

## Politeness and Negotiation Strategies in Handling Customers: Conflict-Resolution

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i8/14669> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i8/14669

**Published Date:** 18 August 2022

### Abstract

The study examines politeness strategies used by customers in raising issues and the negotiation strategies used by an organization to handle customers' problems in their official online discussion rooms. This qualitative study chose a mega-corporation technology organization's official discussion room. The researchers analyzed the discussions comprising questions, customer issues, and responses from the organization's personnel. 20 online customer complaints posted via discussions.apple.com were investigated using the components of politeness strategies and negotiation strategies used by the organization's personnel using the purposive sampling method. The results indicated the four politeness strategies used by the customers in the discussion room are apparent. The most frequent politeness strategy used by customers is positive politeness. Besides, it is also revealed that the four negotiation strategies from the responses of the organization's personnel in the discussion room are evident. The most frequent negotiation strategy used by the organization in handling the customers' issues is using a simple and accessible language strategy. The study concludes with recommendations on expanding the data sample and using other conventional online platforms in new areas for future studies of strategic politeness and negotiation in issue-solving.

**Keywords:** Politeness Strategies, Negotiation Strategies, Issues Solving, Customer Complaints, Online Discussion.

### Introduction

For decades, public online discussion rooms have become the most used platform for customers to issue complaints (Arumugam et al., 2020). Many business corporations or organizations have been utilizing customer discussion rooms to access them to raise issues and complaints quickly. It is one of the many ways business corporations and organizations consolidate customer-relation management towards any problems and complaints by negotiating resolutions and assuring their satisfaction (Arumugam et al., 2020). However, a complaint intrinsically carries threats and often impairs the social relationship between

interlocutors. It also threatens an addressee's positive face as a complainer expresses negative evaluations of a situation resulting from the addressee's past actions (Kraft & Geluykens, 2002). Hence, establishing the principle of politeness can build a positive atmosphere of negotiation (Liu, 2018).

Wijayanto et al (2013) have systematically conceived a ground-breaking concept of politeness from Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory. The strategies are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. As a genre that involves negotiation and facilitation, effective organizational communication heavily relies on the conveyance of politeness and negotiations. Maintaining politeness is essential to rapport management (Pikhart & Koblizkova, 2017; Rani et al., 2022). On the other hand, negotiation strategies are often used in business operations as a practice of customer service in reaching a negotiated settlement to maintain the longevity of customer relationships. Patel (2020) highlighted that one should not ignore the significance of customer complaints on businesses. That being said, the concept of negotiation strategies developed by Acuff (2008) is essential in maintaining businesses for rapport customer-relationship management.

A study by Wijayanto et al (2013) found that most complaints or issues are made by using politeness strategies focused on the frequencies of politeness rather than the type of politeness used. As their study followed a curated scenario for problem-solving, they also discovered a difference in the politeness strategies used by different status levels of the samples involved. This shows that people sometimes portray or use politeness strategies with those they feel they deserve or with those they feel on par with. However, the study does not highlight the specific types of politeness strategies customers use in raising issues considering their status level or social class. The study is also missing an element to understanding the importance of politeness strategies used by the complainer and the negotiation strategies used by companies to address the issue.

Acuff (2008) outlined four negotiation strategies to respond to customers' complaints. The strategies include simple and accessible language, high aspirations, asking questions, and personal integrity. The strategy of using simple and accessible language is the attempt to formulate simple and easy language that is comprehensible for customers (Saeed, 2008). Maintaining high aspirations is the strategy to accomplish higher goals from many factors, such as difficulties in negotiation, patience, and fair settlement in giving solutions (Schneider, 2004). Meanwhile, asking questions can help "play both sides of the table and answer questions as well as asks them" to gain more information from the customers (Miles, 2013). Maintaining personal integrity is maintaining a professional appearance, building trust, and being honest with customers (Mahmoodi, 2012). The previous study has made a similar approach to analyzing politeness and negotiation strategies to find customer-relationship politeness in business operations. Using politeness strategies is impactful in consolidating customer experience to mitigate impoliteness or face threats that might happen due to the absence of face-to-face communication (Arumugam et al., 2020; Sharif et al., 2019). Using appropriate negotiation strategies in business operations is also very effective in helping customers. Business operators reach satisfaction without harm in their business relationships and increase their long-term value maximization (Arumugam et al., 2020; Prado & Martinelli, 2018).

