shop at this store—for *this* type of product.			
— Because of what happened, I will never shop at this store again—for *any* kind of product.			
— I would recommend to a friend that he/she shop at this store.			
Negative Word-of-Mouth[3]:			
— How many friends or relatives (relatives not living at home) did you tell?	4.88	6.11	—

[1] Seven point (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) scales were employed.

[2] Stability/controllability is the sum score of two multiplicative terms, and is measured on a scale of 1–7.

[3] This is the actual number of friends and relatives. For causal modeling purposes, negative word-of-mouth was subsequently rescaled on a 7-category, ordinal scale.

* The two items that were dropped are:

I feel uncomfortable when I have to return a defective product to a store. (Attitude Toward Complaining)

I would recommend to a friend that he/she shop at this store. (Repatronage Intentions)

model produced a nonsignificant Satorra-Bentler chi-square (χ^2_{99} = 117.17, p = .10), a GFI of .932 and a Tucker-Lewis index of .975, all of which indicate that the measurement model provides an acceptable fit to the data. (See Table 2 for the correlation matrix among the remaining 17 indicators and Table 3 for the results of the measurement model.) By providing an acceptable fit to the data the measurement model also provides strong evidence of both discriminant and convergent validity among the latent constructs (see Anderson and Gerbing 1988). The correlations among the latent constructs are shown in Table 4; since all of the correlations among the independent variables are low multicollinearity does not appear to be a problem.

The Complaining Behavior Model

After confirming the measurement model the structural model was then tested. The structural model fits the data very well, producing a nonsignificant chi-square (Satorra-Bentler χ^2_{104} = 121.15, p = .12), a GFI of .930, and a Tucker-Lewis index of .977. Importantly, the explanatory power of the model is quite high; the SMC's indicate that the structural equations explained 49.1% of the variance of negative word-of-mouth and 68.5% of the variance of repatronage intentions. See Figure 2 for the final model, and a summary of the standardized estimates and fit indices.

The effects of perceived justice on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. As hypothesized (H5a and H5b), perceived justice had a significant impact on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (−.500) and on their repatronage intentions (.593). Complainants who perceived that justice had been served were less likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior, and reported higher repatronage intentions than those complainants who perceived a lack of justice. These findings confirm the central thesis of this study, that complainants' repatronage intentions and their negative word-of-mouth behavior are dependent primarily upon their post-complaint perceptions of justice.

The direct effects of likelihood of successful redress on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. As hypothesized (H1a), likelihood of success had a significant effect (−.252) on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior. Complainants who initially perceived little likelihood of successful redress were more likely to have engaged in negative word-of-mouth behavior than complainants who initially perceived a high likelihood of success. Contrary to H1b, likelihood of success did not have a significant, positive effect on complainants'

TABLE 2

Correlation Matrix Among Indicators

	JUST1	JUST2	JUST3	REPAT1	REPAT2	NWOM	IMP1	IMP2	IMP3	ATT1	ATT2	ATT3	LOS1	LOS2	LOS2	SC1	SC2
JUST1	1.000																
JUST2	.818	1.000															
JUST3	.793	.814	1 000														
REPAT1	.596	.512	.479	1.000													
REPAT2	659	.584	.557	.703	1.000												
NWOM	− 531	−.464	−.479	− 452	−.513	1.000											
IMP1	−.229	−.168	−.156	−.129	− 174	.144	1.000										
IMP2	− 288	−.238	− 277	−.171	−.178	.343	574	1 000									
IMP3	−.242	−.146	− 176	−.136	−.129	.306	.508	.632	1.000								
ATT1	.146	.137	161	.062	128	− 104	−.068	.034	018	1 000							
ATT2	.115	.108	122	.119	.171	− 066	−.041	−.005	− 017	.401	1 000						
ATT3	.094	.106	.131	.054	.083	.025	.065	.141	.080	.372	.428	1.000					
LOS1	.327	347	.289	.328	.370	− 335	−.053	− 057	.026	−.008	− 005	−.087	1.000				
LOS2	.147	.180	.172	.210	.195	−.209	.048	.009	.040	−.014	−.037	−.091	.663	1 000			
LOS3	− 010	− 030	− 009	032	043	− 070	−.050	028	.004	−.010	−.030	−.046	.386	.485	1.000		
SC1	−.240	−.238	−.161	−.396	−.281	.117	.188	.073	.029	.071	− 030	.032	−.212	− 161	−.113	1.000	
SC2	−.214	− 225	−.173	−.394	− 207	.062	.104	036	−.014	.112	120	.102	−.231	−.241	−.090	.505	1.000

