

**EMOTIONAL SUPPRESSION AS A MODERATOR OF THE IMPACT OF  
TRANSGRESSION ON CONSUMERS' SATISFACTION**

**SUPRESSÃO EMOCIONAL COMO MODERADOR DO IMPACTO DA  
TRANSGRESSÃO SOBRE A SATISFAÇÃO DO CONSUMIDOR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Despite the increasing amount of research about the effects of a seller's transgression on consumers' relationship quality evaluation, existing theory still demands more insight into consumer's capacity to suppress the negative emotions that a transgression might generate. This research proposes that consumers' are not always equally influenced by a transgression because some individuals demonstrate a higher capacity to suppress the negative emotions that arise from a seller's transgression. An experimental study in a controlled virtual bookstore was developed, simulating a real website. Participants were randomly allocated into one of the two conditions: transgression vs. non-transgression scenario. We demonstrate that consumers who are better able to suppress the negative emotions experienced a lower decrease in their satisfaction evaluation of the relationship with the seller after a transgression than those who had a lower negative emotion suppression capacity following the behavior. These results shed light into the boundary conditions of the transgressions in the business to consumer marketing relationship. This research is therefore intended to make contributions to the literature of marketing relationship in a transgression context.

**Keywords:** transgression; emotional suppression; satisfaction

## SUPRESSÃO EMOCIONAL COMO MODERADOR DO IMPACTO DA TRANSGRESSÃO SOBRE A SATISFAÇÃO DO CONSUMIDOR

### **RESUMO**

Apesar da crescente quantidade de estudos sobre a transgressão de empresas contra consumidores na avaliação da qualidade do relacionamento, a literatura existente ainda demanda mais investigações sobre a capacidade do consumidor em suprimir as emoções negativas advindas de uma transgressão. Esta pesquisa propõe que os consumidores não são influenciados de maneira semelhante por uma transgressão, pois alguns indivíduos demonstram maior capacidade de suprimir emoções negativas que surgem devido a uma falha da empresa. Um estudo experimental foi realizado no contexto de compra de livros em um site desenvolvido especialmente para a pesquisa. Os participantes foram aleatoriamente alocados em uma das duas condições: com ou sem transgressão. Demonstrou-se que os consumidores com maior capacidade de suprimir emoções negativas apresentaram menor queda no nível de satisfação com a empresa transgressora em relação àqueles com baixa capacidade de supressão. Tais resultados elucidam um aspectos importantes acerca do marketing de relacionamento B2C. Desta forma, esta pesquisa contribui para a teoria de relacionamentos em marketing em um contexto de transgressão.

**Palavras-chave:** transgressão, supressão emocional, satisfação.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Although there are many studies concerning the importance of the relationship between consumers and companies, it is well known that these interactions are not always harmonious. Conflicts and transgressions are a possible consequence of all kinds of relationships, and for this reason, many studies were developed in order to understand how to recover consumers' satisfaction and other relationship quality evaluations after a transgression (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Grégoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009). Transgressions are seen as a very negative act in the relationship between the company and the consumer, because they are considered inevitable (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004). Much has been done to understand how a transgression affects the course of the relationship, for offenders and victims (Metts, 1994; Fincham, Jackson & Beach, 2005). However, it is how individuals manage these conflicts and the negative consequences of a transgression that ultimately determines if the partnership can be preserved (Young, 2011).

Despite the fact that academic studies have shown that relationships have relevant affective content (Fournier, 1998), and this representation has been greatly explored in personal relationships, there has only been the applications of Barnes (2010), in a relationship context, which has sought to integrate the moderated influence of emotional suppression on the impact of a transgression on consumers' subsequent satisfaction evaluations. Although the satisfaction construct has been widely investigated in the relationship quality models (Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1994; Demoulin, 2011), we think this unique perception is more important in a transgression situation because satisfaction is the first evaluation that consumers provide after a service or product use. Therefore, the understanding of Consumer Satisfaction in a transgression context still needs further investigation.

