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REVIEW PAPER

A systematic review of brand transgression, service failure recovery and product-harm crisis: integration and guiding insights

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Abstract

Research studies on brand transgression (BT), service failure and recovery (SFR), and product-harm crisis (PHC) appear to have a common focus, yet the three streams developed surprisingly independently and with limited reference to one another. This situation is unfortunate because all three fields study a similar phenomenon by using complementary conceptualizations, theories, and methods; we argue that this development in silos represents an unnecessary obstacle to the development of a common discipline. In response, this review synthesizes the growing BT, SFR, and PHC literatures by systematically reviewing 236 articles across 21 years using an integrative conceptual framework. In doing so, we showcase how the mature field of SFR in concert with the younger but prolific BT and PHC fields can enrich one another while jointly advancing a broad and unified discipline of negative events in marketing. Through this process, we provide and explicate seven overarching insights across three major themes (theory, dynamic aspects, and method) to encourage researchers to contribute to the interface between these three important fields. The review concludes with academic contributions and practical implications.

Keywords Brand transgression · Service failure · Service recovery · Product-harm crisis · Crisis · Systematic review · Negative event

There has been a swell of interest in the service, branding, and product-harm literatures pertaining to the role of negative events and consumers' responses to such events. The stream on service failure and recovery (hereafter SFR) has reached maturity with more than a thousand articles. A tradition among SFR[1] scholars has been to examine service performance that falls below customers' expectations (Smith et al. 1999). Similarly, the fast-growing field of brand transgression (hereafter BT) has investigated brands' acts that violate norms endorsed by consumers (Aaker et al. 2004). Relatedly, product-harm scholars have examined publicized instances wherein products emerge as defective and dangerous to their customers (e.g., Cleeren et al. 2017). A great deal of theoretical and practical knowledge has accrued in BT, SFR, and PHC. The three streams appear to study a similar phenomenon—significant negative events occurring between consumers and firms/brands—which represents a "moment of truth" in the development of consumer relationships.

Surprisingly, despite their common focus, these three streams have developed almost independently and with limited reference to one another. We argue that this development in silos represents an unnecessary obstacle to the development of a knowledge base of higher quality. This situation is unfortunate given that BT, SFR, and PHC study a similar phenomenon by using complementary theories, methods, and variables. This review proposes that the three streams should "join forces" to form the foundations of a broad and unified discipline studying negative events in marketing. This view is consistent with a recent call for cross-level integration in which Fournier and Alvarez (2013, p. 260) claim that it is time to

[1] For brevity, SFR means "the service failure and recovery field," BT stands for "the brand transgression field," and PHC represents "the product-harm crisis field."

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"integrate and further articulate existing research under the science of negative relationships umbrella, including theory on brand transgressions, service failures, and crises." We label this "umbrella" the *discipline of negative events in marketing*, which studies any conflict or friction—including failure, transgression, crisis, or any other negative incident—that occurs between a consumer/customer and a firm, its brand or its offering. Consistent with the three steams of interest, the current review is mainly interested in negative events of a certain amplitude, which trigger a reappraisal of the relationship between a consumer and a firm/brand. However, we also believe that many notions covered in this article could also apply to relatively minor events, which represent small "speedbumps" in the development of a relationship.

It is against this backdrop that this systematic review showcases how the mature field of SFR, in concert with the growing fields of BT and PHC, can enrich one another. The current review aims to integrate them by using the lens of a unifying organizing framework. With this objective in mind, this review systematically analyzes 236 influential articles in SFR, BT, and PHC published since 1998. After a careful systematization of these articles, this review highlights their connections and differences by formulating seven overarching insights across three broad themes: theory, dynamic aspects, and method. Please note that the overarching insights also serve as a structure for our analysis and as guiding prescriptions for the three fields.

Importantly, we minimize the descriptive part of this review as much as possible—knowing that some aspects need minimal description—by using four integrative figures (Figs. 2-5). The main goal of this review is to integrate the three fields by formally benchmarking their advances on particular topics (that we call insights). For each insight, we pay special attention to explaining how the knowledge in a given field can be extended to the others. Overall, we conclude that BT, SFR and PHC complement each other in remarkable ways, which should greatly help the development of a common discipline. In the next sections, we describe the three streams, present the overarching insights, and conclude with academic and practical contributions.

Definitions, article selection, and organizing framework

Basic definitions

Table 1 displays the definitions of five core concepts: brand transgression, service failure, service recovery, product-harm crisis, and product recall. It also shows the link between each definition and many similar others suggested in the literature. A brand transgression is defined in general terms, which could allow the incorporation of a large array of negative events. By contrast, service failures and product-harm crises are negative events that are more specific in scope, such as "below-expected service performance" and "products found to be defective," respectively. Compared to BT, the fields of SFR and PHC tend to emphasize what managers can do with the notions of "service recovery" and "product recall," respectively.

Summarizing Table 1, we could say that all service failures and PHC are BT; however, the opposite is not necessarily true. Additionally, service failures and PHC differ from each other according to the typical number of affected consumers (i.e., a few vs. many) and the nature of the offering (i.e., service vs. product). Although the three definitions use different terms, they all clearly refer to significant negative events occurring in a commercial context, as we see next.

The notion of BT is defined as an "*act of violation of the implicit or explicit rules guiding consumer-brand relationship performance and evaluation*" (Aaker et al. 2004, p. 2). This stream is rooted in the consumer-brand relationship literature, and it started to get momentum with the seminal work of Aaker et al. (2004), the starting point of our review for BT (1,796 Google Scholar citations as of July 2019). The notion of BT is broad and has been studied from multiple angles, such as anthropomorphism (Puzakova et al. 2013), cross-cultural (Magnusson et al. 2014), sport management (Lee et al. 2016), neuroscience (Reimann et al. 2018), and consumer culture theory (Arsel and Stewart 2015).

Service failure is defined as a *private service performance that falls below the expectation of one or a few customer(s)* (Smith et al. 1999). The notions of service failure and *service recovery* are almost inseparable (Tax et al. 1998). A service recovery is defined as *all the actions a firm can take to redress the grievances or loss caused by a service failure*. This review focuses on the articles published since the seminal work of Tax et al. (1998) and Smith et al. (1999), which are the most cited in the field (respectively 3,183 and 2,914 citations). Although research had been published before these articles, we argue that the two formalized the SFR field to make it mainstream in marketing. SFR is at maturity, with more than a thousand articles[2] and several meta-analyses (Gelbrich and Roschk 2011; Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2014).

Product-harm crisis is defined as a "*discrete event in which products are found to be defective and therefore dangerous to at least part of the product's customer base*" (Cleeren et al. 2017, p. 594). PHC typically involves a well-publicized situation affecting a large group of customers (Dawar and Pillutla 2000). This field is strongly linked to product recall, defined as *a recovery strategy through which a firm asks its customers to return its defective product in order to replace, fix, or reimburse it*. PHC as a field began to get increased momentum from the

[2] We estimated the number of SFR articles or reviews by using the Web of Science database. From our query, we found 1,154 articles on the topics of "service failure or service recovery" between 1998 and 2018, including only the categories "management" and "business" (as of December 2018).

Table 1 Definitions of our core concepts

Brand transgression	Service failure	Service recovery	Product-harm crisis	Product recall
Definition in the review: An act of violation of the implicit or explicit rules guiding consumer-brand relationship performance and evaluation (Aaker et al. 2004).	Definition in the review: A private service performance that falls below the expectation of one or a few customer(s).	Definition in the review: All the actions a firm can take to redress the grievances or loss caused by a service failure.	Definition in the review: A discrete event in which products are found to be defective and therefore dangerous to at least part of the product's customer base (Cleeren et al. 2017)	Definition in the review: A recovery strategy through which a firm asks its customers to return its defective product in order to replace, fix or reimburse it.
Consistent with: • A negative disconfirmation of customer expectations through acts of omission or commission by the brand (Magnusson et al. 2014). • Any behavior that violates the norms of the consumer-brand relationship (Sayin and Gürhan-Canli 2015). • A brand-related incident that ranges from product failure and poor service to companies' violations of social codes, and may serve as defining moments that leads to significantly negative financial and psychological consequences (Lin and Sung 2014).	Consistent with: • An exchange between the consumer and the organization, in which the consumer experiences a loss due to a failure in the encounter (Smith et al. 1999). • A service performance that falls below a consumer's expectations (Hess et al. 2003). • An activity that occurs as a result of customer perceptions of initial service delivery behaviors falling below the customer's expectations or "zone of tolerance" (Holloway and Beatty 2003).	Consistent with: • The organization attempts to provide a gain, in the form of a recovery effort, to make up for the customer's loss (Smith et al. 1999). • The actions and activities that the service organization and its employees perform to rectify, amend, and restore the loss experienced by customers from deficiencies in service performance (Hess et al. 2003). • Activities in which a company engages in order to address a customer complaint regarding a perceived service failure (Holloway and Beatty 2003). • Mechanisms by which trust can be rebuilt after violations caused by service failures (Basso and Pizzutti 2016).	Consistent with: • A discrete, well-publicized occurrence wherein products are found to be defective or dangerous (Dawar and Pillutla 2000). • A case in which products are found to be defective, causing harm to their users and often leading to costly product recalls (Gijsenberg et al. 2015).	Consistent with: • Activities in which the firm (implicated of product-harm crises) must retrieve recalled products from all distribution channels and from the end consumers (Chen et al. 2009). • A firm's response to product-harm crises, in an attempt to remedy the situation (Dawar and Pillutla 2000). • A firm's recovery strategy to deal with product-harm crises, by identifying a defective good and recalling the good from the distribution chain (Gijsenberg et al. 2015; Rasoulian et al. 2017).

time of Dawar and Pillutla's (2000) article—with 1,049 citations—which represents our point of departure. These efforts culminated in the review article published by Cleeren et al. (2017).

Selection of articles

We identified four seminal articles that established each field: two for SFR (Tax et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1999), one for BT (Aaker et al. 2004), and one for PHC (Dawar and Pillutla 2000). Then, we used Google Scholar to search the citations of these articles and completed this search by manually looking at the articles of eight marketing journals over the last 20 years (*JM*, *JMR*, *JCR*, *Marketing Science (MS)*, *JAMS, JCP*, *JR*, and *JSR*). We selected these journals because they have high impact factors and represent typical outlets for SFR, BT and PHC (e.g., Cleeren et al. 2017). This approach is in line with suggestions for reviews (Hunter and Schmidt 1990; Palmatier et al. 2018). Overall, 77.9% of the articles originate from journals other than *JM*, *JCR*, *JMR*, and *MS*; 63.4% of the articles come from our list; and 10.2% of the articles originate from non-marketing journals. Please see the Web Appendix for all references and a series of statistics about their characteristics (i.e., distribution of the reviewed articles, key outlets for each stream, number of articles per year by journal, and average number of studies per article).

