Bachelor Thesis

Service Recovery Paradox: A quantitative research concerning customer post-recovery satisfaction in the service sector

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Abstract

The phenomena when customers perceive a service as better after a failure and the following recovery process has occurred is called service recovery paradox. In the case of the paradox, customers are more satisfied post-recovery in comparison to if the failure would not have occurred. How to best manage a service recovery depends on the type of service failure since the recovery actions should be adjusted in order to match the failure in a suitable way. Three surveys were conducted in this study, one for each type of failure classified as (1) Service delivery failures, (2) Failure to respond to customer needs and requests and (3) Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions. Each survey presented a scenario in three parts. The first part of the scenario was neutral, the second part was post-failure and the third part was post-recovery. The respondents had to take a standpoint regarding their level of satisfaction after each scenario part. The findings from this study confirm the possibility for an increase in customer post-recovery satisfaction concerning (1) Service delivery failures combined with suitable recovery actions, hence the service recovery paradox was found. In the case of (2) Failures to respond to customer needs and requests combined with suitable recovery actions, the level of post-recovery customer satisfaction did not reach pre-failure satisfaction. The last type of service failure, (3) Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions, resulted in the lowest level of customer satisfaction both post-failure and post-recovery and was hence most far away from the paradox.

Keywords

Customer Satisfaction, Service Failure, Service Recovery, Service Recovery Paradox
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Appendix B – Foundation to Survey Scenarios
1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Ideally, the quality of a service should be high at all times and failures should not come about (Grönroos, 2015; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). However mistakes are inevitable within the service sector (Garg, 2013; Hart et al., 1990; Grönroos, 2015; Siu et al., 2013; McCollough et al., 2000). Lovelock and Wirtz, (2011) and Bougoure et al., (2016) argue that the level of credibility that a customer has towards a brand depend upon the severity of the failure and how recovery actions are managed when the brand is unable to deliver a service in the intended way. Findings hereof denote the importance of handling service failures and the following recoveries in a way that will please the customer (Bougoure et al., 2016; Tax et al., 1998; Maxham, 2001). Ennew and Schoefer (2003) explain that apologies, communication and compensation are of importance in a service recovery strategy. Customers expect that companies will make attempts to recover failures (Bougoure et al., 2016; Tax et al., 1998), however, these expectations diverge depend upon the individual perception of the failure (Bougoure et al., 2016).

A great service recovery can turn angry and frustrated customers into loyal ones (Hart et al., 1990; Krishna et al., 2014; Grönroos, 2015). The phenomena when customers perceive a service as better after a failure and the following recovery process has occurred, is called service recovery paradox (Garg, 2013; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). The theory of service recovery paradox indicates that customers can acquire a higher level of satisfaction towards a brand post-recovery in comparison to if the service had gone smoothly in the first place (Garg, 2013; Ok et al., 2007; Hart et al., 1990; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Grönroos, 2015). For the service recovery paradox to pertain, the benefits a customer receive from a service recovery must exceed the customer’s perceived cost of the failure (Bougoure et al., 2016). Prior research hereof argue that the beingness of the service recovery paradox has a positive correlation with customer satisfaction after a service failure and its following recovery actions; the higher level of post-recovery satisfaction a customer has towards a brand, the greater is the chance for the paradox to eventuate (Garg, 2013; Ok et al., 2007; Hart et al., 1990; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Grönroos, 2015). Hence, to explain if the service recovery paradox is a possible outcome cannot be done without measuring customer satisfaction. Research has studied
the paradox with the aim to identify if, why and how a successful service recovery can erase the consequences of a service failure (Krishna et al., 2014).

1.2 Problem Discussion

The existence of service recovery paradox have been debated (Magnini et al., 2007; McCollough et al., 2000; Hess et al., 2003). Some researchers argue that there is not enough evidence that confirms the phenomena (Maxham, 2001; Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh, 2006; McCollough et al., 2000). Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh (2006) argue that a service provider must intend to deliver the service without mistakes during the first try since failures cannot restore a brand’s positive reputation and trust among customers. However, a second group of researchers have confirmed the theory of the paradox (Garg, 2013; Ok, et al., 2007; Tax et al., 1998; Michel, 2001; Hocutt et al., 2006; Michel & Meuter, 2008).

Tax et al., (1998) found that customer complaints which during a service failure are handled with care, are connected to reliability and trust towards the brand. If preferable recovery actions are taken by the service provider it can strengthen the customer relationship and customer commitment (Tax et al., 1998). However, it is argued that the paradox may depend upon the type of service failure (Krishna et al., 2014; McCollough et al., 2000; Magnini et al., 2007; Tu et al., 2009) and the chosen service recovery action (Garg, 2013; Krishna et al., 2014; McCollough et al., 2000; De Matos et al., 2007). This indicates that the researchers who have concluded the paradox as non-existent are likely to have investigated the phenomena with a type of service failure that is perceived to be too severe by the customer and/or in combination with a service recovery action that was not suitable or explicit enough to impact customers’ satisfaction positively. Webster and Sundaram (1998) argue for the importance of researching appropriate recovery actions to fill that knowledge gap since an inability to recover explicitly can lead to customer dissatisfaction, negative word of mouth, monetary loss and negative reputations.

In the case of the service recovery paradox, customers would not have been as satisfied as if the failure would not have occurred (McCollough et al., 2000; Ennew & Schoefer, 2003). The failure can thus be seen as an opportunity for the service brand since it unseal openings for brand to recover from failures (Bitner et al., 1990; Ennew &
Schoefer, 2003). Bell and Zemke (1987) argue that experiences which precisely match customers’ expectations will be forgotten. If the experience however deviates from the expectations, the opportunity of being remembered arises (Bell & Zemke, 1987). Since prior research reveals that delighted customers create a stronger brand reputation and a more positive word of mouth (Ennew & Schoefer, 2003), service brands would benefit from understand when the paradox is a possible outcome. Magnini et al., (2007) suggest that researchers should explain what is enhancing and hindering the occurrence of the service recovery paradox rather than just review evidence for or against it, which prior studies argue might be the type of failure (Krishna et al., 2014; McCollough et al., 2000; Magnini et al., 2007; Tu et al., 2009) and the chosen recovery actions (Garg, 2013; Krishna et al., 2014; McCollough et al., 2000; De Matos et al., 2007). Wirtz and Mattila (2004) argue that the impact which service recovery actions might have on customers’ behavioral responses is arbitrated by satisfaction and are thus highlighting the importance of measure customer satisfaction in research within service recovery. It is further stated that future research within the topic should adopt customer satisfaction as the dependent variable (Wirtz & Mattila, 2004).