Emotional suppression is an important mechanism that can help people manage the negative impact of a transgression. However, there are individuals who are more sensitive to negative situations, while others can deal with such situations more easily. These patterns of behavior can have significant implications on the emotional suppression process. This research operates on the assumption that consumers are not equally affected by a transgression, and that the ability to suppress the negative emotions is of critical importance to keep the satisfaction level with the seller. Supported by a collection of emotional regulatory strategies, some individuals can find a better way to deal with negative situations (McRae, Ochsner & Gross, 2011). Therefore, one way to understand how a transgression impacts consumers' satisfaction evaluations is to investigate the moderating influence of negative emotion suppression on this predicted relationship.

Below we draw on research from both the transgression and its impact on consumers' satisfaction with the seller. Then the role of emotional suppression and its moderating effect is discussed to develop our hypotheses.

## 2 SELLER'S TRANSGRESSIONS AND CONSUMER SATISFACTION

Transgressions are violations of implicit or explicit rules guiding relationship performance and evaluation (Metts, 1994). In a marketing relationship context, transgressions can happen on both sides of the relationship: sometimes, consumers are responsible for the fail (Neale & Fullerton, 2010; Ariely, 2012), but most of the time, the seller is responsible for the transgression. In consumer research, the presence of a transgression has been observed in a variety of situations, such as preferences and product evaluations (Smith, Bolton & Wagner, 1999), severity and transgression recovery and consumers' revenge (Grégoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009), brand attitude (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004) and emotional reaction (Romani, Sadeh & Dalli, 2009; Porath, MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). In most of these studies, the seller's transgression is presented to the individuals and their behavioral consequence is observed in a subsequent evaluation of the relationship with the company and/or with the brand.

Although transgressions will vary in their severity and cause and differ in their ultimate negotiations, all are significant in their ability to affect relationship progress (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004). Therefore, since a transgression harms the positive expectations that consumers have about the company, we can rely on the Disconfirmation Paradigm, which posits that the perception of quality is one of the satisfaction antecedents (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Oliver, 1997) to propose that transgressions will have a negative impact on consumers' satisfaction. As Oliver & DeSarbo (1988) and Oliver (1997) pointed out, the shift attributed by disconfirmation of expectation can cause individuals dissatisfaction with the services of the company. The reason for this is that expectations are central in satisfaction processes because their pattern helps in later evaluations of the company's performance, increasing or decreasing the relationship satisfaction.

Moreover, satisfaction (dissatisfaction) is determined by the general feelings and attitudes of individuals toward a product (service) after purchase (Folkes, 1984). Therefore, consumers' attributions about the transgressions might have a negative impact on satisfaction and subsequent behavioral tendencies, suggesting the following hypothesis:

**H1:** *The seller's transgression negatively impacts consumer's satisfaction.*

## 2.1 THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL SUPPRESSION

The outcome proposed in the first hypothesis is expected because of the activation of negative emotions experienced when confronted with a transgression, even if the consumer has had only a momentary contact with the seller (Cohen, Pham & Andrade, 2008).

Emotions play an important role in consumer behavior, specifically because individuals experience a variety of daily situations that can activate positive and negative responses (Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1988). This affective response can be determined by subjective evaluation of environmental stimuli and the way individuals cope with them (Lazarus, 1991). The understanding of this evaluation is based on the distinction between the nature of affective responses and how individuals cognitively develop them, especially because those responses can influence other behavior constructs (Solomon, 2007).

Mccoll-Kennedy and Sparks (2003) demonstrated that a service failure induces an emotional response. After that, consumers begin to evaluate the negative situation and the relationship with the transgressing company. In this type of event the typical negative emotions felt after service failures were anger and irritation (Demoulin, 2011). The shift of affective response that individuals might experience impacts consumers' perception of the relationship, for instance, feeling angry with the seller company reinforces the perception that they may not be reliable (Fornier, 1998, Cohen, Pham & Andrade, 2008).

Although satisfaction decrease may be a consequence of the seller's transgression, individual's emotional responses are not equally affected. Rusbult et al. (1991) and McRae, Orchsner and Gross (2011) argue that individuals use different strategies to regulate emotions, in order to adjust to the negative environmental situations. Some individuals, for instance, have the ability to suppress their negative emotions more effectively and, as a result, the effect of a transgression on their satisfaction with the seller may not be so affected.