Nevertheless, customers' complaints are usually made when they are upset over something not working in their favor, and usually, the complaints are expressed with anger (Masjedi & Paramasivam, 2018). It becomes a problem to handle the complaints efficiently as dealing with angry customers can be challenging. Arumugam, Ahmad, and Supramaniam (2015) indicated that Malaysian non-native English speakers believe that expressing their dissatisfaction negatively is the most effective method of placing a complaint. In addition, they also employed a complaint strategy under the third level of severity of the complaint, which means they produced the complaint by expressing it explicitly. However, not all customers voice their complaints with anger, as some would still express their dissatisfaction civilly. As mentioned by Wijayanto et al (2013), some customers would still want to maintain a good relationship with the party they are dealing with and, at the same time, be able to voice out their issues. This shows that different people react differently over an issue which means that other customers use different politeness strategies in filing complaints. Hence, organizations must know the negotiation strategies to attend to the complaints in the best way that could benefit both themselves and their customers. According to Simoes (2014), solving issues would require more than just traditional qualities such as leadership effectiveness, self-confidence, and charisma. Applying negotiation strategies successfully could cost organizations to lose their consumers.

Issues or crises can occur in any situation, whether between partners or an organization and its consumers (Beachboard & Aytes, 2013). One of the most common ways for customers to voice their dissatisfaction would be through complaints, thus why most organizations worldwide have provided channels for their customers to file their complaints, such as by providing customer service to attend to issues faced by them (Ryabova, 2015). However, just providing these channels is not enough because without being able to solve the problems filed by their consumers efficiently, it can still affect an organization negatively. This is why every organization must be able to solve issues and complaints efficiently; as mentioned by Kim et al (2018), the ability to solve problems efficiently will positively influence the status of an organization. Apple Inc. is a world-renowned technology organization based in California, United States of America. Among the services provided by this organization include designing, developing, and selling electronics, computer software, and online services to their consumers. This research is to study the politeness strategies used by Apple Inc. in handling customers' complaints and see how that could affect the outcome of the complaints.

### **Statement of Problem**

Ideally, organizations with an excellent grasp of negotiation skills can handle their customers accordingly, which will positively impact their customer relations (Henshall, 2019). The power of negotiation skills has its ways of improving things in resolving issues. A study by Mahmoodi (2012) reported that an organization pays attention to a particular set of structures while addressing any problems. Following this structure, it has helped the organization to resolve its customers' issues peacefully and successfully. However, the study also found that if organizations give more attention in the first negotiation phase (pre-negotiation) by showing clarity that they understand the problem or the situation, customers would feel more confident and surer with the assistance or help they are providing. This study is more focused on the actual process of the negotiation strategies used by the organization instead of highlighting the specific types of negotiation skills used by the organization.

Based on these past studies, there is an inconsistency in exploring the importance of politeness and negotiation strategies in issue-solving efficiency. As studies today have either talked about the complainer or the responder to the complaint, it is intriguing to investigate both parties and determine their uses of politeness strategies and negotiation strategies. Therefore, in this study, the researchers integrated the politeness and negotiation strategies used by the customers and the organization in its efficiency in issue-solving through the organization's official online discussion room site.

### Research Questions

1. What are the politeness strategies used by customers in raising issues?
2. What are the negotiation strategies used by an organization in handling customers' issues?