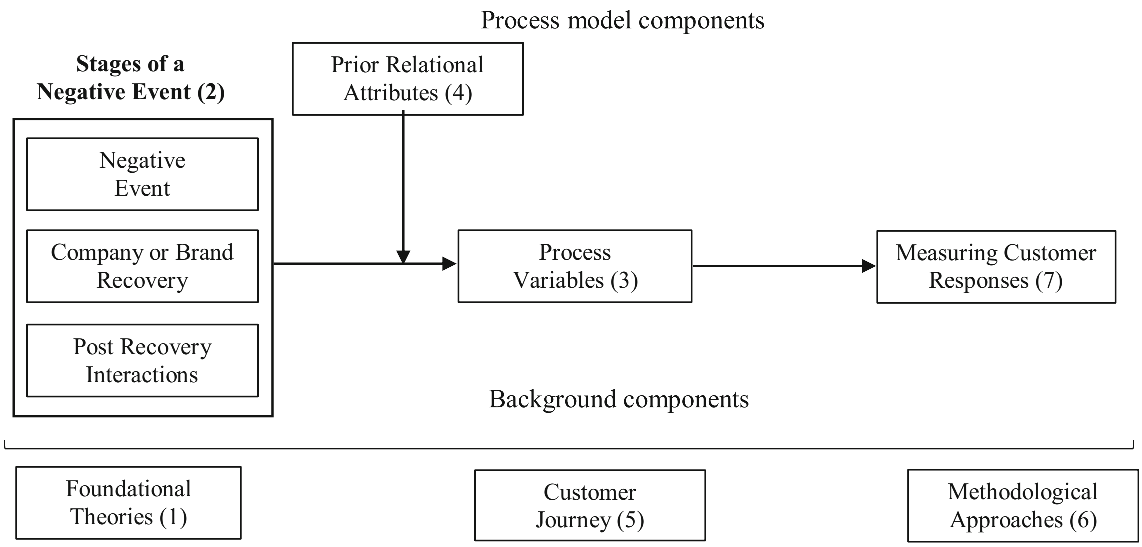
We believe we identified most of the articles on BT (with a total of 66) and PHC (29 in total). For the latter, we first included all the articles from the recent PHC literature review by Cleeren et al. (2017) and added several recent articles (e.g., Trendel et al. 2018). On the basis of the gathered references, these two fields can be considered as relatively young and in a growth phase (see Web Appendix).

The SFR search resulted in about a thousand articles (see footnote 3). To keep the scope manageable for SFR and to focus on its most influential work, this review first retained articles that cited either Tax et al. (1998) or Smith et al. (1999) *and* received at least 400 citations. Then we supplemented these articles with all the others published in our list of journals since 1998. This search resulted in 141 articles. We are confident that this search included most of the key articles, since the majority of the highly cited papers were published in our list of journals. SFR is at maturity, with minimal growth in the last 10 years (see Web Appendix).

Overall, our final database consists of 236 articles (BT = 66, SFR = 141, PHC = 29), of which 196 are based on empirical work (BT = 60, SFR = 109, PHC = 27). Within these empirical articles, we systematically coded 394 studies (BT = 122, SFR = 236, PHC = 36) that feature about 3.5 million observations/cases (BT = 28,568, SFR = 3,446,360, PHC = 6,932). Data were drawn from 21 countries. The number of included articles seems on the high side, compared to recent reviews in branding, crisis, and service (129 articles for Gürhan-Canli et al. 2018; 25 articles for Cleeren et al. 2017; 230 articles for Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2019). We prepared a protocol specifying the information to be extracted from each study (see Web Appendix). We manually derived the information using agreed-on criteria. There were very few judgment calls, and those were resolved among the co-authors (Stock 1994).

Organizing framework

Our organizing framework (see Fig. 1) displays the core components of a process model with the stages of a



Overarching Insights Corresponding to the Dimensions of the Framework

Theoretical Considerations:

1. Expanding the theoretical boundaries beyond each field's comfort zone.
2. Using appropriate theories depending on the three stages.
3. Integrating, establishing, and nuancing the role of different processes.

Dynamic and Longitudinal Considerations:

4. Understanding the critical and differential role of a prior relationship.
5. Adopting the perspective of the whole customer journey.

Methodological Considerations:

6. Relying more on advanced methods and multi-method enquiries.
7. Measuring theory-based, objective, and financial/market-based responses.

Note: Numbers in parentheses correspond to the order in which a particular component is discussed in text.

Fig. 1 Organizing framework and corresponding insights.

negative event as the independent variables, prior relationships as the key moderators, a series of process variables in the middle, and customer responses as the outcomes. We added three background components to this framework: foundational theories, customer journey, and methods. In Fig. 1, numbers in parentheses correspond to the order in which a particular component is discussed in text. Across each component, this review identifies an overarching insight that provides a central guideline for all three streams.

Our insights are formulated at a relatively high level of abstraction (see Fig. 1). We tried to reach a balance between "analyzing with sufficient depth" versus "covering a large number of articles, theories, and findings." Since our primary purpose was to integrate the knowledge accumulated in the three fields, it was not feasible to discuss each given article (although all individual studies were included in our statistics). Researchers interested in specific details are encouraged to consult the references cited in the text and Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5. To streamline the presentation, we organize the seven insights in three logical categories: theoretical considerations (i.e., foundational theories, three stages, and process variables), dynamic and longitudinal considerations (i.e., prior relationships and customer journey), and methodological considerations (i.e., methods and final customer responses). See numbering in Fig. 1.

Theme 1: Theoretical considerations

Insight 1: Expanding the theoretical boundaries beyond each field's comfort zone

An overarching theme pertains to the importance for each field to expand its boundaries beyond its typical theoretical "comfort zone" (see Fig. 2). Each field tends to be fairly specialized, and hence all three would gain from integrating the theoretical perspective of the others in order to gain a holistic view of negative events in marketing. The upper part of Fig. 2 depicts the level of theorizing that is most prevalent in each stream on the basis of the micro-meso-macro continuum (Dopfer et al. 2004). Figure 2 also outlines the typical unit of analysis, research focus, negative event type, and core theories for each stream.

Appreciating differing theoretical traditions SFR has mainly used a *meso* lens. Its typical unit of analysis refers to a customer facing a service failure and, to a lesser extent, a frontline employee involved in such a situation (Van Vaerenbergh and Orsingher 2016). The ultimate research focus tends to be on external validity and relevance; SFR aims to provide managerial insights to improve the recovery process and customer-firm interactions. Accordingly, many SFR variables represent perceptual metrics for performance (e.g., satisfaction) or information to guide managers (e.g., justice dimensions). Consistent with its

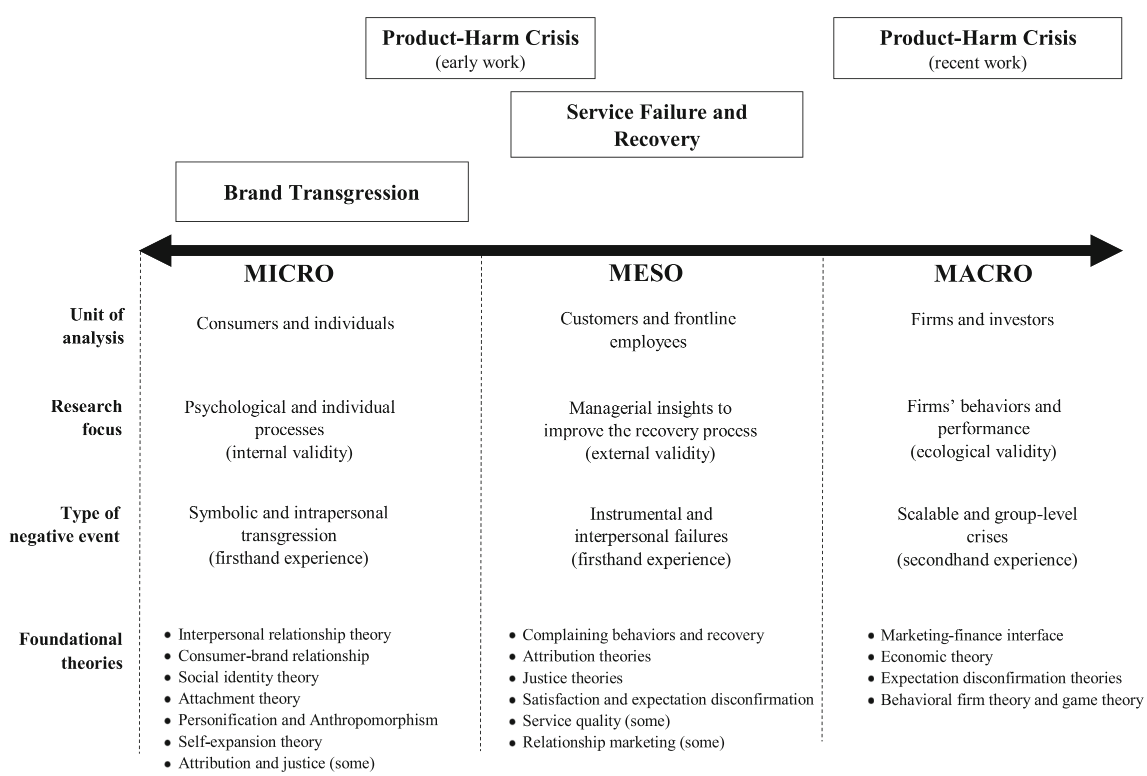


Fig. 2 The level of theorizing in BT, SFR, and PHC

Table 2 Contexts used in SFR, BT and PHC (number of studies within articles and percentage)

Contexts	SFR (n = 236)[b]	BT n = 122)	PHC (n = 36)
Hospitality	79 (33.5%)	9 (7.38%)	–
Varied or self-selected contexts[a]	54 (22.9%)	24 (19.67%)	2 (5.56%)
Travel	27 (11.4%)	2 (1.64%)	–
Retail	18 (7.6%)	3 (2.46%)	–
Telecommunication	12 (5.1%)	2 (1.64%)	–
Financial services	9 (3.8%)	5 (4.1%)	–
Electronics	7 (3%)	13 (10.66%)	5 (13.89%)
Self-service technologies	7 (3%)	–	–
Fitness	5 (2.1%)	1 (0.82%)	–
Automobile & Auto-services	4 (1.7%)	4 (3.28%)	11 (30.56%)
Health & Medical	3 (1.3%)	1 (0.82%)	1 (2.78%)
Arts & Entertainment	2 (0.8%)	3 (2.46%)	–
Consumer products	1 (0.42%)	11 (9.02%)	14 (38.89%)
Apparel	1 (0.4%)	9 (7.38%)	–
Technical & Technological services	1 (0.4%)	5 (4.1%)	–
Personal care & Beauty	1 (0.44%)	3 (2.46%)	–
Endorsement	–	18 (14.75%)	–
Agricultural & Dairy products	–	–	1 (2.78%)
Oil & Gas	–	1 (0.82%)	2 (5.56%)
Sports	–	3 (2.46%)	–
Others	5 (2.1%)	5 (5.41%)	–

[a] In self-selected contexts, the respondents are usually asked to remember a recent failure, transgression or crisis of their choice whereas varied contexts indicate studies with more than one context

[b] While we systematically review 236 articles in total across BT, SFR, and PHC, the numbers in this table refer to studies within those empirical articles (i.e., a single article may contain more than one study). We have reviewed 196 empirical articles, which contain 394 studies (for an average of 2.01 studies per empirical article)

interpersonal orientation (see Table 2), SFR's most popular contexts are in service industries such as hospitality (33.5%), travel (11.4%), retail (7.6%), and telecommunications (5.1%).