1.3 Purpose

The purpose is to explain how different types of service failures combined with suitable recovery actions impact customer satisfaction.
2 Literature Review

The literature review is divided into four parts. These parts hold theoretical foundations concerning customer satisfaction, types of service failures, service recovery actions and the service recovery paradox. The review is based on prior studies which will be further elaborated into hypotheses.

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction deals with how well a product’s or service’s perceived performance correlates with the customer’s expectations about it (Armstrong et al., 2012; Hill et al., 2003). Armstrong et al., (2012) further state that when service performances matches customer expectations, the customer will be satisfied. Outstanding companies put a great effort into keeping customers satisfied (Armstrong et al., 2012) since the higher level of satisfaction among customers generates in a greater amount of loyal customers (Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh, 2006; Armstrong et al., 2012). Siu et al., (2013) argue for the importance of always aim for satisfied customers.

When a service’s or product’s performance does not correlate with customer expectations, the satisfaction level decreases and negative feelings toward the brand arises (Armstrong et al., 2012; Garg, 2013). It can be shown that customers’ satisfaction toward a firm, when the service function as intended, affect the level of satisfaction that customers will have toward the firm when a failure has occurred. Hence, in situations where customers’ prior satisfaction toward the firm are already low, the post-satisfaction after a failure within the firm will be even lower in comparison to when the prior satisfaction is already high (Siu et al., 2013).

If a service’s delivery of a promise is perceived as worse than expected, the customer will be dissatisfied (Armstrong et al., 2012; Souca, 2014). Souca (2014) further states that dissatisfaction occur when an offer is failing to deliver enthusiasm. If the performance however is perceived as better than expected, the customer will be more than satisfied, thus delighted (Armstrong et al., 2012; Souca, 2014). Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh, (2006) and Armstrong et al., (2012) argue that delighted customers are more likely to repeat purchases as well as tell others about the great experience (Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh, 2006; Armstrong et al., 2012).
2.2 Types of Service Failures

Grönroos (2015) argue that the real test of customers attitudes towards a service supplier takes place when a service failure has occurred. Service brand companies should strive for keeping the quality of a service high at all times and ideally failures should not occur. However, failures within the service sector are inevitable (Garg, 2013; Grönroos, 2015) and when they do occur, the planned service process will eventuate in a bad result for the customer as a consequence (Grönroos, 2015). A service failure arises when a service is not being delivered according to plan or if it does not meet customer expectations (Ok et al., 2007; Mattila & Ro, 2008; Ennew & Schoefer, 2003; Bitner et al., 1990), hence resulting in a dissatisfied customer experience (Mattila & Ro, 2008; Bitner et al., 1990). Service failures are significantly related to customer dissatisfaction and switching behaviors (Mattila & Ro, 2008; McCollough et al., 2000; Tax et al., 1998).

Ennew and Schoefer (2003) state that there are many different types of failures that a customer may experience in a service. A useful step to understand consumers’ reactions to such failures is to classify service failures according to their type (Ennew & Schoefer, 2003; Bitner et al., 1990; Kelley et al., 1993; Hoffman et al., 1995; Smith et al., 1999). Bitner et al., (1990) classified service failures into three categories; (1) *Service delivery failures*, (2) *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests* and (2) *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions*. These have been used in several studies (Ennew & Schoefer, 2003; Bitner et al., 1990; Kelley et al., 1993; Hoffman et al., 1995; Mueller et al., 2003; Silber et al., 2009). Bitner et al., (1990) argue that the classification system may be applicable across several industries due to its abstractness but yet being detailed enough to suggest a management approach with the aim to improve customer satisfaction in the service. It is argued that understanding the classification and reason for a service failure is of importance when deciding upon an appropriate service recovery strategy and hence, to avoid further service failures from occurring (Ennew & Schoefer, 2003; Bitner et al., 1990; Kelley et al., 1993; Hoffman et al., 1995).

2.2.1 Service delivery failures

The first service failure type formed by Bitner et al., (1990) is *Service delivery failures* which consist of three types of sub-failures; unavailable service, unusually slow
service or other core service failures. Bitner et al., (1990) state that unavailable service refers to if a service that is normally available is unavailable for some reason, e.g. a cancelled flight or an overbooked hotel. It is further argued that unreasonably slow services refer to a service or an employee that customers perceive to be particularly slow in fulfilling its function, e.g. delay in the serving of a meal at a restaurant (Bitner et al., 1990). It can also be other core service failures, referring to aspects of the core service that do not meet the basic performance standards for the industry, e.g. the luggage arrives damaged after a flight or the restaurant meal that is being served is cold, or the hotel room is not clean (Bitner et al., 1990)

2.2.2 Failure to respond to customer needs and requests

The second type of service failure formed by Bitner et al., (1990) is closely related to employee responses of customer needs and their requests. A customer need can be either implicit or explicit (Bitner et al., 1990). An implicit need is what the customer expects without having to request for it, e.g. when a flight schedule is changed, the implicit customer need is that the airline will arrange and notify their customers regarding alternative flights. Explicit needs are overtly requested and is generally described as special needs, customer preferences, customer errors or disruptive others. Special needs can be a part of a customer’s language, psychological, medical and social circumstances or a diet; e.g. a vegan diet, hence preparing a vegan meal to the customer counts as a special request (Bitner et al., 1990). Bitner et al., (1990) further state that customer preferences are the preferred needs of a customer that often requires employees to change the way the service is usually being delivered; e.g. a customer wants to replace something of a restaurant-dish. Customer errors are scenarios that starts with a customer mistake, e.g. lost hotel key, where the employee needs to solve the situation (Bitner et al., 1990).

2.2.3 Unprompted and Unsolicited Employee Actions

The last type of service failure formed by Bitner et al., (1990) is not a part of the service delivery system or initiated by the customer. In this case, the actions of an employee is the cause of the service failure (Bitner et al., 1990). It can be the level of attention that the employee gives the customer, e.g. ignore customers or having a poor attitude. Another subcategory for this type of service failure is unusual employee actions, e.g. being rude, insulting or inappropriate touching the customer. Bitner et al., (1990) argue
that cultural norms is a factor referring to violating employee actions against customers that go against cultural norms like equality, honesty and fairness. Another subcategory to this type of service failure is gestalt, referring to a holistic customer evaluation, e.g. a customer on holiday evaluates the experience as overall dissatisfying, without identifying specific incidents to be the cause of the dissatisfaction (Bitner et al., 1990). The last subcategory, adverse conditions, refers to employee actions in stressful situations. Customers are impressed by the performance if an employee acts effectively, taking control over a stressful situation whilst the other employees around are losing their heads. An example of a quite obvious negative employee action under pressure is if the captain and other employees of a sinking ship would board the lifeboats before passengers (Bitner et al., 1990).