Emotional regulation consists of intrinsic and extrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, particularly those that are intense and have temporal characteristics (Metts, 1994). Emotional regulation is an important mechanism for individuals to manage their negative experiences with a transgression (Mauss *et.al.*, 2007). The emotion regulation proposes that individuals seek to redirect the flow of spontaneous emotions (Koole, Dillen & Sheppes, 2011).

Gross and John (2003) proposed two strategies of emotional regulation: reappraisal and suppression. The authors explain that reappraisal is an antecedent-focused strategy because it occurs early, and intervenes before the emotion response has been generated. Therefore, the

reappraisal changes the subsequent emotion direction. Suppression is a response-focused process and changes the behavioral aspect of the emotion response tendency, being more effective in decreasing the behavioral expression of negative emotion. The second strategy is the focus of our study because we are interested in the consumers' subsequent behavior after a seller's transgression that might generate negative emotions. It is important to consider emotion suppression in situations that might influence consumer behavior, such as the seller's transgressions, because of the consequences for the relationship between consumers and the company.

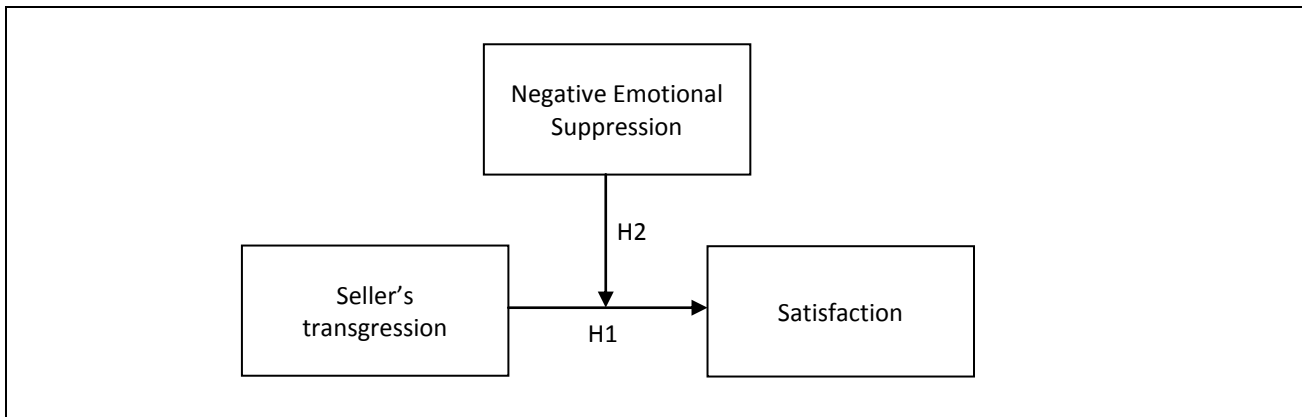
How individuals cope with negative threats to the relationship has greater impact on relationship strength than positive relationship features (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004). An example of this impact can be observed in the relationship between consumers and companies. When a transgression is committed by a seller (e.g. the service is not delivered as promised), consumers construe a cognitive perception of that fault because the expectation about the performance of the company is not achieved (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1994, Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004). This transgression creates a disconfirmation of the expected service and subsequently a negative emotion toward the company (Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1988; Solomon, 2007).

The consequence is that, through different emotional suppression strategies individuals try to redirect the spontaneous flow of emotions to change the way they are feeling (Koole, Dillen & Sheppen, 2011). The attainment of controlling emotional urges, specifically negative ones, is an assignment of fundamental significance to the individuals' well-being and their social relationships (Mauss et al., 2007). Emotional suppression means that the consumer will give more importance to other long-term goals. For instance consumers may decide to maintain the relationship in the long term because the future benefits overcome the short-term costs provided by the service failure (Avnet & Higgins, 2006). This individuals' perception of the relationship will reduce the negative impact of subsequent evaluations after a seller's transgression.

