

# User-friendly explanations and algorithmic failures reactions



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## What Is An Offensive Recommendation ?



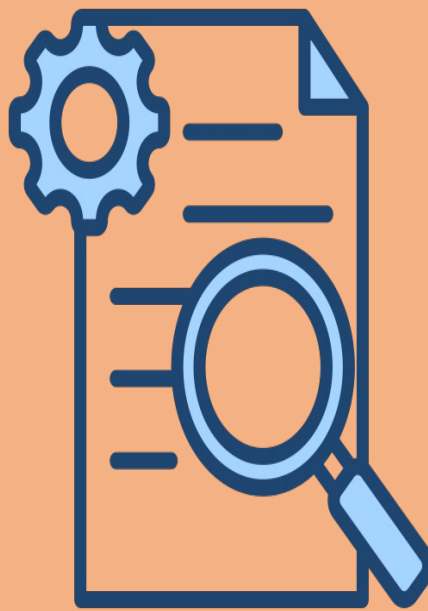
“Digital technology providers have an ethical duty to take steps to prevent unintended harm to consumers before launching their service technologies” – (Rosenbaum et al. 2022)

**The Problem:** How should companies explain an offensive recommendation to the customer after it happens ?

**The Study:** How users react to explanation types after receiving an offensive recommendation ?  
Goal: Test whether empathetic, technical, or combined messages improve user satisfaction and justice compared to no explanation

Hypotheses :

- H1: Any Explanation > No Explanation (Increases Customer Satisfaction)
- H2: Empathy > Others Explanation Types (Leads To Higher Perceived Justice)
- H3: Perceived Justice → Increases Customer Satisfaction



**The Method:**

Explanation Types :

Empathetic  , Technical  , Empathetic + Technical  , No Explanation

Data Collection :

Method: Online Experiment  , Sample Size: 207  , Randomly assigned to one of the 4 groups



**The Findings:**


- Empathy + Technical → Significantly Increased Satisfaction (p = .047)
- Technical-Only → Marginally Significant Effect (p = .056)
- Empathetic-Only → Not Significant (p = .120)
- No Explanation → Lowest Satisfaction and Justice
- Perceived Justice → Strong Predictor Of Satisfaction (p = .0043)



**The Managerial Implications:**

What should you do to recover from offensive recommendation?

- Don't stay silent because it leads to lower satisfaction and perceived fairness 
- Use a combined message, start with empathy, then provide a clear technical explanation 

Example : “We’re sorry this upset you. It happened due to outdated data patterns in our system. We’re working to improve it” 

**The Conclusion:**

Research Implications:

- Algorithmic failure isn't just a technical issue but also a communication issue
- Best response = hybrid explanation that combines empathy with technical clarity



Limitations and Future Research:

- Online Survey - Live Social Media Platform
- Single Topic (Body Image Sensitivity) - Explore Other Sensitive Topics (Gender, Political Beliefs, etc)
- Mostly Young Respondents - Diverse Demography (Older Adults, Low Literacy Users, etc)