SFR originated in the 1970s and 1980s from the complaining literature (Hirschman 1970; Singh 1988), which posits that consumers complain to obtain a *recovery*. Following the usage of such early descriptive frameworks, SFR researchers have employed more elaborate theories, including attribution theory (24.8% of reviewed articles; Folkes 1984) and justice theory (45%; Tax et al. 1998) as well as theories related to expectation disconfirmation (21.1%; Oliver 1997) and relationship marketing (28.4%; Hess et al. 2003).

A majority of BT theories adopt a *micro* view by examining the psychological processes and reactions of individuals facing symbolic transgressions committed by brands. BT's unit of analysis is predominantly at the individual consumer level, and this field tends to use variables that capture deep internal processes. This field has drawn heavily from theories on social psychology of interpersonal relationships in general (Berscheid 1994) and consumer-brand relationship in particular (Fournier 1998). Over the years, BT has further borrowed from interpersonal theories of attachment (Paulssen and Bagozzi 2009), social identity (Lee et al. 2016), and anthropomorphism and personification (Puzakova et al. 2013). Our analysis suggests that 68% of BT articles rely on some form of interpersonal relationship theory. Consistent with its overall orientation, BT focuses on relational transgressions with branded entities or objects, and its most popular contexts (Table 2) are endorsements (14.8%), electronics (10.7%), consumer products (9%), and apparel (7.4%).

Early PHC work featured a *micro-to-meso* level by experimentally focusing on consumers while providing managerial insights. For example, Dawar and Pillutla (2000) and Klein and Dawar (2004) drew largely on attribution and expectation disconfirmation theories to examine consumers' reactions to PHC. Diverging from these initial efforts, much recent PHC work has adopted a *macro* level, which encompasses firms' behaviors and performance. The unit of analysis of this newer work tends to be at the firm or investor level. This branch of PHC research has drawn mainly on marketing-finance interface and economic theory (Gao et al. 2015; Thirumalai and Sinha 2011), behavioral firm theory (Eilert et al. 2017; Kalaignanam et al. 2013), and game theory (Rubel et al. 2011). This last work exhibits high ecological validity by using archival data on real firms (Cleeren et al. 2017). The most prevalent theory in this stream is the efficient market hypothesis (22.2%), with some reliance on organizational behavior and learning theories (11.1%). Consistent with its macro focus, PHC examines industries in which product recalls are frequent (see Table 2), such as consumer products (38.9%), automobiles (30.6%), and electronics (13.9%).

A call for theory building covering the full theoretical spectrum A key takeaway derived from our synthesis is that all three streams would benefit from expanding their boundaries and integrating levels of theorizing from other areas. All streams should further develop their theoretical background so that the full spectrum is covered (micro, meso, and macro). We illustrate below what this suggestion could entail for each stream.

BT is recommended to integrate theories that offer a "meso-er" perspective with a focus on creating managerial insights. For instance, we believe this stream would gain from better integrating the relationship marketing literature (Palmatier et al. 2006; Steinhoff et al. 2019), which uses managerially relevant relationship conceptualizations (e.g., relationship satisfaction), drivers (e.g., relationship benefits), and outcomes (e.g., objective performance) derived from the B2B literature (e.g., Morgan and Hunt 1994). To become more useable for marketers, this stream could dive deeper into justice theory and the notion of recovery (see Johnson et al. 2018 for a recent example examing the effects of recovery in BT).

As a way to move forward, SFR should first increasingly consider going beyond its current meso focus to use theoretical frameworks that offer a "micro-er" perspective. There is room for more SFR research examining deeper individual and internal processes and placing more emphasis on internal validity (see Wan & Wyer [2019] for an example). SFR could go beyond the adoption of a B2B relationship lens, and it could better integrate interpersonal relationship theories. As another avenue, SFR could also benefit from using a "macro-er" perspective by relying more on the marketing-finance literature so that it could better comprehend the effect of failures on firm performance and investors' responses.

Turning to PHC, it seems important to reinvigorate interest in micro-meso level work so that this field can close the gap between the two rather disparate micro and macro substreams. Given the recent dominance of macro work, a boost in micro work could enhance internal validity, causal inferences, and psychological process evaluation. To accomplish this, SFR and BT appear to be natural sources of inspiration.

In terms of implementation, an expansion toward the "micro-meso" space of the spectrum should be relatively straightforward to carry out for researchers. Most work in this space is experimental, and researchers can use the context of their choice. However, an expansion toward the macro space, for BT and SFR, could be challenging because of a need to find market data associated with real negative events. For instance, PHC researchers regularly work with directories of crises or product recalls, which identify public firms at fault. Although it is comparatively rare, it is still possible to find quality macro SFR research (Keiningham et al. 2014; Luo and Homburg 2008) involving investors and financial data. Such examples are further discussed when we present our last insight (measuring customer responses).

Potential theories to integrate all streams SFR, BT, and PHC conceptualize a negative event in different ways, depending on whether consumers experience a misfortune firsthand versus witness a similar situation secondhand (Fig. 2). BT and SFR tend to be interested in situations in which consumers are *directly* impacted by an event, whereas PHC is mainly concerned with consumers *indirectly* witnessing an event through media or word-of-mouth. Given these different conceptualizations, theories related to construal-level theory of psychological distance (Trope and Liberman 2010) could be helpful in explaining the differences and similarities between the three fields. BT theories can likely benefit from the integration of a low-level construal angle, wherein consumers focus on the firsthand experiences and feel a strong psychological proximity with an event. At the other end of the spectrum, PHC theories are likely to be enriched by a high-level construal perspective, wherein customers understand that they are part of a larger affected group and feel a certain psychological distance from a crisis.

Insight 2: Using appropriate theories depending on the three stages

The second key theme that surfaced from synthesizing BT, SFR and PHC pertains to mapping theories according to three stages: initial negative event, recovery, and post recovery (De Matos et al. 2007; Smith et al. 1999). Figure 3 displays these three stages in the context of the whole customer journey (see Insight 5) by accounting for a prior relationship (see Insight 4) and post-event interactions. We suggest that all fields should position their contribution by referring explicitly to these stages and by using appropriate theories for each of them.

Initial negative event: Going beyond basic attributions, severity and type of events SFR highlights that attributions like controllability and stability are especially appropriate to measure customers' judgments regarding an initial negative event (see Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2014 for a meta-analysis). BT and PHC have also regularly employed the attribution lens to comprehend the initial event (e.g., Laufer and Gillespie 2004; Paulssen and Bagozzi 2009). We also find across streams that researchers typically conceptualize an initial negative event by referring to its severity (e.g., De Matos et al. 2007; Tsarenko and Tojib 2015) and different forms of typologies of the events (e.g., Gelbrich and Roschk 2011; Sayin and Gürhan-Canli 2015; Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2014). Attributions, severity,

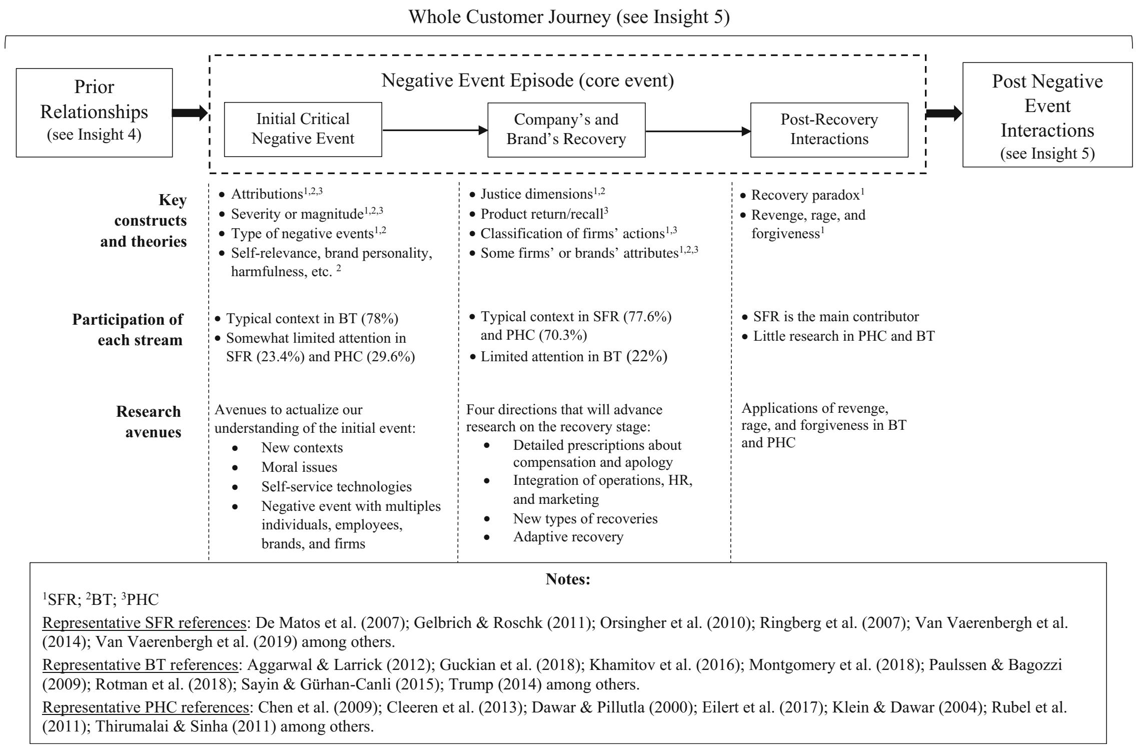


Fig. 3 Conceptualization of a negative event based on three stages (initial event, recovery, and post recovery)

and types of events are popular variables that are best considered as control variables in today's research.