2.3 Service Recovery

Service recovery is a concept which was coined in the service management in order to help companies to handle service failures in a good way (Grönroos, 2015). Service recovery can be defined as actions which the service provider take when failures within the service performance have occurred (Ok et al., 2007; Grönroos, 2015; Wilson et al., 2016). If customer complaints are dealt carefully by the service provider, the firm may have the ability to re-satisfy the dissatisfied customer (Richins, 1983; Bougoure et al., 2016; Tax et al., 1998; Maxham, 2001; Bitner et al., 1990; Goodwin & Ross, 1990). Theory indicates that the customer’s level of satisfaction prior the failure will affect the satisfaction which the customer will have towards the brand post recovery (Siu et al., 2013; Hess et al., 2003). Hess et al., (2003) state that customers with a higher expectation on the recovery actions will be less satisfied when recovery efforts are made if these did not meet expectations. Hence, if poor recovery actions are taken, customers are able to get even more dissatisfied (Hess et al., 2003; Garg, 2013).

A service recovery process should be initiated with an instant response from the company’s side after a failure has occurred (Wirtz & Mattila, 2004; Garg, 2013; Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Siu et al., 2013; Smith et al., 1999; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Hocutt et al., 2006; Magnini et al., 2007). According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2011) it is preferable to conduct the recovery even before the customer has given the time to complain. The level of customer satisfaction might decrease even more if the recovery response takes longer than necessary (Roschk & Kaiser, 2013; Goodwin & Ross, 1990).
Theory reveals that an agreement can be found regarding the importance of providing the customer with information during the recovery process (Tax et al., 1998; Bitner et al., 1990; Sparks & Fredline, 2007). Hence, the service provider should always aim to keep the customer notified of why the service failure came across (Tax et al., 1998; Bitner et al., 1990; Sparks & Fredline, 2007). According to Tax et al., (1998), customers prefer to know the reason for failures since that generates in a feeling of belonging, hence being a part of the service recovery process. In turns, being a part of the recovery process generates in more trust towards the brand since the service provider then is less able to unnoted escape the failure without a recovery (Tax et al., 1998; Garg, 2013). Garg (2013) argue that excellent recovery actions taken by the service provider gives the customer confidence that the firm is concerned about him or her.

It can be seen in literature that apology is an effective recovery action (Goodwin & Ross 1990; Smith et al., 1999; Garg, 2013; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004; Roschk & Kaiser, 2013). Theory argue that the personnel whom interacts with customers should be trained to listen to customer complaints (Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Siu et al., 2013; Fu et al., 2015). Further, the personnel should also be trained to show empathy (Magnini et al., 2007; Hocutt et al., 2006). Roschk and Kaiser (2013) argue that the more empathic an apology is, the higher level of customer satisfaction will be regained. Hocutt et al., (2006) state that when brands quickly offer service recoveries with courtesy and empathy as a response to a service failure, they can delight their customers. Wirtz and Mattila (2004) argue that if the apology comes too late, it has less positive effects on the customer meaning that the apology must be an instant response to a service failure.

Another type of recovery action that has been found to be of importance in a service recovery process is compensation (Bitner et al., 1990; Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Hoffman et al., 1995; Smith et al., 1999; Fu et al., 2015). However, a physical compensation must not be out of a large monetary value in order to make the customer satisfied (Fu et al., 2015; Goodwin & Ross, 1990). In cases where compensation is not a possible recovery action, the service provider must aim to give the customer understanding that his or her opinions are of importance for the brand’s future (Goodwin & Ross, 1990). The best way to re-satisfy and delight frustrated customers are argued to be by combining an honest apology with a fair compensation (Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Fu et al., 2015; Roschk & Gelbrich, 2014). Bitner et al., (1990) state that the keys to success are for the
employee to acknowledge the problem, apologize when appropriate, explain to the customer what happened and offer to compensate. It is important that the recovery actions which service providers make are equally strong, hence fair (Smith et al., 1999; Krishna et al., 2014). Theory hereof suggests that recovery actions should match the type of failure (Smith et al., 1999; Krishna et al., 2014; Fu et al., 2015; Roschk & Gelbrich, 2014) in order to generate the most positive impact of the recovery (Smith et al., 1999; Fu et al., 2015). Otherwise, even more customer dissatisfaction may be enforced (Krishna et al., 2014). Hence, if the failure involves monetary issues, the recovery actions should beneficially include monetary compensation, if the failure however deals with poor employee actions, the recovery actions should hold improved employee behaviours, e.g. an apology (Krishna et al., 2014; Roschk & Gelbrich, 2014).

2.4 Service Recovery Paradox

Service recovery paradox is a phenomena that occurs when customers who experience a service failure are more satisfied with the service post-recovery in comparison to if no failure in the service would have occurred (Ok et al., 2007; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Grönroos, 2015). In order to achieve a service recovery paradox, customers need to receive benefits that exceed the customers’ perceived cost of the service failure (Ok et al., 2007) and the brand’s recovery performance must exceed customer expectations (De Matos et al., 2007).

Michel and Meuter (2008) found that service recovery paradox is a possible outcome if the service failure is recoverable. This is consistent with other researches concerning service recovery paradox, stating that the paradox is occurring when an explicit recovery is made (Krishna et al., 2014; Ok et al., 2007; Tu et al., 2009) and when the recovery is quickly handled by a caring, empathic employee (Magnini et al., 2007; Hocutt et al., 2007). It is further argued that the paradox is more likely to happen when the service failure is not considered to be severe by the customer (Magnini et al., 2007; Krishna et al., 2014) or if the failure is out of the company’s control (Magnini et al., 2007), e.g. if the customer is the one who is responsible for the issue (Michel & Meuter, 2008). According to Krishna et al., (2014), the service recovery paradox is easier to achieve when dealing with money loss, time loss, loss of control and comfort loss in comparison with losses concerning emotions, health or respect.
3 Conceptual Framework

A discussion based on the theories reviewed in the prior chapter is here conducted and formed into three different tentative hypotheses; H1, H2 and H3. The hypotheses is strengthened with a conceptual model where theory and hypotheses are combined.