TABLE 3

Standardized Estimates for Measurement Model

	Factor Loadings							Theta
	Just	Repat	Nwom	Imp	Att	Los	S/C	Delta
Just1	.916							.161
Just2	.900							.189
Just3	.878							.229
Repat1		.829						.313
Repat2		.848						.281
Nwom			.894					.200
Imp1				.658				.567
Imp2				.867				.248
Imp3				.740				.453
Att1					.596			.645
Att2					.656			.569
Att3					.648			.580
Los1						.824		.321
Los2						.815		.335
Los3						.511		.739
SC1							.681	.536
SC2							.741	.450

repatronage intentions. Thus, complainants' repatronage intentions appear to be independent of their initial perceptions of the likelihood of successful redress.

The direct effects of attitude toward complaining on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. Hypotheses 2a and 2b were rejected; attitude toward complaining had no significant, direct effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior or on their repatronage intentions. Contrary to previous research, these findings show that complainants' repatronage intentions and negative word-of-mouth behavior are unaffected by their attitudes toward complaining.

The direct effects of product importance on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. As hypothesized (H3a), product importance had a significant effect (.260) on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior. Complainants who attached a high level of importance to the defective product were more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior than complainants who felt that the de-

TABLE 4

Correlations Among the Latent Constructs (Measurement Model)

	Just	Imp	Att	Los	S/C	Repat	Nwom
Just	1.000						
Imp	−.327	1.000					
Att	.212	.072	1.000				
Los	.311*	−.008	−.081	1.000			
S/C	−.322*	.105	.148	−.357*	1.000		
Repat	.755*	−.239	.191	.358*	−.543*	1.000	
Nwom	−.615*	.417*	−.079	−.361*	.141	−.642*	1.000

* These correlations are significant beyond the $p = .05$ level.

fective product was not important. Contrary to H3b, product importance did not have a significant, negative effect on complainants' repatronage intentions. Thus, complainants' repatronage intentions appear to be independent of the level of product importance.

The direct effects of stability/controllability on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. Hypothesis 4a was rejected; the interaction of stability and controllability did not significantly affect complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior. Thus, complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior appears to be unaffected by whether they perceive the problem to be stable or to have been controllable by the retailer. As hypothesized (H4b), stability/controllability did have a significant impact (−.299) on complainants' repatronage intentions. Complainants who perceived the problem to be stable, or to have been controllable (or both) reported less favorable repatronage intentions than those complainants who perceived the problem to be neither stable or controllable. (It should be noted that the main effects of both stability and controllability were also tested, but neither were found to be significant.)

The effects of likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability on perceived justice. As hypothesized, likelihood of success (H6a) and attitude toward complaining (H6b) had significant, positive effects on perceived justice (.229 and .272, respectively), while product importance (H6c) and stability/controllability (H6d) both had significant, negative effects on perceived justice (−.318 and −.247, respectively). Complainants who perceived a high likelihood of successful redress, or who had a positive attitude toward complaining were more likely to feel that justice had been served, while complainants who were dissatisfied with an important product, or who perceived the

underlying cause of the problem to be stable or controllable were more likely to perceive a lack of justice; see Figure 2.