Interestingly, the three streams have paid different kinds of attention to this first stage. On the one hand, SFR (19.3% of research) and PHC (29.6%) work is rarely conducted only at the initial stage. Given their managerial orientation, these two areas appear very driven by the recovery stage. On the other hand, most BT research (78.3%) is realized at this stage, largely because of its prevailing focus on consumers' internal processes rather than on managerial relevance per se. This is why BT has also considered a series of other cognitions at the initial stage, including brand's self-relevance (Guckian et al. 2018; Trump 2014), aspects of a psychological contract (Montgomery et al. 2018), brand personality (Aaker et al. 2004), brand harmfulness (Khamitov et al. 2016), and brand meaning/symbolism (Sayin and Gürhan-Canli 2015), among others. Such cognitions could be adapted to the reality of PHC and SFR, which stand to benefit from paying more attention to this initial stage, as we shall see next.

Four avenues to actualize understanding of initial negative events For SFR and PHC, their strong focus on recovery may have somewhat impeded their ability to map new phenomena. Without a thorough understanding of the focal event, the design of any recovery is like putting the cart before the horse. We encourage SFR, PHC, and BT to actualize their view of the initial event by exploring further the four following avenues.

First, all fields are encouraged to actualize their view of the initial event when it occurs in non-traditional contexts, such as health care (Zayer et al. 2015), social media (López-López et al. 2014), self-service technologies (Robertson et al. 2012), closing time (Ashley and Noble 2014), or any interface empowered by artificial intelligence (robot or chatbot), to name a few. Second, the initial events need to be studied by accounting for consumers' growing vigilance about moral issues (Rotman et al. 2018) related to, for example, greed (Joireman et al. 2013), corporate social responsibility policy (Bolton and Mattila 2015), or race discrimination (Baker et al. 2008). Third, another potential avenue is to further examine the effects of "co-creating" a failure in the context of self-service technology (Dong et al. 2016). In this case, customers are in part responsible for the failure, so internal attributions (self-blame) become highly relevant (Dong et al. 2016; Zhu et al. 2013).

Fourth, researchers are urged to think outside the box of a simple interaction between a unique consumer and a single firm/brand. More research is needed to understand how a group of customers—friends, a couple, or a family (Du et al. 2011, 2014)—make sense of a negative event involving multiple employees, firms, or brands. For example, many failures encompass 1+ employee; as a result, scholars could further examine the effects of employees' incivility with each other (Porath et al. 2010, 2011). Relatedly, there is still a poor understanding of the attribution process within a complex network of firms (such as a supply chain).

Recovery stage: When SFR leads the way for PHC and BT SFR (80.7%) is mainly concerned about the recovery stage. In fact, the recovery stage work is so rich in SFR that it has been made the object of two meta-analyses about justice theory (Gelbrich and Roschk 2011; Orsingher et al. 2010) and three systematic reviews about the types of recovery and its organization implementation (Davidow 2003; Van Vaerenbergh and Orsingher 2016; Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2019). Being the dominant paradigm, justice theory has offered a solid theoretical framework to examine recovery in SFR. Overall, the two meta-analyses (and a plethora of studies) have empirically validated the sequence "recovery tactics→justice dimensions →satisfaction →responses." In addition, several reviews have suggested different typologies of recovery tactics, which are often organized in reference to the three typical justice dimensions (e.g., Davidow 2003).

Turning to PHC, a notable feature of the field is the predominant usage of product recall as its central recovery strategy. This strategy is omnipresent in PHC, with 66.7% of the articles encompassing it. Some PHC research has also examined other firms' interventions, such as price reduction, communication, compensation, process improvement, and apology (e.g., Cleeren et al. 2013), but to a limited extent. To explain the dynamics of product recall, PHC has opted for different frameworks, including theories of contingency (Cleeren et al. 2013), the expectations-evidence framework (Dawar and Pillutla 2000), and control-theoretic models (Rubel et al. 2011). However, there has not been much effort to find an overarching theoretical platform spanning most research—like justice theory for SFR—and to test a variety of recovery tactics that would go beyond the implementation of product recall.

At the other end of the spectrum, research on brand interventions is relatively scarce in BT; only 21.7% of the included work comprehensively taps into brands' responses to their transgression (see Puzakova et al. 2013, 2016, for exceptions). Overall, BT keeps introducing novel theoretical frameworks and concepts with limited reference to the usual three stages of a negative event. Compared to SFR and PHC, BT would gain from having its different theories organized according to the three stages. We see a great potential for the application of justice theory in BT, and the SFR meta-analyses on these issues seem a logical starting point for BT.

Four directions that will advance research on the recovery stage This review identified four promising avenues to advance research on recovery (Fig. 3). First, we echo recent calls that highlight the importance of going beyond the mere presence or absence of apologies and compensations. Future research is recommended to provide specific prescriptions about the dimensions of an apology (Roschk and Kaiser 2013), the optimal level of compensation (Gelbrich et al. 2015), and the most appropriate compensation type (e.g., tangible vs. intangible; Roschk and Gelbrich 2017).

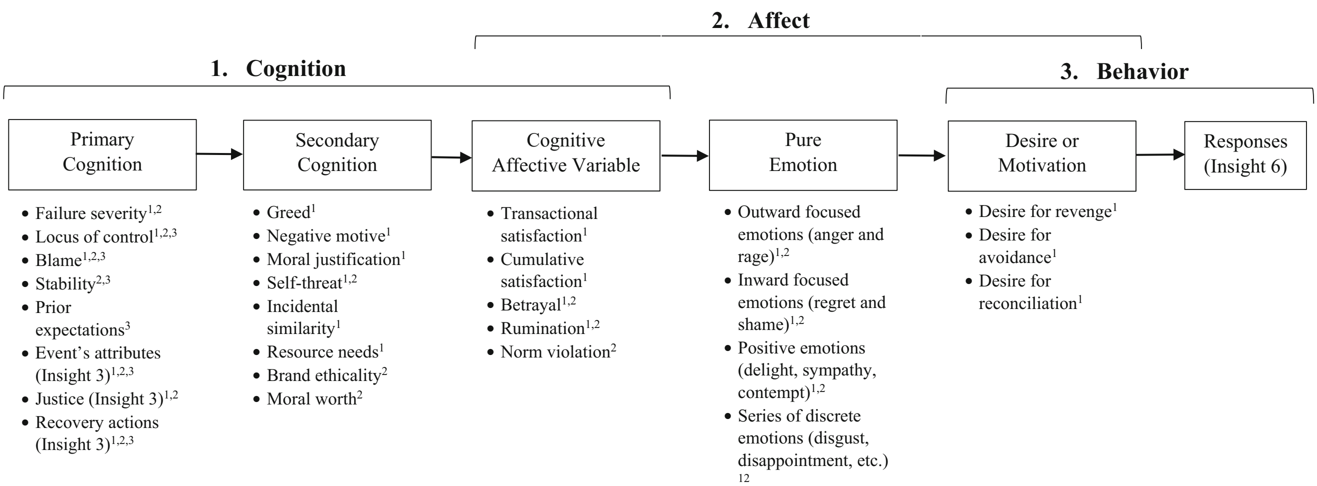
Second, Van Vaerenbergh and Orsingher (2016) propose a multilevel, comprehensive framework that highlights the importance of integrating three key fields interested in service recovery: operations, human resources, and marketing. The authors judiciously note that there is limited work on the human resources and operational aspects of a recovery, compared to customer-based work. The current review re-iterates the call made by these authors.

Third, recent research has also suggested a series of new insightful recoveries, such as external recovery (Allen et al. 2015), customer inoculation (Mikolon et al. 2015), recovery communication (Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2012), and co-created recovery (Dong et al. 2008). We believe pursuing this avenue is important as long as the suggested recoveries fit new negative events. Indeed, after conceptualizing the initial event in new ways (see the section on the first stage), researchers are likely to conclude that new recoveries are needed. For instance, when a recovery is not possible (e.g., a permanent illness), managers could develop interventions that focus on acceptance. Or, when a customer is mostly responsible for a failure, managers can enact interventions to prompt customer self-expression and cognitive restructuring, which can help the healing process.

A fourth promising avenue is to further develop the notion of *adaptive recovery* (Ringberg et al. 2007), which implies that different recoveries are needed in relation to specific contexts and consumers. We believe there is much potential to examine the effectiveness of different recoveries in accordance with the heterogeneity of contexts and customers. This work could be based on contingency theory (Cambra-Fierro et al. 2015), which suggests that the nature of recovery should fit the context of the negative event, such as, for instance, its economic vs. non-economic type (Cambra-Fierro et al. 2015) or its tangible vs. intangible nature (Roschk and Gelbrich 2014).

Post-recovery stage: SFR proposes actionable frameworks for BT and PHC There is abundant SFR work examining customer responses after an excellent recovery (i.e., the recovery paradox) or a poor recovery (i.e., rage and revenge). As a general recommendation for this last stage, we believe that BT and PHC—on which the current review finds relatively little post-recovery research—could seek to integrate the following two advances made in SFR.

First, in SFR, the recovery paradox suggests that customers feel more positive after a successful recovery, compared to the way they felt prior to the service failure. This paradox received



Notes:

[1]SFR; [2]BT; [3]PHC

Representative SFR references: Chebat & Slusarczyk (2005); Dunn & Dahl (2012); Gelbrich (2010); Grégoire & Fisher (2008); Joireman et al. (2013); Komarova Loureiro et al. (2018); McColl-Kennedy et al. (2009); Schoefer & Diamantapoulos (2008); Strizhakova et al. (2012); Surachartkumtonkun et al. (2013); Wan & Wyer (2019).

Representative BT references: Donovan et al. (2012); Guckian et al. (2018); Hegner et al. (2017); Johnson et al. (2011); Kähr et al. (2016); Khamitov et al. (2016); Paulssen & Bagozzi (2009); Reimann et al. (2018); Romani et al. (2015); Wiggin & Yalch (2015).

Representative PHC references: Dawar & Pillutla (2000); Klein & Dawar (2004); Lei et al. (2008); Lei et al. (2012); Whelan & Dawar (2016).