Therefore, individuals' ability to suppress the negative consequences of a transgression can moderate the resulting satisfaction with the seller and define if the relationship can be preserved (Lazarus, 1991; Cohen, Pham & Andrade, 2008; Young, 2011). Hence, we suggest the following hypothesis:

**H2:** *The suppression of negative emotions moderates the impact of seller's transgression on the consumer satisfaction. Specifically, the higher (vs. lower) the consumers' emotional suppression capacity, the lower (vs. higher) the impact of a transgression on consumers' satisfaction with the seller.*

The previous hypotheses are presented in Figure 1:



**Figure 1** – Proposed Framework

### 3 PRELIMINARY STUDY

Based on an experimental procedure (Goodwin, 2007), the goal of this study was to check the stimuli of the transgression scenario. Respondents' involvement with the product, a self-chosen category of business books, was also verified. We describe the experimental design, the pretest used to define the stimulus, and the procedures.

#### 3.1 METHOD

Participants and design. Fifty-one undergraduate students (52.9% female, mean age: 28.7) participated in this preliminary experiment. Participants received credit towards the fulfillment of a particular course requirement. The study employed a within subjects design. Each of the subjects evaluated both transgression scenarios (delivery delay and extra charge). Respondents also reported their involvement with the chosen category of business books.

Procedure. Subjects were presented with a list of 136 titles of books, allocated into 18 business areas (e.g., marketing, human resources, and finances). Respondents were instructed to choose one of the areas and indicate their involvement with the chosen area. The scale proposed by Zaichkowsky (1985) to measure consumers' involvement with a product category was applied, using a 7-point scale. Subsequently, subjects were presented with the two scenarios. They were asked to consider a hypothetical situation and imagine themselves buying a business book related



to their area of interest and that they were about to finish the payment. At this moment two transgression scenarios were presented. The first scenario related to a delay in sending the chosen book, described in the following sentence after the purchase "We are sorry, but unfortunately we missed the information presented on the web site and we do not have books available in the store. It will take us no longer than 20 days to send you the book."

The second scenario is related to a price increase at the end of the purchase, described in the following sentence, also after the purchase "We are sorry, but unfortunately we missed the information presented on the web site and the book you chose costs 25% more than the advertised price. This increase was added to the final amount you agreed to pay." After the presentation of each of the transgression scenarios, participants described the emotions they felt. Negative emotions were measured using the PANAS scale proposed by Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988), with a 10 point-scale (1= "nothing", 10 = "extremely"), and only the negative items were measured.

Although these transgression scenarios could easily be repaired by the bookseller, the main purpose of the study is not to analyze the impact of the transgression on consumers' negative emotions, satisfaction evaluation, and emotional suppression.

### 3.2 RESULTS

An involvement index was created by averaging the items (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .83$ ). Results indicated that all books were considered as being of high-involvement by the participants ( $M = 5.43$ ;  $SD: 1.22$ ). As expected, the scenario of buying a business book was appropriate to the respondents.

Next, we evaluated the transgression stimuli for the purchase experiment. Both scenarios have accomplished the task of generating negative emotions with mean average rating higher than 5.5 in 6 of the 10 negative emotions. The results indicated that the second stimulus was more effective for the elicitation of negative emotions, presenting higher means for three emotions: Irritable ( $M_{transgression1} = 8.82$ ;  $M_{transgression2} = 9.43$ ,  $\rho = .030$ ); Nervous ( $M_{transgression1} = 8.41$ ;  $M_{transgression2} = 9.2$ ,  $\rho = .010$ ) and Scared ( $M_{transgression1} = 4.98$ ;  $M_{transgression2} = 6.53$ ,  $\rho = .000$ ). The other emotions presented no significant difference.

Therefore, the second scenario was chosen for presentation in experiment 1.



## 4 EXPERIMENT 1

The main purpose of experiment 1 is to demonstrate that the seller's transgression have a negative impact on consumer's satisfaction evaluation (H1). Experiment 1 also shows the moderating effect of emotion suppression on the relationship between a seller's transgressions on consumers' satisfaction (H2). Precisely, this experiment demonstrates that a service transgression induces negative emotions because the expected result of the relationship between buyer and seller was violated.

