

# A chatbot or not? Effects of hiding service employee's true identity on customer satisfaction in technology-enabled service recovery

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## **Abstract**

Service researchers have observed that despite the rise of service robots, consumers might prefer authentic human interaction rather than robots in many service encounters. Service firms seem to encourage using service robots, mainly in assisting role but also handling customer service recovery situations. Consumers can perceive robot-technology as threat for identity and they can be uncertain about true identity (robot or human) of technology-enabled service counterparts. However, the effects of employee's identity manipulation on customer satisfaction in service encounters have rarely been explored. The present study addresses this gap by examining the impact of employee's identity manipulation on customer satisfaction in technology-enabled service recovery. Our main findings, generated through experimental customer service recovery situations are novel and reveal the effects of identity manipulation: when true service assistant bot identity was humanized, it increased significantly customer satisfaction, but robotizing service employee's identity has not significant impact on customer satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *service encounter; human-robot interaction(HRI); customer satisfaction*

**Track:** Services Marketing