Fig. 4 An overview of the different processes in BT, SFR, and PHC

much attention in the 1990s (Hart et al. 1990), to the point that a meta-analysis on this topic was conducted (De Matos et al. 2007; 24 studies). In sum, the heightened post-recovery attitude seems to occur only for specific variables and under particular conditions. The interest in this paradox has decreased in SFR in recent years, but perhaps it could be reinvigorated by being replicated and possibly extended in BT and PHC.

Second, SFR exhibits a fast-growing interest in customer responses after a double deviation (i.e., a service failure and a failed recovery), which is a key trigger for explaining rage (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009) and revenge (Ward and Ostrom 2006). SFR researchers found that when the justice norm is violated at the recovery stage, customers experience a strong emotional drive (anger or rage) that leads them to take action (Grégoire et al. 2010). In this context, they see revenge as an appropriate last resort to restore a form of balance with the firm. Since the beginning of the 2000s, a substantial body of work has emerged that defines revenge and rage (Bechwati and Morrin 2003; McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009), examines their antecedents (Grégoire and Fisher 2008; Surachartkumtonkun et al. 2013), tests the mediation effects involving greed, betrayal, anger, and rage (Grégoire et al. 2010), and identifies the outcomes in terms of behaviors (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009). Although "revenge research" tends to originate from social and organizational psychology (Grégoire et al. 2018), this topic has received little attention in BT and PHC.

Insight 3: Integrating, establishing, and nuancing the role of different processes

The next insight stems from integrating the large variety of mediators suggested in the three areas (Fig. 4). SFR and BT have suggested many different processes, which seem to share many commonalities. PHC, in turn, has put much less emphasis on proposing mediators. Looking at the universe of mediators (Fig. 4), all streams should increasingly build on the suggested sequences rather than proposing new ones for the sake of novelty. Our hope is that such integration efforts could reduce reliance on rather arbitrary processes.

Most SFR and BT models can be organized according to the sequence: cognitions ➔ affect ➔ behaviors (see Fig. 4 for references). Over the years, this tripartite sequence has been broken down into multiple parts. Indeed, researchers regularly refer to two levels of cognitions: primary and secondary. The first level of cognitions allows researchers to categorize the focal event in broad categories (e.g., severity, blame, and locus), whereas the second category involves cognitions (e.g., greed, self-threat, ethicality) that are more diagnostic in calibrating specific emotions and behaviors. Recent research has also proposed constructs—the "cognitive affective" variables in Fig. 4—that are at the intersection of cognitions and affects (e.g., betrayal and rumination). Going downward in the sequence, BT and SFR have proposed a large list of discrete emotions, ranging from outward-focused to inward-focused and negative to positive. Researchers have also refined their understanding of the transition "affect ➔ behaviors" by integrating a series of motivational constructs (e.g., desire for revenge).[3]

A need for a framework integrating related process variables First, it appears important to develop an integrative framework that focuses on unifying the different mediators. When examining all the different mediators suggested in Fig. 4, we note that many of them have similar meanings and roles. As a start, researchers should try to organize them according to overarching categories. For instance, many secondary cognitions refer to inferences of intent (e.g., greed and negative motive), while several others have clear moral implications (e.g., moral justification, brand ethicality, and moral worth) (Joireman et al. 2013; Rotman et al. 2018). In terms of cognitive affective variables, betrayal and norm violation also overlap in notable ways (Aggarwal 2004; Grégoire and Fisher 2008). Many affective responses, such as contempt and satisfaction or anger and rage (e.g., Surachartkumtonkun et al. 2013), could be regrouped under similar umbrellas. We invite BT, SFR, and PHC scholars to better categorize their mechanism variables into simpler and broader building blocks and, then, to use consistent terms. If new process variables are needed, researchers need to argue for their unique role and test for their discriminant validity over established constructs.

Accounting for complementary processes and ruling out alternative mechanisms Along with better categorizing of the current variables, researchers need to consider complementary sequences that could jointly explain a focal phenomenon. Again, looking at Fig. 4, certain complementary routes seem to emerge. Some processes seem internally focused (e.g., self-blame, self-threat, rumination, inward-focused emotions), (e.g., Strizhakova et al. 2012), whereas others are mainly externally focused (e.g., greed, negative motives, anger) (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009). Most processes entail negative variables, yet some of them have a positive valence (e.g., positive motive, delight, sympathy, reconciliation; Tsarenko et al. 2019). Overall, scholars should consider parallel and sometimes complementary mechanisms to explain a given consumer response.

Then, a logical next step would be to investigate thoroughly the conditions under which certain processes (e.g., anger) hold over others (e.g., sympathy) (Grégoire et al. 2018), thereby advancing our current process knowledge. In addition, while certain phenomena can best be explained by multiple different mechanisms and sequences, it is critical to understand the conditions under which a given process has superior predictive ability over others. In doing so and following many BT examples (Johnson et al. 2011; Rotman et al. 2018), researchers are encouraged to consider and rule out alternative mechanisms.

As we just noted, the predominant focus across the three streams has been on investigating negatively-valenced processes; however, not all consumers respond bitterly to adverse events (especially after a recovery). Future research should pay more attention to positive process variables, such as reconciliation, grace, acceptance, and self-healing (Joireman et al. 2013; Tsarenko et al. 2019).

Testing processes through a combination of SEMs and moderated mediations We can also draw lessons from the way that SFR and BT researchers have tested processes. Again, this review favors integrating the approaches used in SFR and BT, as both are complementary. First, SFR was built on a rich SEM tradition (e.g., Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009), which simultaneously accounts for a large variety of parallel mediators. Although this approach has been less popular in recent years, we believe there is still value in testing large comprehensive models by using SEM, especially given the relatively unstructured state of the mediators. By comparing different large sequences, researchers could gain a broad picture of the different processes working in a complementary or competitive manner. Confirmatory factor analyses would also represent a viable option to determine discriminant validity of similar-looking process variables. Revisiting such SEM process models would enable a much needed "cleanup" and add structure to this relatively disjoined area.

Along with such efforts, researchers should increasingly conduct finer grained analyses of a given process model by using moderated mediation. Here, BT research regularly features the reversal of focal effects through moderation by identifying process-relevant boundary conditions (e.g., Aaker et al. 2004; Aggarwal and Larrick 2012). Many influential BT articles have used clever experimental designs, manipulating boundary conditions and emphasizing moderated mediation. As a general recommendation, the three fields should develop research that balances a need for comprehensiveness with SEM models and a need for precision with well-designed studies featuring relevant boundary conditions.

PHC: More emphasis on processes Although PHC is advanced in many dimensions (e.g., archival data), it provides limited

[3] Please note that the final responses or dependent variables are discussed in our last insight.

process insights compared to BT or SFR. Our hope is that the work and references presented in Fig. 4 could help spearhead its further development.

Theme 2: Dynamic and longitudinal considerations

Insight 4: Understanding the critical and differential role of a prior relationship

Because negative events always occur in a relationship context, researchers need to properly account for the effects of a prior relationship with a firm/brand. Compared to SFR and PHC, BT has paid more attention to this issue, given its strong relational roots. We find that 55% of BT articles have a clear relational focus, compared to 32% for SFR and 22.2% for PHC. Accordingly, BT seems a good model to follow to advance the relational insights of both SFR and PHC. Figure 5 depicts a summary of the current relational findings. In SFR and PHC, the proposed conceptualizations for a prior relationship (e.g., rapport, commitment, or relationship quality) are based largely on B2B and relationship marketing. Inspired by social psychology, BT has arguably studied a larger variety of relationships types (e.g., communal, exchange, adversarial) and dimensions (e.g., self-relevant vs. self-neutral, positive vs. negative).

SFR and PHC have argued that a prior relationship can have favorable effects (i.e., a "love is blind") versus unfavorable effects (i.e., a "love becomes hate") on customer responses after a negative event; these two streams rely mainly on a competitive view and tend to support one effect over the other.[4] Instead of relying on a competitive framework, BT has featured the *reconciliation* of these two rival explanations. To do so, BT focuses on the relational process by explaining that different relationship types are associated with distinct relational norms. Depending on whether the negative event *confirms* or *violates* the norms associated with a given relationship (Aggarwal 2004), customers experience greater gratitude or betrayal (Reimann et al. 2018) and respond more positively or negatively (Aaker et al. 2004).

Simultaneously considering different relationship types Although BT, SFR, and PHC use similar basic relational constructs (e.g., trust and commitment), BT offers a more holistic take on the relational dimension of our framework. BT draws from the rich literature on consumer-brand relationships (Fournier 1998), which offers a large variety of relationship types. Many BT researchers go beyond selecting only one relationship type and regularly contrast the effects of multiple relationships. For example, Aggarwal (2004) relies on exchange vs. communal brand relationships, Johnson et al. (2011) on self-relevant vs. self-neutral relationships, and Gaustad et al. (in press) on relationships linked to actual vs. ideal self-identity. Accordingly, SFR and PHC researchers are encouraged to integrate different relationship types, justify their selection given the context, and contrast their respective effects.

Incorporating relevant relational process variables Along with integrating different types of relationships, SFR and PHC need to increasingly incorporate process variables that better capture relational influences. In contrast, much BT work (e.g., Aaker et al. 2004; Donovan et al. 2012) focuses on measuring processes with mediators involving a relational component (e.g., betrayal, forgiveness, partner quality, gratitude). For instance, Johnson et al. (2011) showed that self-relevant relationships are more likely to lead to betrayal after transgressions, compared to self-neutral relationships. Aggarwal (2004) documented that the same brand's actions could be concurrently viewed as a norm violation for communal relationships and a norm confirmation for exchange relationships. Conversely, SFR and PHC tend to use processes that rarely include relational anchors. Here, the knowledge base and best practices in BT could be helpful starting points for SFR and PHC.

Reconciling two competing relational explanations On the one hand, prior relationships can buffer negative impact and serve as a safety cushion; but, on the other hand, the existence of such relationships can amplify the negative impact and backfire (Fig. 5). Following BT's reconciliation focus, we urge researchers across all streams to better explain when favorable versus unfavorable effects are expected, and to systematically identify boundary conditions nuancing such effects. Hence, we believe it is time for these streams to empirically examine an integrative framework that reconciles both explanations.