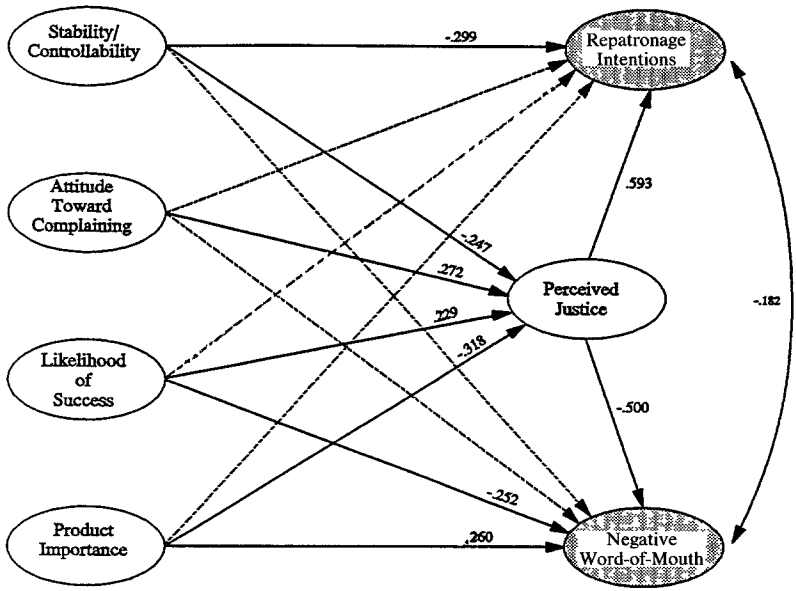
Indirect and total effects of likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability on complaining behavior. By influencing their perceptions of justice likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability *indirectly* affected complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions. In order to better understand the full effect of each of these variables on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions, one must sum their direct and indirect effects. Interestingly, when the indirect effect of likelihood of success on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (−.115) is added to its direct effect (−.252) one finds that this variable actually had a *total* effect of −.367 on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior. Further analyses of direct and indirect effects reveal that product importance also had a large total effect (.419) on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior, and that stability/controllability had a large total effect (−.446) on complainants' repatronage intentions. Despite their lack of direct effects, one finds that attitude toward complaining and stability/controllability indirectly affected complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (with indirect effects of −.136 and .124, respectively), and that likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, and product importance indirectly affected complainants' repatronage intentions (with indirect effects of .136, .161, and −.189, respectively). See Table 5 for a summary of all direct, indirect, and total effects.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Previous research has modeled complaining behavior as a static phenomenon, without taking into account the outcome of the redress seeking episode. The results of this study show that consumer complaining behavior is actually a dynamic process, and that *once a consumer seeks redress* negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are then dependent (primarily) upon the complainants' perception of justice. The significant role that perceived justice plays in consumer complaining behavior suggests that dissatisfied consumers are quite willing to give the retailer another chance *if* the retailer stands behind the product and guarantees customer satisfaction. As long as the retailer ensures satisfaction most complainants will not engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior or exit. Rather, because they perceive the retailer as being fair and just these complainants may actually become more loyal customers! However, if the

FIGURE 2

Estimated Final Model of Complaining Behavior (for those dissatisfied consumers who sought redress)



Dashed lines represent nonsignificant ($p > .05$) hypothesized paths

Standardized Path Coefficients (Gamma Matrix)

	LOS	ATT	IMP	S/C
JUSTICE	.229*	.272*	-.318*	-.247*
REPAT	.097	.113	-.029	-.299*
NWOM	-.252*	.006	.260*	-.141

Standardized Path Coefficients (Beta Matrix)

	JUSTICE	REPAT	NWOM
REPAT	.593*	---	---
NWOM	-.500*	---	---

* these coefficients are significant at the $p = 05$ level

Fit Indices

S-B $X^2_{104} = 121.15$, $p = .12$
GFI = .930
Tucker-Lewis index = .977

SMC Repat = .685
SMC NWOM = .491
SMC Justice = .329

TABLE 5

Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Each Variable on Complaining Behavior (Standardized Coefficients)