It can be seen from theory that service recovery actions must be initiated as an instant response to a service failure in order to generate in re-satisfied or delighted customers (Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Siu et al., 2013; Smith et al., 1999; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). It can also be seen that customers prefer being informed about the recovery process and why the service failure came across (Tax et al., 1998; Bitner et al., 1990). Literature state that apologies and compensation are the most beneficial service recovery actions of choice where a combination of these seem to be the recovery action which yield in most satisfied and delighted customers (Goodwin & Ross, 1990). A service brand’s recovery actions must also match the type of service failure in order to be effective, otherwise customer satisfaction can come to decrease even more (Krishna et al., 2014; Smith et al., 1999). A suitable recovery action is therefore depending on the type of service failure that has occurred, e.g. Krishna et al., (2014) explain that for a service failure resulting in a monetary loss for the customer, a suitable recovery would be to compensate with money whereas a loss of respect should be recovered with respect and so on. Hence, when different types of service failures are recovered with a suitable recovery action, the level of customer satisfaction should be able to exceed pre-failure satisfaction, resulting in a service recovery paradox.

H1: When service delivery failures are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases.

H2: When failure to respond to customer needs and requests are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases.

H3: When unprompted and unsolicited employee actions are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases.
This model was created with the aim to explain the hypotheses visually. The hypotheses and the model will measure how (1) *service delivery failures*, (2) *failure to respond to customer needs and requests* and (3) *unprompted and unsolicited employee actions* impact customer satisfaction when a suitable recovery action is taken. Further, the outcome will show whether or not service recovery paradox is occurring. Thus, if the satisfaction level increases when the recovery actions have been provided in comparison to an earlier stage.
4 Methodology

This chapter holds justifications of all actions which have been chosen in this study. The justifications are supported with theories regarding methodological considerations and all actions are explained in detail in order to gain transparency in the research.

4.1 Quantitative Research

The subject of service recovery paradox have been thoroughly explored for many years in previous studies. Krishna et al., (2014) state that the paradox should be given more explanatory research in terms of its occurrence within different types of service failures and Magnini et al., (2007) suggest that researchers should explain the factors that are enhancing and hindering the occurrence of the paradox. This implies that the subject is mature enough to take on a quantitative research approach.

A quantitative research is a study where a phenomena can be explained through numerical data which can be analyzed by using mathematically based methods (Mujis, 2004; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Christensen et al., 2016). By using numerical measurements in research concerning service recovery paradox, one can hopefully be able to generalize results, which is one of the advantages of a quantitative research approach according to Bryman and Bell (2011). By conducting quantitative studies, as this, the researcher is able to gather a large sample size that may cover a large population. Tu et al., (2009) argue that research within service recovery paradox would benefit from using a quantitative research design with a large sample size in order to explain the phenomena statistically. When being able to cover and test a theory on a large population, the chance for the findings to be generalizable increases (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) state that quantitative studies aim to quantify a problem found in theory by using large volumes of data and to transform the findings into statistics. Studies of quantitative nature are very structured and able to uncover patterns in theory (Bryman & Bell, 2011) which is beneficial since this research will clarify patterns regarding how different types of service failures and recovery actions impact customer satisfaction.

The relation between the theory and research in this study can be explained as deductive. This study is hence embarking on theories of a natural science approaches...
which are to be tested (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Thus, the theories explained in quantitative studies are further assemble in hypotheses (Bryman & Bell, 2011), which Mujis (2004) explains as tentative formulations which anticipates for a set of facts that can be further tested. In this study three different hypotheses were formulated (see chapter 3).

4.2 Research Design

This research will use a scenario approach in order to collect empirical material, which is a research design that has been conducted by several studies prior to this one when service recovery paradox has been investigated (Hess et al., 2003; Michel, 2001; Maxham, 2001; Tu et al., 2009; Ok et al., 2007; Magnini et al., 2007; Smith et al., 1999; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004). Bryman and Bell (2011) argue that this method of collecting information is called Vignette Questions. This technique presents one or more scenarios which allow the respondents to answer how the they should react to the scenarios in question (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Michel, 2001; Maxham, 2001; Tu et al., 2009; Ok et al., 2007; Magnini et al., 2007; Hess et al., 2003). Bryman and Bell (2011) state that when questions in a survey are asked about other people than oneself or about imaginary people, a distance between the respondents’ self and the research appears which tend to make the respondents more comfortable to participate (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Hence, there are advantages of using scenario based research designs since this will feel less threatening for the participating individuals to respond.

4.3 Research Method

Armstrong et al., (2012) explain a survey as a type of primary data collection where respondents answer questions concerning knowledge, attitudes and preferences regarding the phenomena of study. Mujis (2004) states that a survey is a flexible way of collecting data which includes a standardized questionnaire which is the same for all respondents. Three surveys have been conducted in this study (Appendix A), one for each type of service failure. To make it easier for respondents to understand the survey in the accurate way, questions should be sorted based on the theme of the question (Adams & Cox, 2008) which is the reason for dividing up the scenario in each survey into three different parts; pre-failure, post-failure and post-recovery where questions regarding their satisfaction level have been asked after each. The respondents who have answered one of the surveys are automatically excluded from the other two to avoid the
collection of answers that could have been affected by a previous survey. A questionnaire can either be conducted face-to-face, by telephone, online or through the traditional way of using paper and pen (Mujis, 2004). This study will hold surveys which either can be answered online or by paper and pen since the respondents are people in a variety of ages whom may have different preferences regarding answering methods. The majority of the surveys have been sent to people as a private message which is argued to enhance the response rate (De Bruijne & Wijnant, 2014). Hoonakker and Carayon (2009) argue that internet surveys have advantages since these surveys are easy for people to access, independent of their location. The method of using online-based questionnaire is a fast and cheap way of distributing surveys to a large amount of people, it is also argued that the quality of responses is higher (Hoonakker & Carayon, 2009). When it comes to studies within service recovery paradox Hocutt et al., (2006) suggest that researchers would advantage from using surveys as the research method in order to test the literature.

4.3.1 Construction of Survey

In previous service recovery studies, restaurant has been the industry of research (Hocutt et al., 2006; Tu et al., 2009; Bitner et al., 1990; Ok et al., 2007; Hess et al., 2003; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004) in combination with conducting a scenario-based study (Hocutt et al., 2006; Tu et al., 2009; Ok et al., 2007; Hess et al., 2003; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004). Through prior studies, it has been acknowledged that this research design, hence scenarios, is possible to conduct within the restaurant industry. Hereof, it is possible to disqualify the choice of industry to be the misdoing factor if the hypotheses should be rejected. By conducting a scenario-based survey with a restaurant setting, a lot of people can relate and be included in the study due to the reality-based scenarios which was discussed by a focus group (Appendix B).