### Methodology

The data collection method revolves around a qualitative approach to document analysis. Firstly, the data were randomly selected using a purposive sampling method from the customers' complaints and the Community Personnel of Apple Inc.'s responses in their discussion room. The data chosen were the responses of the organization's personnel to the customer's comments about Apple products. Twenty (20) complaints of differing issues were analyzed, and the data was narrowed down into two main categories using a coding process. The two categories consist of four subcategories that have been set based on politeness and negotiation strategy. This reflects on the customers' politeness strategies in complaining and the personnel's negotiation strategies in providing solutions for the issue. The researchers then represented the analyzed data in tables according to the categories suggested by (Wijayanto et al., 2013; Acuff, 2008).

The study relied on the conceptual framework from the works of (Wijayanto et al., 2013; Acuff, 2008).

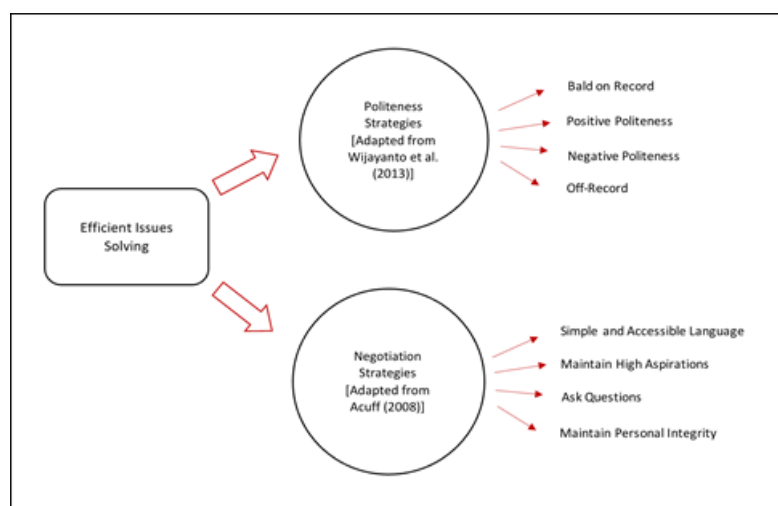


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of Efficient Issues Solving Adapted from (Wijayanto et al., 2013; Acuff, 2008)

Figure 1 demonstrates the two main variables needed to achieve efficient issue-solving, namely, politeness strategies and negotiation strategies. The elements included in the politeness strategies are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-

record. Whereas the details in the negotiation strategies are simple and accessible language, maintaining high aspirations, asking questions, and maintaining personal integrity. This conceptual framework determines politeness and negotiation strategies in achieving efficient issue-solving.

## Result and Discussion

*What are the politeness strategies used by customers in raising issues?*

Goldsmith and MacGeorge (2000), in the attempt to initiate conversations and make requests of unknown persons in online discussion rooms, the impact of politeness strategies in computer-mediated communication is pivotal to mitigating 'face threat.' From the data analyzed, it was found that the majority of the customers practiced politeness strategies in addressing their issues to avoid making the situation unpleasant. The subsequent section discusses politeness strategies used by the customers to raise their issues at Apple Inc.'s official online discussion room site in four categories: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

### Bald on Record

The result shows that it was apparent that many of the customers have utilized a bald on-record politeness strategy to raise their issues in the online discussion room. In line with Masjedi and Paramasivam's (2018) claim, a bald-on-record politeness strategy is used to make a direct accusation in dealing with a particular situation. A starter of an opening remark of direct accusation will be used and followed by a direct request to fix the raised issues. The results depicted in the online discussion room using the bald-on record strategy are in the form of expressing disappointment, negative sequence, and annoyance. Such questions (table excerpt 1) show that the customers type out questions without attempting to minimize the imposition on the organization's personnel.