	Negative Word-of-Mouth		*Repatronage Intentions*
Likelihood of Success			
LOS → NWOM	−.252	*LOS → REPAT*	.000
LOS → PJUST → NWOM	−.115	*LOS → PJUST → REPAT*	.136
Total effects	−.367	Total effects	.136
Attitude Toward Complaining			
ATT → NWOM	.000	*ATT → REPAT*	.000
ATT → PJUST → NWOM	−.136	*ATT → PJUST → REPAT*	.161
Total effects	−.136	Total effects	.161
Product Importance			
IMP → NWOM	.260	*IMP → REPAT*	.000
IMP → PJUST → NWOM	.159	*IMP → PJUST → REPAT*	−.189
Total effects	.419	Total effects	−.189
Stability/Controllability			
S/C → NWOM	.000	*S/C → REPAT*	−.299
S/C → PJUST → NWOM	.124	*S/C → PJUST → REPAT*	−.147
Total effects	.124	Total effects	−.446
Perceived Justice			
PJUST → NWOM	−.500	*PJUST → REPAT*	.593

The indirect effects of these variables are obtained by multiplying the standardized coefficients for their direct effects on perceived justice times the direct effects of perceived justice on negative word-of-mouth and repatronage intentions, respectively. For example, the indirect effect of likelihood of success on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (−.115) is obtained by multiplying the direct effect of likelihood of success on perceived justice (.229) times the direct effect of perceived justice on negative word-of-mouth (−.500). The *total* effect of likelihood of success on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (−.367) is then obtained by summing its indirect (−.115) and direct effects (−.252).

retailer does not stand behind the product and ensure customer satisfaction complainants are likely to react by telling several friends about their dissatisfying experience and by vowing never to repatronize the offending retailer.

Other key findings are that dissatisfied consumers who perceived little likelihood of successful redress, or who were dissatisfied with products they felt were important were more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior. These consumers probably were very frustrated with the retailer and felt a need to "get it off their chest" by telling friends and

relatives. These findings illustrate the importance of the customer service/customer satisfaction concept. Firms that adopt this philosophy and communicate it to their customers are less likely to be the subject of negative word-of-mouth communications when problems do occur because their customers are more confident that their problems will be resolved satisfactorily. Dissatisfied customers who perceive a high likelihood of success, and who feel that their problems are equally as important to the retailer, most likely will first seek redress and will not engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior unless they are subsequently dissatisfied with the retailer's response to their complaint.

Another important finding is that dissatisfied consumers who perceived the problem to be stable or controllable were less likely to repatronize the offending retailer. Consumers who perceived the problem to be stable probably wished to avoid that retailer in the future, while consumers who perceived that the retailer could have prevented the problem probably were angry and may have vowed to "get even" by never shopping there again. This finding should be of particular concern to retailers. In order to retain these customers' business, it is important that the retailer apologize (Bies and Shapiro 1987) and take responsibility for any problems that may have occurred. The retailer should also thank the customer for bringing the problem to the retailer's attention, and should make a commitment to the customer to do better in the future. Complainants who perceive that the retailer is sincerely concerned, and is genuinely committed to improve, may be more likely to give the retailer another chance.

Other key findings are that likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability indirectly affected complaining behavior by influencing complainants' perceptions of justice. Consumers who perceived little likelihood of success, who had unfavorable attitudes toward complaining, who were dissatisfied with products they felt were important, or who perceived the cause to be stable or controllable were less likely to perceive that justice had been served, and hence were more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior and less likely to repatronize the offending retailer. Interestingly, when their indirect effects are taken into consideration one finds that likelihood of success and product importance substantially impacted on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior (with total effects of $-.367$ and .419, respectively), and that stability/controllability had a major impact on complainants' repatronage intentions (with a total effect of $-.446$). These findings underscore the complex nature of complaining behavior. In order to better uncover complex relationships such as these, another key implication is that complaining behavior should be examined within the context

of a structural equations model. Because structural models can uncover both direct and indirect (and reciprocal; Long 1983) relationships among variables we recommend that future researchers continue this approach.