A focus group is a group interview with several participants, typically six to twelve, who discuss a defined topic (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This focus group consisted of six participants that frequently visit restaurants; at least once a month. The participants were during approximately 40 minutes asked to discuss problems which they have experienced as restaurant guests. The session was introduced by a brief explanation of the research’s aim as well as the aim with the focus group; to come up with possible service failure scenarios which can occur in a restaurant setting. The group were
introduced to the three different types of service failures classified by Bitner et al., (1990): (1) *Service Delivery Failures*, (2) *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests* and (3) *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions*. They were then asked to discuss different service failures connected to each of the failure type which they had experienced, if and how the service provider in that situation recovered the failure, if that recovery action was seen as successful from the participants point of view and how the participants themselves would have preferred the recovery actions in that situation to be, in order to make them satisfied. The discussion was both recorded and written down in order for the conductors to capture as much information as possible, which is in accordance with Bryman and Bell’s (2011) recommendations.

The discussion from the focus group made up the foundations for each scenario. Hence, three different scenarios could be formed on the basis of the discussion. Bryman and Bell (2011) emphasizes the importance of creating believable and credible scenario situations. The service failures experienced at restaurants, which most of the participants could relate to and had experienced, were chosen as foundation to the scenarios in order to ensure that the scenarios should be understandable and relatable for a large amount of people. The suitable recovery action for each type of failure was mainly based on theory, however the discussion from the focus group regarding suitable recovery actions was also considered when creating the appropriate recovery action for the scenarios. The questions connected to each scenario have been chosen due to the discussion as well as in connection to theory.

Further, the questionnaires (Appendix A) have been translated into Swedish in order to reach as high level of understanding as possible among respondents. It has been believed that since the majority of the respondents would be Swedes, it should be easier for these to answer a questionnaire in their native language. Adams and Cox (2008) state that the response rates increases when the respondents understand the questions correctly, which in this research is believed to happen if the questions are written in the language which the respondents usually utilize. In order to make sure that the English and Swedish version of the questionnaires measure the same things, the words and sentences have been translated word by word.
4.3.2 Pre-test of Surveys

Bryman and Bell (2011) argue for the importance of pre-testing the survey before allocating the outcome of it. A pre-test is desirable to understand if the survey questions operate as intended. The three surveys in this study have been pre-tested one by one to make sure that the questions are formulated, as Petra (2010) states, in a simple, specific and relevant manner to avoid misunderstandings. As accorded by Bryman and Bell (2011) the pre-tests should be carried out on a small group of people, in this specific case of 10 people, which is a representation of the population of the research. In this research, the pre-test was sent out online. The pre-test for the questionnaires gave insights in where changes had to be done. Suggestions about making the scenarios even more distinct were collected, which later was taken in allocation. As accorded by Adams and Cox (2008), when respondents comprehend the survey, the accuracy of respondents’ responses increases. This indicates that the suggestions about clarifying the scenarios in the surveys have been of good use in this research. Further, wording must also be considered (Petra, 2010; Adams & Cox, 2008) and through the pre-test it was noticed that one word was spelled wrongly which hereof was altered into the correct spelling. There were also suggestions to clarify the explanations of how to answer the question. The following text was also suggested to be added in the end of each question in order to make it explicitly clear for the respondent of what to do; “Please take a stand to the question on the 5-grade scale where; 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted”.

4.4 Sampling

Due to time-restricts during this research, it has been important with an effective and efficient sampling procedure which maximizes the amount of responses in an as short time as possible. Bryman and Bell (2011) argue that when utilizing convenience sampling, the researcher can assume that almost all questionnaires will be answered, the response rate when using this sampling type is hence very high. Convenience sampling is a sampling type which allows the researcher to use those people in the nearest surroundings to participate in the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Since there is no specific exclusions or inclusions of whom is allowed to participate in this study, convenience sampling is seen as the most suitable sampling type since it is therefore possible to reach a large amount of people since the questionnaire is sent out online. Lev-On and Lissitsa (2015) argue that online environments create beneficial
communication opportunities which generates in a possibility to interact with both like-minded and dissimilar people. According to Manago et al., (2012), the average amount of contacts people have on networking sites are 440, which proves that large amount of data can be found through online contacts. However, one aim is to make sure that people within a variety of ages are participating in the study in order for this research to cover a large population. In excess of convenience sampling, snowball sampling has been used as a supplement to the first. Bryman and Bell (2011) state that snowball sampling occur when the researcher establish contacts with other people through the ones who are already participating the study. Snowball sampling has been an advantage for this research in order to make sure that all age groups are covered, even those who hence are out of the researchers reach.

Christensen et al., (2016) argue that if a research holds groupings, as in this research, where three different surveys are allocated in which the respondents are only allowed to answer one of them, each group should consist of at least 50 respondents. Hence, in this case, 150 in total. As stated, this research is not aiming for specific individual elements in the respondents, more than a desire of variety of ages among all of them, hereof the study can be seen as a heterogeneous research which Bryman and Bell (2011) explain is a research where the sample can be a part of a whole city or country which indicates that the population is expected to be very varied due to its size. The rule of thumb is that the more heterogeneous a population is, the larger sample is needed (Bryman & Bell, 2011). With that in mind, this research aims for a sample size between 270-300 respondents. Thus nearly the double amount of respondents than what Christensen et al., (2016) argued as the minimum value.

4.5 Operationalization

The process of define and organize measures of concepts in a research is referred to as operationalization (Bryman & Bell, 2011). When creating a operationalization, the conceptual definitions have to be elaborated and specific in terms of where the constructs are to be used (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005). The operationalization table have been critically examined by three experts in order to assess face validity of the measurements that is argued to be of importance by Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005). Since the three surveys are constructed with the same structure and the same aim, one operationalization table have been created to explain the three surveys. All questions in
the survey measures customer satisfaction where question 1-3 for each survey are asked in connection to the first part of the scenario, hence before a failure has occurred. The questions 4-6 are asked after the second part of the scenario which is the post-failure scenario. The last three questions for each survey, 7-9, are asked based on the post-recovery scenario. The reason for not including all theoretical concepts in the operationalization table is because customer satisfaction is the only variable that is being measured in the questions of the surveys. The concepts of service failures and service recoveries are included in the scenarios and the service recovery paradox will be measured as the outcome of the surveys. Thus compare the data showing the respondents level of customer satisfaction pre-failure with the level of post-recovery satisfaction. The questions are numbered in the operationalization table referring to the survey questions which can be found in Appendix A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>How well a service’s perceived performance correlates with the customer’s expectations about it (Armstrong et al., 2012; Souca, 2014; Hill et al., 2003)</td>
<td>Find out the level of customer satisfaction before a failure has occurred.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Scenario part 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>How well a service’s perceived performance correlates with the customer’s expectations about it (Armstrong et al., 2012; Souca, 2014; Hill et al., 2003)</td>
<td>Find out the level of customer satisfaction after a service failure has occurred.</td>
<td>4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Scenario part 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>How well a service’s perceived performance correlates with the customer’s expectations about it (Armstrong et al., 2012; Souca, 2014; Hill et al., 2003)</td>
<td>Find out the level of customer satisfaction after a suitable service recovery action has been made.</td>
<td>7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Scenario part 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Operationalization of theoretical constructs*