### 4.1 METHOD

Participants and design. One hundred and forty six (56.8% male, mean age: 26.0) participated in the study in exchange for credit towards the fulfillment of a course requirement. This experiment employed a single factor (stimuli: transgression vs. non-transgression) between subjects design. Respondents were randomly allocated to one of the two conditions.

Procedure. A controlled virtual bookstore website was developed, simulating a real website. The chosen set of books came from the preliminary study, along with appropriate involvement rates. Subjects were invited to access and navigate the website to perform the simulated book purchase. During the procedure, participants were to choose the business area and the book of interest. They were told the price, conditions, and delivery costs.

After the selection and purchase was approved, the transgression group condition was submitted to the message of website mistake on the purchasing price (increased price), as described in the preliminary study and a higher new price was charged providing no chance for correction at that moment. The non-transgression group condition received no message.

After that, both groups were directed to a section involving a set of questions to assess the negative emotions experienced during the purchase process, by following the same scale applied in the preliminary study. The emotional suppression was also measured in a 10-point scale, originally proposed by Gross and John (2003). The satisfaction with the bookseller performed service was also measured in a 10-point scale proposed by Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann (1994). After that participants were debriefed and thanked.

## 4.2 MANIPULATION CHECK

To evaluate if the service transgression generates consumer's negative emotions, an negative emotion index was created by averaging the items (Cronbach's alpha = .86). The measurement variables that formed the negative emotions variable are presented in Table 1, which summarizes the results from an exploratory factor analyses.

**Table 1** – Negative Emotions measurement variables and alpha reliability

VARIABLE	MEASUREMENT VARIABLE	LOADINGS	KMO TEST	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Negative Emotions	Attentive	0.677	0.866	0.856
	Alert	0.593		
	Guilty	0.499		
	Scared	0.761		
	Hostile	0.634		
	Irritable	0.719		
	Ashamed	0.571		
	Nervous	0.767		
	Upset	0.625		
	Afraid	0.765		

An independent-samples t-test was performed in order to compare the negative emotions scores in both conditions (transgression vs. non-transgression). There was statistically significant difference of negative emotions index between non-transgression ( $M = 1.74$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ) and transgression ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ );  $t(144) = -4.48$ ,  $p = .000$ . This difference demonstrates that individuals experiencing a service transgression show higher negative emotions.

Individual differences did not have a significant impact on manipulation. For instance, there was no difference between men and women in the negative emotions scores ( $t(144) = .84$ ,  $p = .40$ ).

The reliability of the satisfaction scale confirmed that this construct is one-dimensional. The three items used to measure this variable provided a very consistent reliability index (Cronbach's alpha = .90). Results from exploratory factor analyses are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2** – Satisfaction measurement variables and alpha reliability

VARIABLE	MEASUREMENT VARIABLE	LOADINGS	KMO TEST	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Satisfaction	Overall satisfaction	0.907	0.753	0.9
	Expectancy disconfirmation (performance that falls short of or exceeds expectations)	0.918		
	Performance versus the customer's idea / product or service in the category	0.925		

Finally, the emotional suppression scales were also verified. The emotional suppression scale is one of the dimensions of the emotional regulation scale, which includes the emotional reappraisal. However, we are interested only in the emotional suppression dimension, which confirmed its one-dimensionality. The exploratory factor analyses results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3** – Emotional Suppression measurement variables and alpha reliability

VARIABLE	MEASUREMENT VARIABLE	LOADINGS	KMO TEST	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Emotional Suppression	I control my emotions by not expressing them	0.872	0.823	0.834
	When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them	0.646		
	I keep my emotions to myself	.688		
	I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I'm in	0.736		

For the subsequent analyses, an emotional suppression index was created by averaging the items (Cronbach's alpha = .83).