Five hypotheses were not supported. Neither likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, nor product importance had a significant direct effect on complainants' repatronage intentions, whereas neither attitude toward complaining nor stability/controllability had a significant direct effect on complainants' negative word-of-mouth behavior. It should be noted that these findings are due to the strength of perceived justice as a mediator between these variables and complaining behavior. Although previous research has found that likelihood of success, attitude toward complaining, and product importance play a critical role in determining whether a dissatisfied consumer will *first* seek redress, engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior, or exit (Singh 1990; Richins 1987, 1985, 1983a; Bearden and Mason 1984), this study shows that *once* a dissatisfied consumer seeks redress, negative word-of-mouth behavior and repatronage intentions are then dependent (primarily) upon the complainants' perceptions of justice. On the whole, the entire set of findings indicates that failure to include perceived justice in models of consumer complaining behavior can result in misspecified models and unreliable findings.

LIMITATIONS

This study is subject to several limitations. First, the sampling frame included only those dissatisfied consumers who complained to the retailer (i.e., sought redress); dissatisfied consumers who did not seek redress were excluded from this study. Consequently, this study does not provide a complete picture of the complaining behavior process. In order to better understand the roles that variables such as likelihood of successful redress, attitude toward complaining, product importance, and stability/controllability play in determining whether dissatisfied consumers will seek redress, engage in negative word-of-mouth behavior, or vow never to repatronize the retailer (i.e., exit) future research should examine how these relationships differ between those dissatisfied consumers who *sought* redress and those dissatisfied consumers who *did not seek* redress. For example, one might find that the relationship between likelihood of success and repatronage intentions is stronger for that group of dissatisfied consumers who did not seek redress than it is for that group of dissatisfied consumers who did seek redress. Secondly, because the current sample was comprised mainly of white, middle-class consumers living in the midwest or midsouth, and was limited to products purchased at retail

stores, the generalizability (Cook and Campbell 1979) of our model is somewhat limited. An interesting project would be to test the model using data from a broader mix of respondents (e.g., different ethnic groups, such as Hispanics, Asians, etc.) and to extend it to other purchase settings (e.g., automobiles, major appliances, direct mail purchases, and services industries such as banking, airlines, and hotels, etc.). The lack of a validation sample is also a limitation of this study. A validation sample would provide strong evidence as to the validity of the model (Cook and Campbell 1979); however, the size of our sample (n = 201) precluded us from validating our findings. Finally, it appears that key explanatory variables were not included in the model. Although we were able to explain 68.5% of the variance of repatronage intentions, we were able to explain less than half (49.1%) of the variance of negative word-of-mouth. Clearly, other variables, such as *negative affect* (or emotion, Westbrook 1987), are missing from the model. Future research should expand the model to include other possible determinants of complaining behavior.

SUMMARY

Because of the impact that perceived justice has on retail profits, remedying consumer complaints should be thought of as a key marketing variable. It is much easier to keep current customers satisfied than it is to attract new customers, especially given slow growth in retail sales. A widely promoted, and successfully executed policy of "satisfaction guaranteed" gives customers greater confidence that any problems they might encounter will be remedied in a timely and courteous manner. Because of this confidence, dissatisfied consumers are more likely to first seek redress, thus giving the retailer a chance to remedy the problem. As a result of the retailer standing behind the product and ensuring customer satisfaction, many complainants will henceforth become loyal customers, and will spend an even greater percentage of their sales dollars at that particular retailer.

REFERENCES

Adams, J. S. (1965), "Inequity in Social Change," in L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology,* (Vol. 2), New York, NY: Academic Press.

Anderson, J. C., and Gerbing, D. W. (1984), "The Effect of Sampling Error on Convergence, Improper Solutions, and Goodness-of-Fit Indices for Maximum Likelihood Confirmatory Factor Analysis," *Psychometrika,* **49,** 155–73.

——— (1988), "Structural Equation Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach," *Psychological Bulletin,* **103,** 411–23.

Bearden, W. O., and Mason, J. B. (1984), "An Investigation of Influences on Consumer

Complaint Reports," in T. C. Kinnear (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **11,** Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.