Table

*Except 1*

Complaints	Excerpts
Q9	<i>I also put a booster for the WiFi, which <b>shows up on the list. No luck.</b></i>
Q9	<i>...<b>Feel upset and frustrated.</b></i>
Q9	<i>The only thing I haven't done <b>but will do is return it.</b></i>
Q14	<i><b>I did not see any resolutions to this question in 2017 but I wonder if anyone has figured it out.</b></i>
Q17	<i>...High Sierra doesn't work with Apple's sites? <b>That cannot be true.</b></i>
Q17	<i>...<b>but at this point, I just want to leave this computer running High Sierra to maintain the highest software compatibility,</b></i>
Q17	<i>...<b>but I find it super ironic that Apple itself cannot help me to access their site.</b></i>

All of the customers' complaints sound as to asserting their rights as a customer and expressing annoyance due to their issues. The customers do not attempt to minimize the threat to the organization's personnel. Nailah (2016) states that using bald on record in voicing out problems is to make the hearers, which in this case the organization's personnel, feel uneasy with the impact of the Face Threatening Act (FTA) raised by the customers in the questions.

### Positive Politeness

Wijayanto et al (2013) explained that positive politeness strategies are used to fulfill a positive face which means something that is deemed preferable by the person it is directed to. From the findings, it can be seen that the majority of the customers used positive politeness to voice out their issues in the online discussion room. The most common reason the customers used positive politeness was to ask for confirmation by not assuming and directly attacking the organization for the issues they faced.

Table

*Except 2*

Complaints	Excerpts
Q3	<i>How can I enable performance management protection...</i>
Q5	<i>Does this thing zoom out...</i>
Q5	<i>"...where do I turn on this feature..."</i>

Table Excerpt 2 shows that the customers did not immediately assume the issues they were facing happened because of Apple Inc.'s fault and instead tried to ask for further clarification of why the issues occurred. Most of the customers also applied positive politeness by using hedges, gratitude, and greetings, as can be found accordingly:

Table

*Except 3*

Complaints	Excerpts
Q9	<i>I think I've tried all troubleshooting...</i>
Q12	<i>That feature seems to be gone...</i>
Q13	<i>Many thanks</i>
Q17	<i>Thanks!</i>
Q11	<i>Hello everybody,...</i>
Q13	<i>Hi there...</i>

All the positive politeness in the complaints (Table except 3) created a pleasant environment though they were voicing their issues. As mentioned by Nurmawati et al. (2019), customers can still be polite while expressing their dissatisfaction because they would want to keep a harmonious relationship with the organization or so that they can express their issues clearly.

### Negative Politeness

The data revealed that there are only seven instances where the customers use negative politeness to introduce their issues in the discussion room. The customers use negative politeness to become conventionally indirect and questioning (Arumugam, Ahmad & Supramaniam, 2015; Wijayanto et al., 2013). It shows that the customers are aware of the situation. Still, they would want more clarity by continuing to question the organization with questions that might eventually help them to resolve their issue. The results found that the customers used negative politeness to avoid giving offense by showing deference (Nordquist, 2020).

Table

Except 4

Complaints	Excerpts
Q2	<i>What should I do? And tell me the correct way to charge the battery.</i>
Q12	<i>I updated my iOS to the 12.4.1 version the day I bought the new iPhone XR, might that be the problem? Some bugs in the latest version?</i>

Table excerpt 4 shows that the customer has a background of the issue they are facing, but they continue to question the possibilities that might become the solution for their problems. The negative politeness used by the customers is also to maintain a safe distance from others while minimizing negative feelings about the issue in these instances:

Table

Except 5

Complaints	Excerpts
Q11	<i>His functionality started to drop with every minute that passed until there was no response from him. Am I the only one with this issue?</i>
Q17	<i>So really, High Sierra doesn't work with Apple's sites? That cannot be true. There would be some mention of it online, I would think.</i>

It is seen (Table Except 5) that the customers would not want the issue to be reverted by blaming or putting the fault back on them; therefore, they use negative politeness to distance themselves and present a powerless speech (Taylor, 2011).

### Off-Record

The analyzed data in Table Excerpt 6 shows that the customers rarely use the off-record strategy in complaining and requesting a solution to their issues in the discussion room. Mohammed (2019) agreed that "All these off-record strategies use indirect language and remove speakers from the potential to be imposing." This means not all customers practice indirect questions or statements to voice their complaints. This strategy is also used to hide the concepts or ideas considered ambiguous (Mohammed, 2019).