To clearly demonstrate this need for reconciliation, here are illustrations in SFR and PHC. A growing body of SFR research examines the effects of having a prior relationship on responses after a failure, and it generally puts forward an explanation based on the "love is blind" logic (Grégoire and Fisher 2008). The "love is blind" effect suggests that strong prior relationships facilitate consumers' acceptance of a failure and are associated with favorable consumer responses. However, there is also research, although less abundant, that argues for the opposite "love becomes hate" effect, when strong prior relationships lead to unfavorable responses (Grégoire et al. 2009). Although researchers usually present both possibilities, their results tend to support one interpretation over the other, most commonly the "love is blind" effect. The same recommendation holds for PHC, which provides

[4] See Wan et al. (2011) and Harmeling et al. (2015) for notable exceptions.

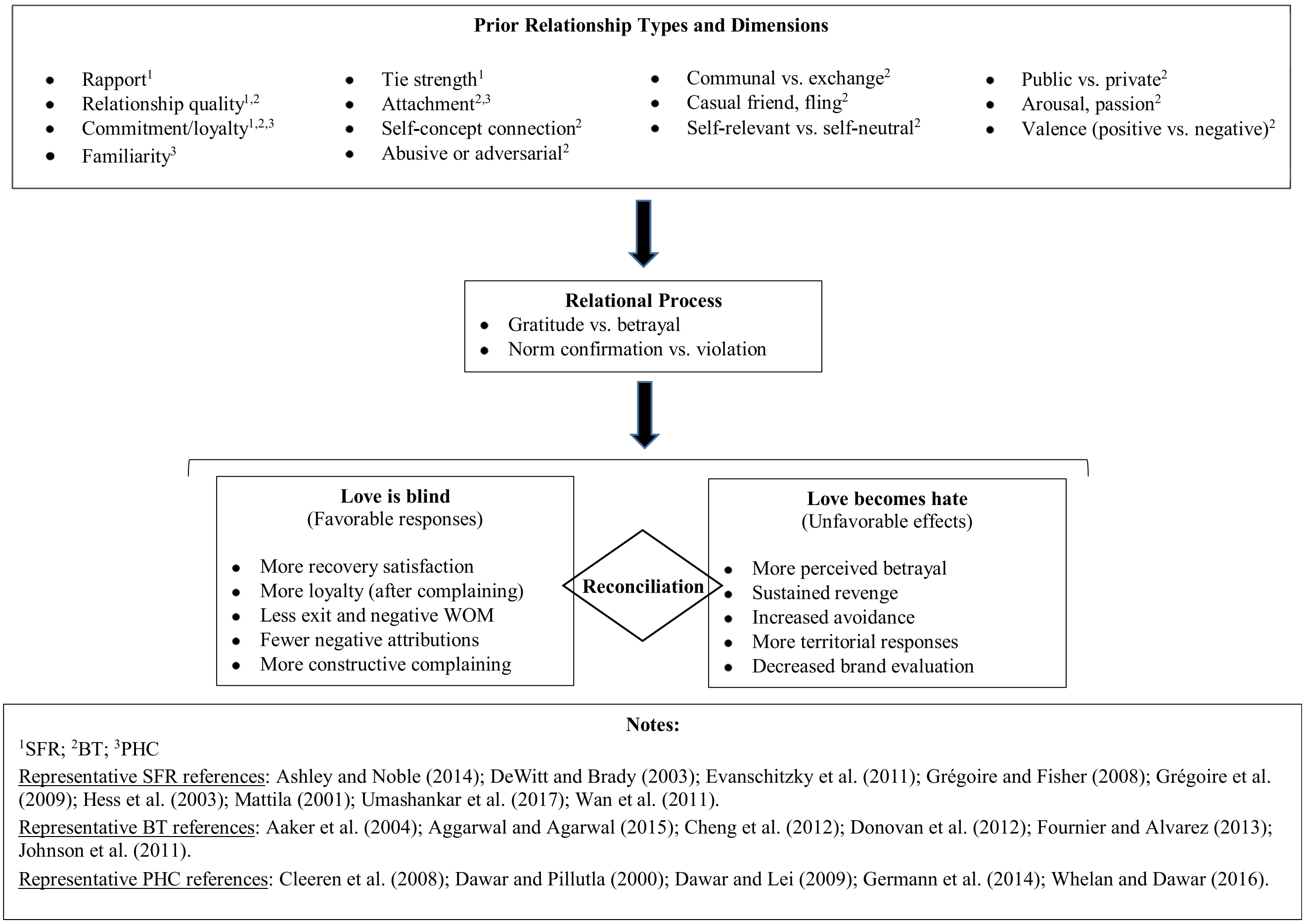


Fig. 5 The favorable and unfavorable effects of a prior relationship in the aftermath of a negative event

similarly mixed evidence pertaining to the influence of a prior relationship (Cleeren et al. 2008; Germann et al. 2014). Overall, it is important to go beyond siding with a particular school of thought and actually explain when one effect takes precedence over the other.

Contrasting the effects of relationships across different touchpoints Finally, we believe a promising opportunity for all streams is to compare the effects of the diverse relationships customers develop with the same firm through its various touchpoints (i.e., the firm itself, a given brand, a specific employee, a website, or a community). Most current work strictly explores the bond with a firm/brand. Here, we invite all scholars to consider the prospect that different relationship types can co-exist within the same organization.

Insight 5: Adopting the perspective of the whole customer journey

The next overarching insight centers on the notion of customer journey, which is defined as the combination of all customers' responses (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) throughout all their touchpoints with a firm (Hamilton and Price 2019; Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2019). These interactions are typically divided into three phases: pre-event, core event, and post-event (Lemon and Verhoef 2016; Voorhees et al. 2017). The literature on customer journey and experience emphasizes the importance of studying more than just a focal event so as to incorporate the interactions occurring before and after the focal event. The notion of customer journey—and how it applies to our context—is illustrated in Fig. 3. The pre-event is captured by "prior relationships" (Insight 4), the core event is represented by the three stages of a "negative event" (Insight 2), and the post-event maps onto "post-negative event interactions" (this insight).[5]

A call for an increasing adoption of the customer journey perspective Much research in BT, SFR, and PHC tends to focus on the core event episode or some parts of it. Such an

[5] The notion of customer journey has recently been utilized to understand the recovery stage (Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2019). We apply a similar logic in this section, but by referring to a broader focal event (i.e., a "negative event episode" instead of the recovery stage) and larger scale pre-event and post-event phases.

approach in isolation does not provide a holistic perspective. That being said, the rich literature on the effects of prior relationships (see our Insight 4) provides key insights to understand the seemingly under-examined pre-event stage. Prior relationships comprise a sum total of the prior interactions, and we see a clear link between this insight and the concept of customer journey. Here, we suggest that relationship researchers clearly highlight their contribution to the customer journey literature.

Multi-stage research enables a better understanding of the customer journey As part of an effort to better integrate the *whole* customer journey perspective, we have identified some multi-stage research that examines the effects of a series of transgressions recoveries on customer responses. For example, Maxham and Netemeyer (2002) find that the beneficial effect of recovery decreases to non-significance after three instances of failures. In turn, Surachartkumtonkun et al. (2015) use a dynamic model to show how rage unfolds after three service failures and two ineffective recovery attempts. In addition, Sivakumar et al. (2014) examine the effects of a sequence of failures and delights on post perceptions of relationship quality. Overall, we salute these initiatives and strongly encourage such efforts.

Post responses as a key to unlock the customer journey perspective According to the findings of our analysis, there is limited research that investigates the "post negative event interactions" phase (Fig. 3), which refers to the way that customers subsequently interact with firms (interpersonal post-event responses) and feel (intrapersonal post-event feelings) *after* the negative event episode. Though it is assumed that customers derive some benefits from their complaints, only 9.2% SFR, 11.7% BT, and 7.4% PHC research examines such post responses.

As a notable BT example, Aaker et al. (2004) looked at the effects of multiple interactions, including a transgression, on consumers' post perception of relationship quality. In another SFR example, Harmeling et al. (2015) show that extreme service failures radically change the developmental trajectory of a relationship. In addition, some SFR researchers (Grégoire et al. 2018; López-López et al. 2014) show that customers feel especially negative when their complaining efforts do not allow restoration of a form of justice with the guilty firm. Taken together, these examples highlight that more work is needed to understand how customers further interact with and feel about the firm/brand after a negative event.

An underappreciation of the temporal component in BT, SFR, and PHC We note that a very limited number of papers in SFR (5.5%) and BT (5.0%) have integrated a time effect. Most articles in BT and SFR assume (explicitly or implicitly) that consumer responses operate uniformly over time. By contrast, PHC, given its reliance on longitudinal archival data, has more regularly accounted for the effect of time (25.9%). However, even in this latter case, the time variable has rarely been made the object of formal hypotheses; it was automatically accounted for in the modeling approach. Overall, when all evidence is considered, we conclude that the effect of time is an under-researched topic of importance across all three areas.

The rare SFR and BT longitudinal studies consulted have all produced meaningful results that could be informative for future research. In SFR, Grégoire et al. (2009) show that after an online complaint, revenge decreases and avoidance increases over time, while betrayal remains constant. Relatedly, Hogreve et al. (2017) show a non-linear effect of time on recovery expectations that follows an inverted U-shape. Lastly, Fang et al. (2013) studied the effectiveness of recovery tactics and found that apology compared to compensation had shorter decay over time. In BT, the vast majority of work (95%) represents cross-sectional studies with a limited concern about time. This is particularly surprising given that branding scholars repeatedly underscore that consumer-brand connections are dynamic and fluid (Khamitov et al. in press; Park and MacInnis 2018). There remain many opportunities to examine "when, why, and how consumer-brand relationships change over time" (Park and MacInnis 2018, p. 125).

Given its econometrical and archival traditions, we note that more than a fifth of PHC research has factored in the role of time. The fact that the temporal component was accounted for is obviously a good start and a role model for SFR and BT. That being said, our analysis still reveals that, in a majority of cases, time is simply viewed as a control variable rather than a theoretically meaningful variable. Even in PHC, more work is needed on the effect of time.

Theme 3: Methodological considerations

Insight 6: Relying more on advanced methods and multi-method enquiries

Another key insight is the importance of greater methodological variety and sophistication. It appears critical for all three streams to rely increasingly on (1) field studies, (2) advanced methods, and (3) multi-method enquiries. These three elements are particularly important considering the prevalence of hypothetical scenarios in SFR and BT. It should be noted that PHC presents greater variety of methods with more frequent use of archival data and econometric models (Cleeren et al. 2017). Please see Table 3 for a detailed summary.