Bearden, W. O., and Teel, J. E. (1983), "Selected Determinants of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaint Reports," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **20** (February), 21–28.

Bentler, P. M. (1989), *EQS Structural Equations Program Manual,* Los Angeles, CA: BMDP Statistical Software, Inc.

———, and Bonett, D. G. (1980), "Significance Tests and Goodness of Fit in the Analysis of Covariance Structures," *Psychological Bulletin,* **88,** 588–606.

Bies, R. J., and Moag, J. S. (1986), "Interactional Communication Criteria of Fairness," in R. J. Lewicki, B. H. Sheppard, and M. H. Bazerman (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior,* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

———, and Shapiro, D. L. (1987), "Interactional Fairness Judgements: The Influence of Causal Accounts," *Social Justice Research,* **1,** 199–218.

Bloch, P. H., and Richins, M. L. (1983), "A Theoretical Model for the Study of Product Importance Perceptions," *Journal of Marketing,* **47** (Summer), 69–81.

Churchill, G. (1979), "A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **16** (February), 64–73.

———, and Surprenant, S. (1983), "An Investigation Into the Determinants of Customer Satisfaction," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **19** (November), 491–504.

Cook, T. D., and Campbell, D. T. (1979), *Quasi-Experimentation: Design & Analysis Issues for Field Settings,* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Day, R. L., and Ash, S. B. (1979), "Consumer Response to Dissatisfaction with Durable Products," in W. L. Wilkie (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **6,** Miami, FL: Association for Consumer Research.

———, and Bodur, M. (1978), "Consumer Response to Dissatisfaction with Services and Intangibles," in H. K. Hunt (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **5,** Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, 263–72.

———, Grabicke, K., Schaetzle, T., and Staubach, F. (1981), "The Hidden Agenda of Consumer Complaining," *Journal of Retailing,* **57** (Fall), 86–106.

———, and Landon, E. L. (1976), "Collecting Comprehensive Complaint Data by Survey Research," in B. B. Anderson (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **3,** Atlanta, GA: Association for Consumer Research, 263–68.

——— (1984), "Modeling Choices Among Alternative Responses to Dissatisfaction," in T. C. Kinnear (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **11,** Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, 496–99.

DeMott, J. S., and Nash, J. M. (1984), "Sears' Sizzling New Vitality," *Business Week,* (August 20), 82–90.

Desatnick, R. L. (1988), *Managing to Keep the Customer,* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Folkes, V. S. (1984), "Consumer Reactions to Product Failure: An Attributional Approach," *Journal of Consumer Research,* **10,** 398–409.

Gilly, M. C. (1987), "Postcomplaint Processes: From Organizational Response to Repurchase Behavior," *Journal of Consumer Affairs,* **21** (Winter), 293–311.

———, and Gelb, B. D. (1982), "Post-Purchase Consumer Processes and the Complaining Consumer," *Journal of Consumer Research,* **9,** 323–28.

Goodwin, C., and Ross, I. (1989), "Salient Dimensions of Perceived Fairness in Resolution of Service Complaints," *Journal of Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* **2,** 87–92.

Granbois, D., Summers, J. O., and Frazier, G. L. (1977), "Correlates of Consumer Expec-

tation and Complaining Behavior," in R. L. Day (ed.), *Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Greenberg, J. (1982), "Approaching Equity and Avoiding Inequity in Groups and Organizations," in J. Greenberg and R. L. Cohen (eds.), *Equity and Justice in Social Behavior,* New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

———, and Folger, R. (1983), "Procedural Justice, Participation and the Fair Process Effect in Groups and Organizations," in P. B. Paulus (ed.), *Basic Group Processes,* New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970), *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Homans, G. C. (1961), *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms,* New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, and World.

Joreskog and Sorbom (1990), *LISREL VII: Analysis of Linear Structural Relationships by the Method of Maximum Likelihood: User's Guide,* Mooresville, IN: Scientific Software, Inc.