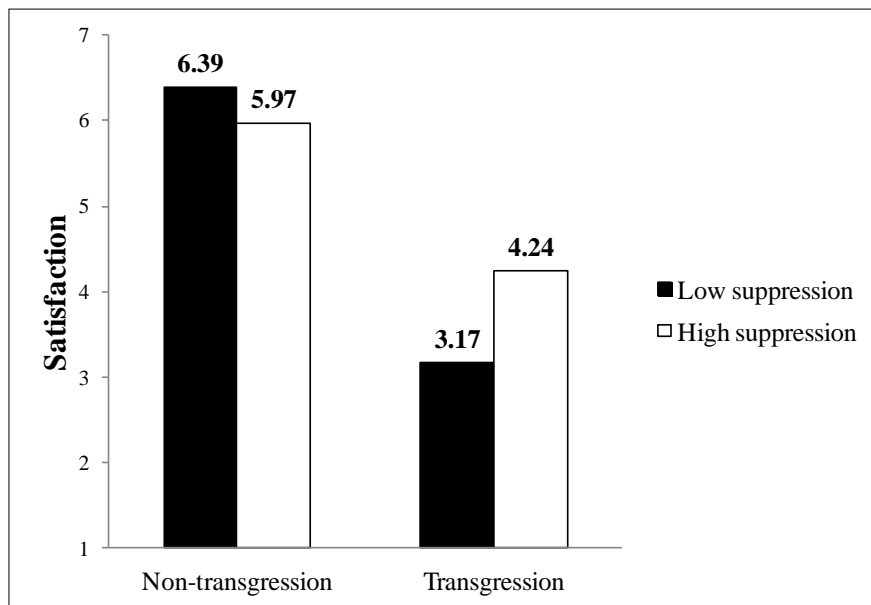
#### 4.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To assess whether the transgression of the service negatively affects consumers' satisfaction (hypothesis H1), an independent-samples t-test was performed in order to compare the satisfaction scores in both conditions (transgression vs. non-transgression). We also created an index of satisfaction by averaging the three items used to measure consumers' satisfaction.

Results demonstrated a significant difference in average satisfaction scores between non-transgression ( $M = 6.33$ ,  $SD = 1.55$ ) and transgression ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 2.18$ );  $t(144) = 8.94$ ,  $p =$

.000 (two-tailed). This difference supports the hypothesis H1, which predicts that a transgression decreases consumers' satisfaction evaluation.

Finally, to check the moderating role of emotion suppression on the impact of the service transgression on consumers' satisfaction (hypothesis H2), we first performed a two-step cluster analysis with the emotional suppression as the continuous variable. The results yielded two groups classified as low and high suppression individuals. Subsequently, a Two-way ANOVA with transgression (transgression vs. non-transgression) and emotion suppression (high suppression vs. low suppression) as the between subjects variables on the satisfaction was run. Results showed a main effect of transgression ( $F(1,142) = 63.70, p = .000$ ) and the expected interaction was also verified ( $F(1,142) = 5.77, p = .018$ ; see figure 2).



**Figure 2** – The Moderating effect of Low (High) suppression on Satisfaction in a (non) transgression scenario

Pairwise comparisons showed that in the non-transgression condition, there was no significant difference of satisfaction between participants showing low ( $M = 6.39, SD = 1.10$ ) and high ( $M = 5.97, SD = 1.28$ ) suppression, ( $F(1, 142) = .93, p = .337$ ). On the other hand, in the transgression condition there was a significant difference of satisfaction. Participants with low suppression ( $M = 3.17; SD = 1.18$ ) showed lower satisfaction than those with high suppression ( $M = 4.24; SD = 1.54; F(1, 142) = 5.95, p = .016$ ). For participants with low suppression, in the non-

transgression condition, the rate of satisfaction was higher ( $M = 6.39$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ) than in the transgression condition ( $M = 3.17$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ;  $F(1, 142) = 58.69$ ,  $\rho = .000$ ). Among participants with high suppression, in the non-transgression condition the rate of satisfaction was also higher ( $M = 5.97$ ;  $SD = 1.28$ ) than in the transgression condition ( $M = 4.24$ ;  $SD = 1.54$ ;  $F(1, 142) = 14.39$ ,  $\rho = .000$ ).