Table 3 Methodologies used in each stream (based on the number of studies within articles)

Method	SFR (n = 236)[a]	BT (n = 122)	PHC (n = 36)
Experiment	69.1%	76.2%	44.4%
Type 1: Scenario/Vignette	56.8%	68%	44.4%
Lab (setting)	28.0%	36.1%	30.6%
Online	24.2%	20.5%	5.7%
Other	2.5%	5.7%	8.3%
Mail	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Not specified	1.3%	4.9%	0.0%
Type 2: Real life experiment	11.4%	5.7%	0.0%
Lab (setting)	6.4%	2.5%	0.0%
Field	3.0%	2.5%	0.0%
Online	2.1%	0.8%	0.0%
Type 3: Other types of experiments	0.8%	2.5%	0.0%
Survey	21.2%	15.6%	5.6%
Type 1: Cross-sectional	16.5%	15.6%	5.6%
Field (setting)	6.4%	0.8%	5.6%
Online	4.2%	7.4%	0.0%
Lab	3.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Not specified	1.3%	0.8%	0.0%
Mail	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.4%	0.8%	0.0%
Publicly known transgression	0.0%	4.9%	0.0%
Type 2: Longitudinal	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Type 3: Dyad	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Qualitative approach	3.8%	6.6%	0.0%
Archival Data	4.2%	1.6%	50%
Other Methods	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%

These percentages are all calculated according to the number of studies within articles reviewed in each field. This table contains three levels: 1) the generic method (e.g., experiment), 2) the specific type of method (e.g., scenario-based experiment), and 3) the setting in which the specific method was used (e.g., lab, online panel)

[a] While we systematically review 236 articles in total across BT, SFR, and PHC, the numbers in this table refer to studies within those empirical articles. We have reviewed 196 empirical articles, which contain 394 studies

An overreliance on scenario-based experiments in BT and SFR The typical methods in SFR have been experiments (69.1%) and, to a lesser extent, cross-sectional surveys (16.5%). The use of experiments has substantially increased in SFR, going from 61.1% between 1998 and 2002 to 79.8% between 2014 and 2018 (see Web Appendix), cannibalizing the share of surveys. Consistent with SFR, the most common methods in BT are experiments (76.2%, 93/122 studies), followed by surveys (15.6%). Within the experimental paradigm, BT and SFR have relied heavily upon scenario-based experiments (BT = 68%; SFR = 56.8%) in lab/online settings (BT = 56.6%; SFR = 52.1%) with rare examples of real-world experiments (BT = 5.7%; SFR = 11.4%).

Compared to BT and SFR, PHC presents a more balanced use of varied methods. Indeed, PHC has shown less reliance on experiments (44.4%) while at the same time emphasizing "real" archival data (50%). In a way, PHC could represent a model for BT and SFR because of the field's tendency to use methods that balance internal validity (i.e., experiments) and external validity (i.e., archival data) as well as different types of informants, such as consumers (59.2%), firms (29.6%), and investors (29.6%).[6]

Overall, the overreliance on hypothetical experiments in BT and SFR appears to be a limitation. Although this kind of method is useful to test causal effects and processes, it possesses weaknesses in terms of ecological validity and generalizability. We believe that BT and SFR critically need a realignment toward the implementation of field studies and advanced methods, as we shall see in the next sub-insights (as well as the whole of Insight 7).

A need for three types of ecologically valid field studies It seems important for all three streams, especially SFR and BT, to conduct more ecologically valid field studies versus lab-based or online panel experiments. Such field studies allow the evaluation of the magnitude and prevalence of an event as well as providing enhancement of ecological validity. In addition, many aspects of a negative event (e.g., affective reactions, relationship development, investors' responses) are poorly captured with hypothetical scenarios. Accordingly, we identified three under-researched areas in which to conduct innovative field studies.

First, the number of surveys has been decreasing in recent years in BT and SFR (less than 11% in 2014–2018 in both fields), and they have never been popular in PHC (only 5.56%). This sharp decrease is probably attributable to the inherent limitations of cross-sectional surveys (e.g., common method bias). However, in response to these limitations, we note that little research relies on advanced survey methods, such as those employing a longitudinal design (2.3% all fields combined) or a dyadic or triadic design (0.5%). Such designs entail effective procedural remedies against common method bias, and all three fields could use more such methods with real individuals (customers, employees, managers).

Second, in an era of greater data availability, it is surprising to see that only 4.2% of SFR research and less than 2% of BT research rely on archival data. There is a need for a greater use of such data, which can capture real behaviors and provide objective performance metrics. Such data also allows analyzing the responses of different stakeholders, such as customers, employees, managers, investors, and firms. We have

[6] The total of the types of PHC informants exceeds 100% since some studies include data from 1+ sources.

identified at least three opportunities for the use of such data. First, researchers can obtain behavioral and financial data (e.g., customer crossbuying and profitability) by building partnerships with firms (e.g., Cambra-Fierro et al. 2015). Second, recent research had access to written or verbal exchanges between customers and employees, and these researchers have used use innovative textual analyses to make sense of such data (Marinova et al. 2018; Packard et al. 2018). Third, inspired by PHC, market-based archival data could be helpful in capturing sales, loyalty, return on investment, brand choice, and online posting, among others (Cleeren et al. 2017).

Finally, real-life experiments based on physical stimuli and concrete behaviors are still rare in each stream. Such study designs are important because they provide better information about individuals' real responses. Within this category of method, studies based on neurophysiological responses, textual analysis, and field experiments are almost nonexistent; and, accordingly, employing such methods is critical to advance all three streams.

When richer data mean a more advanced quantitative toolkit In the spirit of gaining access to higher quality data, researchers need to enrich their quantitative skills toolkit. Much current research relies heavily on ANOVAs for experiments, structural equation modeling (SEM) and moderated regressions for surveys, and PROCESS procedures for mediation analyses (Hayes 2017). Unfortunately, this toolkit could become insufficient for analyzing the newer types of data needed in the future.

Longitudinal, multi-source, and multi-level data would require the use of mixed modeling approaches (e.g., Grégoire et al. 2018), a broad category of models that encompasses growth models and hierarchical linear models (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002; Singer 1998). In addition, archival data related to firms' characteristics and performance typically entail the deployment of econometric models. Here, PHC paved the way by using a rich variety of advanced econometric models, including dynamic linear models, financial event studies, choice and logistic regressions, and hazard models, among others (see Cleeren et al. 2017). Given its econometrical focus, we note that PHC (20.69% of all articles) has been much more successful than either BT (0%) or SFR (2.1%) in publishing in top quantitative journals (e.g., *Marketing Science*).

A strong call for the use of multi-methods Despite recent heartfelt calls for multi-method research (Hamilton 2016; Houston 2016), such work is surprisingly scarce across all three streams (11.67% for BT, 18.3% for SFR, and 7.4% for PHC). That being said, on average, such work tends to be published in higher quality journals (e.g., *JCR*, *JM*, *JAMS*), which is yet another incentive for BT, SFR, and PHC researchers to take this call very seriously. Matching different suitable methods enables researchers to approach the focal negative event from complementary angles (e.g., through combining a depth interview to get at feelings with a large longitudinal survey to get at trends and magnitude).

SFR is in need of meta-analyses and integrative studies Given its maturity, SFR is strongly encouraged to rely increasingly on methods that synthesize existing knowledge, such as meta-analyses and systematic reviews. Although SFR already counts more meta-analyses (3.5%) and reviews (2.1%) than the other two fields, their number remains limited, and such integrative works tend to focus only on the effects of recoveries. We believe other sections of our framework should also become the subject of meta-analyses and/or integrative reviews. For example, researchers could categorize and examine the effects of relational attributes or different process variables on different customer response metrics. It would also be interesting to see how these effects are moderated by methodological features. Lastly, we believe that a systematic review as a method, when well executed, can be at least as informative for future SFR research as a meta-analysis (see Van Vaerenbergh et al. 2019 for a recent example).

Insight 7: Measuring theory-based, objective, and financial/market-based responses

Which outcome variables should we measure after a negative event? Our analysis reveals that BT, SFR, and PHC should place a stronger premium on (1) theory-based conceptualizations of responses, (2) objective responses, and (3) financial and market-based metrics. These three types of outcome variables are especially meaningful in light of an overreliance on perceptual self-reported responses. Indeed, this review finds that 81.7% of SFR and 93.3% of BT articles use solely perceptual self-reported scales. In contrast, this proportion is 37% for PHC as a whole. However, we see a marked difference between the two substreams of PHC (Fig. 2).[7] Its behavioral sub-stream relies heavily on self-reported measures (90%), whereas its quantitative sub-stream uses hardly any.

Increasingly using validated scales and theory-based conceptualization of responses SFR, BT, and the behavioral sub-stream of PHC rely almost exclusively on self-reported measures, which are often arbitrarily selected on the basis of convenience and ease of measurement. The current review minimally suggests that researchers use validated scales for established constructs and increasingly rely on theory-based conceptualization of responses.

[7] As illustrated in Figure 2, PHC can be divided in two sub-streams: its "micro-meso"-focused component (e.g., Dawar and Pillutla 2000) and its "macro"-focused component (Cleeren et al. 2013; Gao et al. 2015). For simplicity of exposition, we refer to the first component as "behavioral PHC" and the second as "quantitative PHC."

BT and behavioral PHC are careful about the validity of their independent (often manipulated) and process (typically measured) variables. However, compared to SFR, they pay somewhat less attention to the measurement of their dependent variables. In BT and behavioral PHC, many of the dependent variables are generic constructs measuring a change in attitude or behavioral intent. We find limited efforts to measure specific behaviors with validated scales (e.g., Kähr et al. 2016; Rotman et al. 2018). To improve, BT and behavioral PHC are encouraged increasingly to select appropriate behavioral metrics from the variety of SFR scales.

Although SFR has been more mindful of measuring specific behaviors with validated scales, there is still much room for improvement. SFR researchers have traditionally measured behaviors which are derived from descriptive typologies of complaining behaviors (e.g., Singh 1988). Indeed, SFR researchers typically administer a combination of the three behavioral intentions: (1) repurchase, (2) word-of-mouth (including positive, negative, traditional, or electronic), and (3) complaining to the firm and/or a third-party (see Kim et al. [2010] for a review). Although such typologies were natural starting points, they remain fairly descriptive and do not rely on strong theorization.

We suggest rather that researchers rely more heavily on theory-based conceptualizations of responses. Here are four examples. First, Grégoire and Fisher (2008) argue that complaining behaviors should be conceptualized on the basis of their different ability to restore justice: reparation versus revenge. Second, some extant work refers to the notion of frames or schemas to capture the way customers respond to a service failure (Beverland et al. 2010; Ringberg et al. 2007). Specifically, Beverland et al. (2010) identify two conflict frames (task vs. personal based) while Ringberg et al. (2007) propose three specific complaining schemas (relational, oppositional, and utilitarian). Third, some scholars organize customers' responses according to their general coping mechanisms in response to stressful situations. To that end, Duhachek (2005) suggests grouping such mechanisms into three categories: active coping, expressive support seeking, and avoidance (see Strizhakova et al. 2012 for actual scales). Fourth, the theory of forgiveness and its three transgression-related interpersonal motivations (revenge, reconciliation, and avoidance) seem highly relevant for the three streams (Joireman et al. 2013).