LaBarbera, P. A., and Mazursky, D. (1983), "A Longitudinal Assessment of Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction: The Dynamic Aspect of Cognitive Process," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **20** (November), 393–404.

Laurent, G., and Kapferer, R. A. (1985), "Measuring Consumer Involvement Profiles," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **22** (February), 41–53.

Lind, E. A., and Tyler, T. R. (1988), *The Social Psychology of Procedural Justice,* New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Long, J. S. (1983), *Covariance Structure Models: An Introduction to LISREL,* Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Marsh, H. W., Balla, J. R., and McDonald, R. P. (1988), "Goodness-of-Fit Indexes in Confirmatory Factor Analysis: The Effect of Sample Size," *Psychological Bulletin,* **103** (3), 391–410.

McQuarrie, E. F., and Munson, J. M. (1987), "The Zaichkowsky Personal Involvement Inventory: Modification and Extension," in M. Wallendorf and P. Anderson (eds.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **14,** Association for Consumer Research, 36–40.

Nunnally, J. C. (1978), *Psychometric Theory,* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Oliver, M. L. (1980), "A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **17** (November), 460–69.

———, and Linda, G. (1981), "Effect of Satisfaction and Its Antecedents on Consumer Preference and Intention," in K. Monroe (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **8,** Association for Consumer Research, 88–93.

Richins, M. L. (1980), "Consumer Perceptions of Costs and Benefits Associated with Complaining," in H. K. Hunt and R. L. Day (eds.), *Refining Concepts and Measures of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

——— (1982), "An Investigation of Consumers' Attitudes Toward Complaining," in A. Mitchell (ed.), *Advances in Consumer Research,* **9,** St. Louis, MO: Association for Consumer Research, 502–6.

——— (1983a), "Negative Word-of-Mouth by Dissatisfied Consumers: A Pilot Study," *Journal of Marketing,* **47** (Winter), 68–78.

——— (1983b), "An Analysis of Consumer Interaction Styles in the Marketplace," *Journal of Consumer Research,* **10** (June), 73–82.

——— (1983c), "Word-of-Mouth as an Expression of Product Dissatisfaction," in R. L. Day and H. K. Hunt (eds.), *International Fare in Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

——— (1985), "The Role of Product Importance in Complaint Initiation," in R. L. Day and H. K. Hunt (eds.), *Proceedings of the Conference on Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

——— (1987), "A Multivariate Analysis of Responses to Dissatisfaction," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* **15** (Fall), 24–31.

Salancik, G. R., and Pfeffer, J. (1977), "An Examination of Need-Satisfaction Models of Job Attitudes," *Administration Science Quarterly,* **22** (September), 427–56.

Schwab, D. P. (1986), "Construct Validity in Organizational Behavior," in L. L. Cummings and B. Staw (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior,* **12,** Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 3–43.

Sekaran, U. (1984), *Research Methods for Managers: A Skill-Building Approach,* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Singh, J. (1990), "Voice, Exit, and Negative Word-of-Mouth Behaviors: An Investigation Across Three Service Categories," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* **18** (Winter), 1–15.

Tax, S. S., and Chandrashekaran, M. (1992), "Consumer Decision Making Following a Failed Service Encounter: A Pilot Study," *Journal of Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior,* **5,** 55–68.

Technical Assistance Research Programs (1981), *Measuring the Grapevine—Consumer Response and Word-of-Mouth,* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs.

Thibaut, J., and Walker, L. (1975), *Procedural Justice: A Psychological Analysis,* Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Tucker, L. R., and Lewis, C. (1973), "The Reliability Coefficient for Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis," *Psychometrika,* **38,** 1–10.

Westbrook, R. A. (1987), "Product/Consumption-Based Affective Responses and Postpurchase Processes," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **24** (August), 258–70.

Woodruff, R., Cadotte, E. R., and Jenkins, R. L. (1983), "Modeling Consumer Satisfaction Processes Using Experience-Based Norms," *Journal of Marketing Research,* **20** (August), 296–304.

Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985), "Measuring the Involvement Construct," *Journal of Consumer Research,* **12** (December), 341–52.