These results provided support for H2. In the non-transgression condition, individuals with low and high suppression of emotions presented equivalent levels of satisfaction, supporting the notion that when there is no transgression on service, the consumer's perception of satisfaction remains unaffected. Alternatively, in the transgression condition, there was a decline in overall satisfaction rates, showing the influence of service transgression on customer partial dissatisfaction.

Specifically for those individuals with lower suppression of emotions, the satisfaction declined even more than for those presenting high suppression levels. Therefore, there is evidence that emotion suppression might reduce consumer's perception of service transgression, resulting in a lower decrease of satisfaction.

## 5 GENERAL DISCUSSION

These findings provide further evidence that emotional suppression moderates the effect of non (transgression) on satisfaction evaluation, thereby confirming the proposition of this study.

In order to maintain the relationship with a seller, consumers who experience service transgression might engage themselves in an emotional suppression process. Therefore, individuals who are better able to suppress negative emotions show a lower decrease in their satisfaction evaluation than those individuals who have more difficulty suppressing their negative emotions. These findings are compatible with previous literature (McRae, Ochsner & Gross, 2011; Cohen, Pham & Andrade, 2008), which proposes that individuals look for a way to deal with negative situations (e.g. negative emotions) and that individual's way to cope with the transgression can be determinant in preserving the relationship with the seller (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004; Young, 2011).

We can speculate that if a seller transgression occurs, managers should respond in different ways according to the manner individuals cope with negative emotions in this process. For instance, the action to recover the consumer's satisfaction should be more intense for individuals with lower capacity of suppressing their negative emotions in order to help them reestablish the

relationship. This recovery action may even reinforce the affective connection of the relationship between the consumer and the seller. Future studies could explore the differences between specific emotions that were significant in the preliminary experiment (i.e., irritable and nervous). There is evidence that specific emotions may play an important role in consumers' relationship quality evaluations (Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1988).

The strategies of emotional regulation have to be analyzed together with specific situations that influence consumer behavior, such as in service provider transgression, because the results might have a great impact on consumers' satisfaction with the relationship. Successfully suppressing the negative emotions is critical for individuals' health and well-being (Mauss *et.al*, 2007). It is not different in situations that involve consumers and companies, because the decision to keep or to stop buying from the seller after a transgression is also a consequence of consumers' emotional regulation ability (Young, 2011).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The emotional reaction is a result of a positive or negative consequence (Cohen, Pham & Andrade, 2008), and in the business to consumer perspective, consumers have this affective response according to the seller's expected performance. Therefore, consumers' satisfaction evaluation is strongly influenced by the affective consequences of a transgression, which raises possible negative emotions, such as anger and irritation (Demoulin, 2011). However, how people cope with this negative reaction is crucial for the satisfaction with the seller (Young, 2011).

Several additional questions arise from the results obtained that indicate proposals for future research. Although we have studied emotion regulation with context variables (service failure), other important individual differences were not considered. Studies could put the two approaches together. Equipped with individual-differences measures, it would be possible to analyze how individual differences (e.g., age, income, personality traits) in the use of suppression interact with transgression manipulation.

The study we presented has used relatively homogeneous samples of college-aged research participants. Future studies could use samples representing a wider age range, including older adults in order to assess the robustness of these findings, to specify boundary conditions, and to test age-related predictions, such as an increase (or decrease) in the use of emotional suppression.

Future studies could also include other buyer-seller characteristics that could possibly change the pattern of results we have found. One possibility is that high-relationship quality

customers could feel betrayed by the seller's transgression and have more difficulty suppressing the negative emotions. For instance, Grégoire, Tripp and Legoux (2009) demonstrated that in face of a transgression, high-relationship-quality customers maintain their desire for revenge over a longer period, and their desire for avoidance grows more rapidly over time. On the other hand, one could argue that these customers could easily suppress the negative impact of a transgression because they would consider the long-term relationship with the seller and the benefits of this partnership could overcome the costs of a transgression.

The restrictions of the paper are linked to the consideration of the satisfaction as the only dependent variable measured. There is also the need to examine the effects of recovery on consumers' satisfaction evaluation. The possibility that consumers with higher emotional suppression will show an increase in satisfaction with the seller than those with lower emotion suppression is an argument that still requires further research.

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