Integrating more objective responses If we exclude the quantitative sub-stream of PHC—all of which utilizes objective responses—we observe a limited amount of work that uses any form of objective responses. Accordingly, this review highlights below four promising examples using objective measures to inspire future work across the three streams.

First, given the multitude of emotions associated with a negative event, it is now possible to objectively capture both the nature and valence of a specific emotion by using face reading software. It also possible to assess emotional arousal by measuring pupil dilation, and the level of stress through measurement of heartbeat and skin conductance (e.g., Boshoff 2012). Second, recent work has emphasized the manipulation of "real" failures or transgressions for which researchers measure actual behaviors, such as actual browsing behaviors and time spent on co-recovery actions (Zhu et al. 2013), actual return to the firm (Umashankar et al. 2017), customer retention (Harmeling et al. 2015), or cheating behaviors (Rotman et al. 2018). Third, some research has begun to use the judgment of others reflected in metrics, such as the actual number of likes and comments (McGraw et al. 2015). Fourth, researchers have used linguistic software to evaluate the content of a complaint (Grégoire et al. in press).

A call for increasing use of financial and market-based metrics
It appears important for all streams, and especially for BT and SFR, to rely increasingly on actual financial and market-based metrics. At present, quantitative PHC is the only stream that successfully encompasses a substantial percentage (63%) of financial and market-based metrics (in contrast to 5.5% for SFR and 1.7% for BT). This lack of prevalence is surprising given the importance of market-based metrics in marketing (Keiningham et al. 2011, 2014).

To illustrate, we could locate only a few, rare SFR and BT articles inspired by the marketing-finance paradigm. Some SFR and BT research has examined the effect of complaining level (Luo and Homburg 2008), brand equity (May et al. 2015), or service failure severity (Keiningham et al. 2014) on financial metrics, such as firms' abnormal profits (Luo and Homburg 2008) and customer profitability (Cambra-Fierro et al. 2015), and market-based variables, such as coupon redemption (May et al. 2015) and market share (Keiningham et al. 2014). These articles are more the exception than the rule, though; and their lead should be followed by others. It should be noted that the majority of this research uses firms as the unit of analysis. However, it still possible to use financial variables at the individual level (customer profitability) by collaborating with firms (e.g., Cambra-Fierro et al. 2015).

Fortunately, quantitative PHC provides abundant examples of the clever use of financial and market-based metrics, and this stream should be viewed as a source of inspiration for future work in BT and SFR. PHC researchers have studied the impact of different drivers on a series of financial variables (i.e., abnormal returns, stock market performance, sales of affected and non-affected brands, competitor sales, etc.) and market-based variables (i.e., brand choice and share, market share, timing of first purchase after the event, number of recalls, etc.). For details, we refer the reader to Cleeren et al. (2017).

Table 4 Seven key insights emerging from a synthesis of BT, SFR, and PHC

Overarching insights (and specific insights) for BT, SFR, and PHC scholars
Theoretical Considerations:
1. Expanding the theoretical boundaries beyond each field's comfort zone
• Appreciating differing theoretical traditions
• A call for theory building covering the full theoretical spectrum (micro, meso, macro)
• Potential theories to integrate all streams
2. Using appropriate theories depending on the three stages
• Initial negative event: going beyond basic attributions, severity, and type of events
• Four avenues to actualize understanding of initial negative events
• Recovery stage: when SFR leads the way for PHC and BT
• Four directions that will advance research on the recovery stage
• Post-recovery stage: SFR proposes actionable frameworks for BT and PHC
3. Integrating, establishing, and nuancing the role of different processes
• A need for a framework integrating related process variables
• Accounting for complementary processes and ruling out alternative mechanisms
• Testing processes through a combination of SEMs and moderated mediations
• PHC: room for more emphasis on processes
Dynamic and Longitudinal Considerations:
4. Understanding the critical and differential role of a prior relationship
• Simultaneously considering different relationship types
• Incorporating relevant relational process variables
• Reconciling two competing relational explanations
• Contrasting the effects of relationships across different touchpoints
5. Adopting the perspective of the whole customer journey
• A call for an increasing adoption of the customer journey perspective
• Multi-stage research enables a better understanding of the customer journey
• Post responses as a key to unlock the customer journey perspective
• An under-appreciation of the temporal component in BT, SFR, and PHC
Methodological Considerations:
6. Relying more on advanced methods and multi-method enquiries
• An overreliance on scenario-based experiments in BT and SFR
• A need for three types of ecologically valid field studies
• When richer data mean a more advanced quantitative toolkit
• A strong call for the use of multi-methods
• SFR is in need of meta-analyses and integrative studies
7. Measuring theory-based, objective, and financial/market-based responses
• Increasingly using validated scales and theory-based conceptualization of responses
• Integrating more objective responses
• A call for increasing use of financial and market-based metrics

General discussion

BT, SFR, and PHC developed independently, which is surprising and unfortunate. In response, the current review synthesizes these three streams by systematically organizing and reviewing 236 articles over 21 years, using a seven-dimension framework. Along the way, this review identifies seven major insights across three consolidated categories of themes. Each insight is articulated as a major recommendation to help the progress of the three streams, individually and collectively. We also hope that these insights (see Table 4) will become the cornerstones of a broad and unified discipline of negative events in marketing.

Academic contributions

First, the current systematic review has brought together diverse academic research (BT, SFR and PHC). As our analysis indicates, the last two decades have witnessed significant developments in these three areas, which we synthesize using a seven dimension framework (see Fig. 1). The analysis reveals that various strengths, weaknesses, and gaps exist in each literature, complementing each other and offering significant opportunities for future research. This review differs from and complements previous syntheses on related areas (Cleeren et al. 2017; Davidow 2003; Fournier and Alvarez 2013; Sayin and Gürhan-Canli 2015) by specifically bridging the gap between BT, SFR and PHC, and by analyzing a variety of negative events at a higher level of abstraction. In so doing, our first contribution lies in identifying a series of seven priority insights that should help researchers in all three streams (see Table 4).

Second, this review advances the idea of a comprehensive discipline of negative events in marketing (Fournier and Alvarez 2013), which could go much beyond BT, SFR and PHC. In addition to these three streams, such a general discipline could encompass the knowledge base of other streams studying negative events in marketing, such as: customer deviance (Harris and Reynolds 2003), moral violation (Dong and Zhong 2017), relationship termination (Odekerken-Schröder et al. 2010), online firestorm (Herhausen et al. 2019), brand sabotage (Kähr et al. 2016), negative online reviews (Mayzlin et al. 2014), brand hate (Kucuk 2019; Zarantonello et al. 2016), corporate social irresponsibility (Kang et al. 2016; Sen and Bhattacharya 2001), consumer boycott (John and Klein 2003; Klein et al. 2004), and negative word-of-mouth (Berger et al. 2010; Libai et al. 2010), to name a few. We hope that the researchers from these diverse and rich streams will see the current review as a genuine invitation to exchange and collaborate with one another.

Practical implications

Firms and brands are more at risk than previously of committing moral or performance failures in their interactions with consumers, and the prevalence of such negative events is on the rise (Bam Communications 2017; Spanier 2016). Individuals across the globe are becoming increasingly aware of this, and they are expecting firms to act responsibly (Yoon et al. 2006), even though many of them have failed miserably to do so (Dans 2015). Consumer-firm/brand encounters have transitioned to the digital realm, where consumers continuously scrutinize and share opinions about brand missteps, and where negativity spreads like wildfire (Herhausen et al. 2019; Spanier 2016). This contributes to the ever-important role of systematically understanding the topics of SFR, BT, and PHC for marketers.

In the wake of a *recent* string of corporate *negative events* (e.g., Volkswagen's "dieselgate," Uber's series of misconducts) and a surge of academic interest in "wrongs" in the marketplace (Campbell and Winterich 2018), researchers have re-focused their efforts on understanding consumers' reactions to firms' failures. With this context in mind, the current review could help both researchers and managers in four specific ways.

First, this review explains what is known about the three stages of a negative event (Insight 2) and the the different processes at work and the importance of integrating, establishing, and nuancing them (Insight 3). Second, our analysis goes beyond explaining customer responses to a negative event episode; it also highlights in detail the importance of understanding the critical role of a prior relationship (Insight 4) and adopting the whole customer journey perspective (Insight 5). Third, the current review systematically summarizes the currently used methodologies and encourages researchers to use advanced methods and multi-methods enquiries (Insight 6). Fourth, we expose different, novel ways to conceptualize customers' responses and call for increasing use of theory-based, objective, and financial/market-based responses (Insight 7). By following these insights and understanding the foundational theories of each stream (Insight 1), we believe SFR, BT, and PHC researchers will produce better quality research, which should benefit practice.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge that, as with any other integrative work, our systematic review does not claim to encompass each publication in the three focal fields. Our work is based on a selection of articles, a substantial number of which come from quality journals in marketing. Moreover, we restricted our theoretical emphasis to research that investigated SFR, BT, or PHC. A more expanded synthesis could incorporate more than these three domains of interest.

Additionally, this review tried to organize the literature under the SFR, BT, and PHC umbrellas. However, some work may have crossed the two domains, although such articles are relatively rare. Undoubtedly, SFR, BT, and PHC may feature similar concepts. In our context, we tried to assign articles according to their prevailing stream.

Furthermore, the majority of the articles originate from North America or Western Europe. Hence, academics and marketing practitioners would benefit from more research studies from other continents and regions to further enhance the generalizability of the insights and potentially obtain a more nuanced understanding of any cross-cultural differences.

We also elected not to conduct a quantitative meta-analysis for two major reasons. First, one of the main pre-requisites for conducting a meta-analysis is the existence of a relatively standardized knowledge base with similar constructs (e.g., Borenstein et al. 2009; Cumming 2013). We do not believe that such a base yet exists across the three streams. Second, conducting a meta-analysis for SFR, BT, and PHC does not appear suitable given the primary purpose of this review, which is the identification of the complementarities across streams so that they can learn from each other. However, we highlighted in Insight 6 that several sections of the current review's framework could become the subject of future meta-analyses, especially for SFR.

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