4.6 Data Analysis Method

The data gathered will be analysed and the results will be calculated in SPSS, which Bryman and Bell (2011) argue is one of the most common computer softwares to analyse data in. In occasions when a researcher aims to study the difference of variables,
conducting an ANOVA is the most suitable way (Mujis, 2004). Mujis (2004) further explain that the ANOVA allows the researcher to compute a mean value for each variable between groups. This type of data analysis is beneficial for this study in order to compare the different outcomes for different types of failures pre-failure, post-failure and post-recovery in order to meet the research’s purpose. Malhotra and Birks (2003) state that in occasions as this, when more than two factors are involved in the testing, n-way ANOVA, is suitable method to use in SPSS. The software will generate help to firstly calculate one mean value for pre-failure, one for post-failure and one for post-recovery for each type of failure separately. Thus, nine different means will be formed. The mean value for pre-failure for (1) Service delivery failures can then be compared to the mean value for pre-failures for (2) Failure to respond to customer needs and requests as well as to the mean value for pre-failures for (3) Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions in order to measure where customer satisfaction is at its highest and lowest. The same procedure can be done for the questions regarding post-failure and post-recovery, in all three types of failures. In the questionnaires, the respondents are asked to read the scenarios and answer how satisfied they are with each situation. The respondents have the ability to answer on a scale between one to five where one is dissatisfied, three is satisfied and five is delighted.

In the end of each questionnaire, the respondents were asked to specify their age and gender. However, this data did not contribute with additional information to the research since the ages of the respondents were unequally distributed and hence impossible to draw any conclusions from. The difference between gender did not show any significant difference between satisfaction level in the different scenarios and has thus not been analysed further.

4.6.1 Outliers

An outlier is an observation that distinctly differ from the rest of the observations in a study (Hair et al., 1998; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Outliers must be viewed within the context of the analysis and should be evaluated by the type of information they may provide (Hair et al., 1998). An outlier can be either of a problematic nature or a beneficial one. Hair et al., (1998) argue that in the case of a beneficial outlier that differs from the majority of the sample may be a characteristics of the population that would not normally be discovered. A problematic outlier on the other hand is not
representative of the population and can counter the objectives of the analysis and can severely distort the result statistically (Hair et al., 1998). Boxplots were constructed in order to detect possible outliers. In the case of the first survey, concerning *Service delivery failures*, no significant outliers were considered to be unrepresentative of the population. In second survey, concerning *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests*, on the other hand one respondent stood out from the rest, answering that he/she was somewhat delighted both before the failure had occurred, post-failure and post-recovery as well which seems unreasonable. This anomaly was considered to be a problematic outlier that did not represent the rest of the population where the respondent most likely had not read the questions or scenarios properly. In the case of the third survey, concerning *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions*, two outliers were detected and removed from the data due to their unusualness. One respondent stated that he/she was more satisfied post-failure in comparison with the pre-failure part of the scenario. This was both confusing and concerning and led to a discussion whether or not the respondent had understood the questions properly. The other outlier in third survey answered that he/she was somewhat delighted post-failure which also was considered to be unrepresentative of the population and therefore deleted.

4.7 Validity

Validity is argued to be the most important criterion and concerns the integrity of the conclusions that are made in a research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Measurement validity normally applies to quantitative researches and refers to if a measure that is contrived of a construct reflects what it is supposed to (Aaker et al., 2011; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Malhotra & Birks, 2003), e.g. is the IQ test really a measure of intelligence? The articles regarding service recovery paradox used in this thesis have measured the concept of satisfaction in order to reach a conclusion regarding the paradox. This indicates that the concept of satisfaction is a well-elaborated measurement when studying the service recovery paradox and hence supports the measurement validity for this research. Ecological validity concerns the question of if the findings of a study is applicable to people’s everyday life in natural social settings (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Studies based on questionnaires may have limited ecological validity due to the unnaturalness of answering a questionnaire (Bryman & Bell, 2011). However the questionnaires conducted in this study uses the vignette technique where the respondents have been presented with a scenario before answering the questions. Since the scenarios in this
research have been discussed by a focus group and are based upon real-life experiences, the naturality of answering these questions may increase. The questions are believed being relatable for a large volume of people. Hence, the questions are related to a natural social setting which is a criteria for ecological validity to pertain.

4.8 Reliability
Reliability measures the consistency of concepts in a study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Hence, if the same result would be found if the research was to be done again (Malhotra & Birks, 2003; Christensen et al., 2016). According to Bryman and Bell (2011) internal reliability refers to if questions used in the questionnaire are consistent with each other. Thus, if the questions which concern the same variable are cohered. If questions, which are intended to regard the same variable, are not in coherence, it is possible that the questions study different things (Bryman & Bell, 2011). To test the questions internal reliability the researcher can conduct a Cronbach’s Alpha test in SPSS (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The result will show a number between 0 and 1. If Cronbach’s Alpha is equal to zero that indicates that the tested questions do not have any internal reliability whereas if Cronbach’s Alpha is equal to one, it denotes that there is a perfect internal reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is further stated that if Cronbach’s Alpha is equal to or more than 0.6, internal reliability has been found (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In this research the aim will be to exceed a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.7, however, >0.6 will be accepted as well. Cronbach’s Alpha has been tested three times per questionnaire in this study. In each questionnaire has the coherence of question 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9 been tested. Hence, the questions regarding the pre-failure situation have been tested separately as well as the questions regarding the post-failure and post-recovery have been tested separately. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the questions in this study denote that all questions have an internal reliability.
### Cronbach’s Alpha for Service Delivery Failures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1-Q3</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4-Q6</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7-Q9</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Cronbach’s Alpha for Service Delivery Failures**

### Cronbach’s Alpha for Failure to respond to customer needs and requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1-Q3</td>
<td>0.943</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4-Q6</td>
<td>0.613</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7-Q9</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Cronbach’s Alpha for Failure to respond to customer needs and requests**

### Cronbach’s Alpha for Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1-Q3</td>
<td>0.924</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4-Q6</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7-Q9</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4. Cronbach’s Alpha for Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions**
4.9 Replication

Replicability occurs when an author has spelled out the research procedures in such great detail so that future researchers have the ability to replicate parts of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The processes and procedures done when conducting this study is clearly stated. This increases the transparency of it and also the ability for others to replicate the study in the future. An operationalization is used to conceptualize question in this research. As Bryman and Bell (2011) state, the operationalization help to define and structure concepts in a study. This makes the research even more transparent, making it easier to replicate since a greater understanding of why certain questions and concepts have been used arises.