Table

Except 6

Complaints	Excerpts
Q7	<b><i>Some bugs in the new version?</i></b>
Q10	<b><i>I don't use iCloud, and I don't have a time machine active</i></b>
Q17	<b><i>So really, High Sierra doesn't work with Apple's sites?</i></b>
Q17	<b><i>There would be some mention of it online, I would think.</i></b>

The results found in the data that off-record was used as sarcasm. The excerpts show that the customers were complaining about their product's issues and being sarcastic by mentioning a time machine that does not exist. In this strategy, customers also used rhetorical questions to request a solution to their problems. Instead of asking directly, it can be seen from the excerpts that they preferred to ask indirectly and utilize sarcasm to show their frustration. "Asking a rhetorical question was the most common Off-record strategy involved in complaints, and mostly it was employed to express annoyance" (Wijayanto et al., 2013).

Based on the findings of the type of politeness strategies used by Apple Inc customers, it is found that positive politeness recorded the highest instances of usage, followed by bald on record, negative politeness, and lastly, off-record. The highest use of positive politeness is to establish common grounds, convey cooperation between the customers and the organization, and portray a sense of friendliness (Kamlasi, 2017). Although one is complaining or addressing an issue, the importance of positive politeness becomes a catalyst for the matter to be efficiently resolved. In this case, although bald on record comes in second, where at times it is used to portray blaming, showing disappointment, and expressing negative sequence (Wijayanto et al., 2013), the customers of Apple Inc. eagerly practice positive politeness while raising their issues. This leads to a smoother and less complicated process of resolving the problems.

### ***What Negotiation Strategies are used by the Organization in Handling Customers' Issues?***

Organizations must practice negotiation strategies effectively to resolve the issues raised by their customers in the best way that could benefit themselves and their customers (Arumugam et al., 2020; Simões, 2014). The personnel of Apple Inc. practices negotiation strategies to attend to the customers so that they can avoid possible further issues and thus be able to resolve the problems faced smoothly. The following section discusses negotiation strategies used by the personnel of Apple Inc. to handle customers' complaints and issues at Apple Inc.'s official online discussion room site according to four categories: maintaining high aspirations, simple and accessible language, asking questions, and maintaining personal integrity.

### **Maintain High Aspirations**

The result shows that it is apparent that the personnel's responses of Apple Inc. have used the strategy of maintaining high aspirations in attending to the customers in the online discussion room. Apple Inc. supports its aspirations to be an organization that can deliver exceptional customer experiences (Wijayanto, 2013). The data show that some examples indicated that the organization's personnel provided resolutions with patience and fair settlement from what the customers have issued in the discussion rooms, even though some of the customers used FTA to show dissatisfaction and threats in some of the questions.

Table  
Except 7

Responses	Excerpts
A1	<i>Let me know the results, and have a great day!</i>
A5	<i>We hope this information is useful.</i>
A6	<i>We're glad you reached out for help.</i>
A10	<i>We'll want to work through the troubleshooting steps below to get you up and to run.</i>
A16	<i>If you are looking for Motion learning material, look at rippletraining.com, they are fantastic.</i>
A18	<i>I hope this helps get you started!</i>

The responses from the organization indicate their intention to maintain high aspirations strategy to assist the customers' issues even though the questions from the customers might be less polite and aggressive at some points. The responses concur with Yao et al (2020) claim



that maintaining high aspirations in negotiating leads to increased trust towards the customers in understanding mutually beneficial trade-offs for both parties. It can increase their tendency to post again, which ultimately makes the organization's trustworthy comments and responses reliable to be referred to (Pan & Chiou, 2011). Arumugam et al (2020); Burke et al (2007) also agree that a single response could drive dramatic outcomes for customers' future behaviour.

### Simple and Accessible Language

Based on the result, it can be perceived that Apple Inc.'s analyzed personnel used simple and accessible language to attend to the customers in the online discussion room. From the analyzed data, it is found that most of the Apple Inc. personnel practiced it by confirming if they understood the issues faced by the customers correctly. As supported by Mahmoodi (2012), it is crucial to provide clarity while communicating during a negotiation to make sure every party is clear before they come to a decision. It is good to practice a simple and accessible language during negotiation to ensure that everyone is on the same page and thus overcome the issue together.

Table

*Excerpt 8*

Responses	Excerpts
A1	<i><b>It sounds like you have an issue with...</b></i>
A7	<i><b>If I understand correctly, you're able to...is that right?</b></i>
A8	<i><b>From your post, I understand that...</b></i>

Table excerpt 8 designates that the organization personnel was repeating the issues stated by the customers to ensure that they had detected the suitable subjects so it would not confuse both parties in trying to resolve the issues. In making sure their points get across as simple as possible, the personnel also used symbols to avoid complicating the customers besides explaining the resolutions taken by the organization. An example from the analysis can be found in table excerpt 9.

Table

*Excerpt 9*

Responses	Excerpts
A1	<i><b>I recommend going to <b>Settings &gt; General &gt; Accessibility</b> and finding the option for <b>Call Audio Routing</b>.</b></i>

The analysis also found that the organization personnel tends to repeat their points differently to ensure that the customers understand what they are trying to say. This can be seen in Table excerpt 10.

Table

*Excerpt 10*

Responses	Excerpts
A13	<i>For your partner to <b>be able to use your iPad and have their Apple Watch track the workout</b>, they will need to use the same Apple ID on their Apple Watch with the iPad. This means you'll need to sign out and have them sign in.</i>

From these elaborations, it is proven that the Apple Inc. personnel tried to use simple and accessible language to assist the customers in ensuring that they refer to and discuss the same thing and, thus, solve the issues. As Saeed (2008) mentioned, getting all parties on the same page will help to lead to efficient problem solving because an organization and the consumers should be a team against the issue instead of the organization being against the consumers or vice versa.

### Ask Questions

The art of asking goes a long way in helping others feel understood and significant. According to Mahmoodi (2012), asking is a powerful tip that negotiators should never be afraid to do, as asking questions will get more precise information from the discussion. The analysis found that the organization asks questions in six instances in responding to the issues raised by its customers.

Table

*Excerpt 11*

Responses	Excerpts
A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Are you noticing any specific applications using more battery life than expected?</i></li> <li>● <i>When you look at the graph displayed under Settings &gt; Battery, does the battery level match up to the user level?</i></li> <li>● <i>Which iPhone model are you using?</i></li> </ul>

The above excerpts in table 10 clearly show that the organization is concerned and eager to resolve the customer's issue. The type of questions used is close-ended and restrictive questions. These questions enable the organization to get specific information to solve the issues (Stark, 2010).

Table

*Excerpt 12*

Responses	Excerpts
A6	<i>Do you have access to another WiFi network that you can try?</i>
A15	<i>Are you able to use the MagSafe charger to charge your iPhone?</i>
A19	<i>Before the message appears, is a specific app opened?</i>

A meaningful negotiation involves direct communication where questions are often asked (Everett, 2020). Asking questions helps to reveal a significant amount of information that would be useful in directing the issue to resolve. The organization has shown that they practice this strategy in wanting to understand and address the issues of their customers precisely, and this strategy leads to resolving the issues.

### Maintain Personal Integrity

Though a negotiator's effort in providing something is not the best, he needs to be honest about it (Mahmoodi (2012). The data shows that the Apple Inc. personnel managed to maintain their integrity by being honest and building trust when they implemented a negotiation strategy to provide solutions to the customers.