4.10 Justification of chosen articles

The articles used in this research have been found through the online search engine One Search which is a resource connected to Linnaeus University’s library or through the search engine Google Scholar which is a resource connected to Google. All articles have been controlled in the database Ulrichsweb which is an online resource that let researchers find out whether or not the journals in which the articles are published in are peer-reviewed or not.

All articles used in the literature review of this study are considered as suitable for the aim; to explain how different types of service failures combined with suitable recovery actions impact customer satisfaction. Coniam (2012) state that an article which is considered as academic should undergo a procedure of being peer reviewed. This process is verifying the article’s quality (Coniam, 2012). The majority of the articles in the literature review in this research have been peer-reviewed and hence acceptable to use. However, two of the articles cannot surely be stated as peer-reviewed before being published; Service failure and Service recovery in Tourism: A review by Ennew and Schoefer (2003) and Customer dissatisfaction and delight: completely different concepts, or part of a satisfaction continuum? by Souca (2014). Nevertheless, these articles are considered being out of an academic and scientific nature. The articles are literature reviews which both review either customer satisfaction or service failure and service recovery, which have been highly relevant in this research, they are hence seen as very suitable. Both articles have reviewed a large amount of studies; 48 versus 56 where some of the used sources are sources which are used in this study as well. The
fact that these two articles mostly have been used in combination with other sources increases the credibility for them in this study.

The article written by Wirtz and Mattila (2004) have not been peer-reviewed. Nevertheless, the article does follow the strict order which Ecarnot et al., (2015) argue that an article which should be considered as scientific should hold. Hence, a title, an abstract, introduction, methodology, result, discussion and a reference list. The article does also contribute with something valuable, which increases the scientificness of it (Ecarnot et al., 2015). The article is also consider being suitable in this research and therefore acceptable to use.

The article by Krishna et al., (2014) is published in the Global Business Review, which can be seen as a less trustworthy journal. However, it has been peer-reviewed, which in accordance to Coniam (2012) argue for its scientificness. Coniam (2012) further state that a peer-reviewing of an article make sure that it is of enough quality for publication, which hence indicates that the article by Krishna (2014) is a credible source to use. Further, Krishna et al., (2014) have followed the structure which Ecarnot et al., (2015) argue that a scientific article should include. This increases the credibility of the article even more, and thus the applicability of the article as a useful source in this research.

4.11 Ethical Issues

Bryman and Bell (2011) explain that when conducting studies it is crucial to always understand issues which can arise during the research. Ethical issues concerns problems that can proceed for the people which the study regards (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The respondents in this study will be anonymous and the data will be kept confidentially to not harm participants or invade privacy which Bryman and Bell (2011) argue to be an ethical issue. The first page of each survey will consist of an explanation, ensuring the respondents that their answers will be anonymous and that the participation of the survey is fully optional to avoid putting pressure on the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2011). At the very end of the introduction page of the survey, the names and email-addresses of the survey creators will be presented so the respondents have the opportunity to get in contact with, if needed. Bryman and Bell (2011) further state that a strength of quantitative research is that statistical findings can easily be manipulated by using graphs and diagrams. Researchers are able to exaggerate the findings by deceive
the reader that the findings are more significant than they are by the use of graphical explanations. Fooling readers is an ethical issue in research which should be avoided (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Hereof, in order for the reader to interpret and perceive the findings in the accurate way, findings will not be presented in graphical forms in this research. When asking survey-questions which can be seen as sensitive for the respondents, as in this study where personal reflections will be measured, the possibility for the respondent to feel threatened appear due to a fear of being judged due to one’s replies (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, in order for respondents to always feel comfortable with this research, it will be stated, explicitly clear, that the answers will be held confidentially and that no judgement will be done, regardless the respondents choice of answer. However, as Bryman and Bell (2011) state, when studies are conducted in such manner so that a distance between the individual respondent and the questions can be seen, respondents will be less concerned of being judged and therefore respond more accurately. Hereof, this study benefits from the chosen research design, the scenario approach, since this will increase the distance between the individual respondent and the questions and in turn decrease the ethical issues about respondents feeling judged by their choice of answer, which otherwise can arise.
5 Results

This chapter presents data from the three surveys conducted. The results are shown in ANOVA-tables which are conducted in SPSS. Each table is described and clarified.

The mean value for each part of the scenario within the survey was calculated in SPSS. Hence the mean value for the neutral scenario; question 1, 2 and 3, the mean value for the post-failure scenario; question 4, 5 and 6 and the mean value for the post-recovery scenario; question 7, 8 and 9. This in order to compare the means and see if the type of failure together with a suitable recovery action has resulted in a service recovery paradox. The tables below present the result that was calculated in SPSS where the dependent variable was the three different parts of the scenario. Hence, number 1 refers to the neutral scenario pre-failure and consist of question 1, 2 and 3. Number 2 refers to the second part of the scenario post-failure and consist of question 4, 5 and 6. Number 3 refers to the last part of the scenario post-recovery consisting of question 7, 8 and 9.

5.1 Survey 1 - Service delivery failures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario parts</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3,6421</td>
<td>.71499</td>
<td>.07336</td>
<td>3.4965</td>
<td>3,7878</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1,9263</td>
<td>.58987</td>
<td>.06052</td>
<td>1.8062</td>
<td>2.0465</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3,8596</td>
<td>.83875</td>
<td>.08605</td>
<td>3.6888</td>
<td>4.0305</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Comparison of means for service delivery failures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>213,086</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>106,543</td>
<td>204,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>146,889</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>359,975</td>
<td>284</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Significance level for service delivery failures

The significance level for the survey concerning Service delivery failures is less than 0.001 which means that there is with 99.9% confident a difference between the groups’ means. The average responses of the satisfaction level in the neutral scenario is 3,6421.
In the post-failure scenario the level of satisfaction amongst the respondents decreased to 1.9263. The post-recovery scenario managed to bring the majority of respondents back to their original state of satisfaction or even higher, resulting in an average satisfaction level of 3.8596. This value indicates support for the service recovery paradox.