Table

Excerpt 13

Responses	Excerpts
A2	<i>If you just updated your iOS, we recommend waiting about 48 hours to check for improvement in battery life.</i>
A2	<i>If you continue to experience less-than-expected battery life after following the recommendations in the above articles, please reply with responses to the following questions:</i>
A4	<i>If you're still encountering an issue after trying the steps above, you can manually reset your keychain to create a new login keychain:</i>
A4	<i>Please respond if you continue to have any problems.</i>
A6	<i>If necessary, contact iTunes Support.</i>
A7	<i>If you find neither of these steps resolves the issue, try resetting your network settings....</i>
A9	<i>If it is still not working, you would want to contact Apple support directly for assistance: Get Support.</i>
A11	<i>Reject it outright for a refund or take/send it back for exchange. For any difficulty, you can contact Apple Support directly</i>
A12	<i>If you are speaking about a different feature, just let us know.</i>
A13	<i>Check under "Supported devices."</i>
A13	<i>For more details, click here.</i>
A15	<i>If you are still not able to get it to charge, are you able to use another wireless charger with your AirPods case? You can use the following article to troubleshoot the AirPods:</i>
A17	<i>To help with this, please follow the steps in this Apple resource,...</i>
A17	<i>...then contact Apple directly if you need any further assistance</i>
A19	<i>If you're still having issues, answering these might help have a clear understanding:</i>

Some examples (Table excerpt 13) indicated that they provided valid suggestions on what the customers need to do if the issues are still not solved. Other than that, Apple Inc. personnel build trust between them and the customers by advising them to reach out again if they still encounter the issues. This strategy shows that the organization's personnel can be trusted and are serious about helping customers solve their problems. It provides a benefit to the business if the customers have trust in the organization to serve them well. "Good business relationships offer more value in the long term" (Mahmoodi, 2012).

From the above findings, it is apparent that Apple Inc. personnel employed four negotiation strategies in responding to and providing solutions to their customers. The most frequent negotiation strategy the personnel uses is simple and accessible language. It shows that most

personnel deliver the solutions in more straightforward instructions to ensure that the customers are clear with the instructions and that they are easy to understand. Acuff (2008) indicated in his research paper that by helping others to understand us, we indirectly help ourselves through the use of simple and straightforward language. Besides, the personnel commonly maintained high aspirations and personal integrity strategies when responding to customer inquiries in the discussion rooms. This explains that the organization's personnel have to assist their customers in a non-face-threatening way and provide the correct information to sustain the organization's reputation. However, it can be seen that asking questions is viewed as the least frequently used negotiation strategy. Many organizations' personnel focus on solving the customers' problems on the online platform.

### **Conclusion**

This study concluded that Apple Inc. customers practiced politeness in addressing their issues regarding the Apple product via the online platform. The organization personnel applied negotiation strategies to handle and respond to customer complaints. The discussion room on the Apple Inc. website showed four different strategies used by the customers to raise their complaints and four strategies used by the personnel to provide solutions to their issues. Therefore, the politeness and negotiation strategies used by the customers and the organization showed efficiency in problem-solving.

Based on the conceptual framework used in this study, the combination of Wijayanto et al (2013); Acuff's (2008) studies showed that politeness and negotiation strategies appear to be an effective mediator in business in solving issues. It indicates that the politeness strategy can help resolve problems smoothly without instigating arguments between two parties. Lastly, although the complaints sounded threatening, the organization managed to help the customers resolve their issues without tarnishing their business by implementing a negotiation strategy.

### **Recommendations**

Despite the complexity of all the complaints and issues in the discussion room site, the resolutions remain simple with politeness and negotiation. There is a need for future research to focus on examining the customers' complaints and issues on online discussion sites in a larger context. Data collected may not comprise the specific questions the researchers are seeking. Further study should consider involving the participation of Apple customers in providing their opinion regarding the same topic. Such studies may contribute to a clearer understanding of politeness and negotiation strategies used in business organizations. It is possible that drawing on the same topic will help the researchers get a better solution to the specific questions. Besides, other online platforms may provide sufficient and appropriate data for future studies, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. It can be an option for the research to use to collect more data in the future. Finally, future research could use a bigger sample size to ensure the research data can be more conclusive.

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