**H1:** When service delivery failures are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases. → Accepted

### 5.2 Survey 2 - Failure to respond to customer needs and requests

#### Descriptives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario parts</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3.8511</td>
<td>.80858</td>
<td>.08340</td>
<td>3.6855</td>
<td>4.0167</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.3546</td>
<td>.38431</td>
<td>.03964</td>
<td>1.2759</td>
<td>1.4333</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3.3830</td>
<td>.88389</td>
<td>.09117</td>
<td>3.2019</td>
<td>3.5640</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7. Comparison of means for failure to respond to customer needs and requests*

#### ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>331,058</td>
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<td>165,529</td>
<td>313,748</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>147,196</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>.528</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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*Table 8. Significance level for failure to respond to customer needs and requests*

The significance level for the survey concerning *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests* is less than 0.001 which means that there is with 99.9% confident a difference between the groups’ means. The average responses of the satisfaction level in the neutral scenario is 3.8511. In the post-failure scenario the level of satisfaction amongst the respondents decreased to 1.3546. The post-recovery scenario managed to bring a lot of respondents back to being satisfied, resulting in an average satisfaction level of 3.3839. This value is close to the level of satisfaction that the first scenario presented, however it did not quite reach it. Service recovery paradox is therefore not a phenomena in this survey.
H2: When failures to respond to customer needs and requests are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases. → Rejected

5.3 Survey 3 - Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions

Descriptives

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Table 9. Comparison of means for unprompted and unsolicited employee actions

ANOVA

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</table>

Table 10. Comparison of means for unprompted and unsolicited employee actions

The significance level for the survey concerning Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions is less than 0.001 which means that there is with 99.9% confident a difference between the groups’ means. The average responses of the satisfaction level in the neutral scenario is 3.8261. In the post-failure scenario the level of satisfaction amongst the respondents decreased to as low as 1.2645 which is the lowest level of satisfaction in comparison with the two previous studies. The post-recovery scenario managed to bring a few respondents back to being satisfied resulting in an average satisfaction level of 2.8152. This is not an increase in comparison with the first, neutral scenario and therefore the service recovery paradox is not a phenomena in this survey.

H3: When unprompted and unsolicited employee actions are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases. → Rejected
6 Discussion

The result of hypothesis one, *When service delivery failures are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases*, supports the existence of a paradox when being tested in combination with *Service delivery failures* and a recovery action including apology, explanation and compensation. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted but it is important to keep in mind that the increase in customer satisfaction is not extraordinary large. The result however indicates that the recovery actions given in this situation exceeds customer’s expectations, hence making them more satisfied post-recovery in comparison to the level of satisfaction they felt pre-failure (Ok et al., 2007; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Grönroos, 2015). One reason for an existing paradox in this case can be because of the type of service failure. The paradox is argued to be more likely to occur when the service failure is not considered to be severe by the customer (Magnini et al., 2007; Krishna et al., 2014) or if the failure is out of the company’s control (Magnini et al., 2007). This type of service failure concerned a loss of time which according to Krishna et al., (2014) is easier to compensate for and hence easier to achieve a paradox in comparison with losses concerning emotions, health or respect. Since previous research argue that service recovery paradox is occurring if the service’s recovery actions exceed customers’ expectations about it (De Matos et al., 2007), it can hence be stated that an apology, an explanation and the compensation given in this scenario is a recovery actions which are well suited for the type of failure. The failure in this situation was dealt with care by the service provider which may have been the reason for why it was possible to re-satisfy customers, as argued by research (Richins, 1983; Bougoure et al., 2016; Tax et al., 1998; Maxham, 2001; Bitner et al., 1990; Goodwin & Ross, 1990). In this scenario, the service provider took a recovery action before the customer have had any time to complain, something that is beneficial in order to re-satisfy the customer, as accorded to Lovelock & Wirtz (2011). As previous research suggests, explanations of why the service failure came across was provided in this scenario which might have affected the customers positively and hence made them more satisfied with the service. Research uncover that customers prefer being informed about the reason for failures in order to make them feel a part of the recovery process (Tax et al., 1998).

In this scenario, the recovery actions were correlated with suggestions by researchers stating that a certain type of failure would be recovered with an equal type of recovery
This can be argued as workable in this scenario since the level of satisfaction increased after the recovery procedure, and the service recovery paradox occurred. The recovery action for this type of service failure included an empathic apology from the service employee, which according to Roschk & Kaiser (2013) can re-satisfy customers post-failure and hence contribute to the service recovery paradox. The recovery action did also include a compensation, which according to researchers is a great action to take if possible (Bitner et al., 1990; Goodwin & Ross, 1990; Hoffman et al., 1995; Smith et al., 1999). However, the compensation in this scenario consisted of some snacks. Hence not out of large monetary value, but did still do its job which correlates with the argumentation by Goodwin and Ross (1990) who state that the monetary value of the compensation is unimportant.

The result for hypothesis two, *When failures to respond to customer needs and requests are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases* revealed that the level of satisfaction post-recovery was almost as high as the level of satisfaction pre-failure. This type of service failure in combination with the suitable service recovery action managed to bring the respondents back to a state of being satisfied. However, it did not quite result in a service recovery paradox where the level of satisfaction after a service recovery have to exceed pre-failure satisfaction (Ok et al., 2007; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011; Grönroos, 2015). Hence the service recovery paradox could not be confirmed in the scenario of *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests*. Previous research reveals that it is preferable to conduct the service recovery before the customer has given the time to complain (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). However, in this scenario the customer had to acknowledge the failure and tell the service provider about the failure in order to receive a recovery which can be one of the factors for why the paradox did not eventuate here. Another reason for a non-existing service recovery paradox in this scenario can be because of the type of failure. The scenario, *Failures to respond to customer needs and requests*, failed to meet the customer need and instead provided a dish containing an ingredient that the customer could not eat. This failure could, in worst case, therefore have resulted in health loss for the customer if the mistake would have gone unnoticed. A loss of health is argued to be difficult to compensate for and it is hence difficult to achieve a service recovery paradox in such situation (Krishna et al., 2014). However since the customer in this case acknowledged the failure before
anything too severe had happened, the average level of satisfaction post-recovery was nearly as high as before the failure had occurred.

The result for hypothesis three, *When unprompted and unsolicited employee actions are recovered in a suitable way, customer satisfaction increases* has also been rejected and to the largest extent compared with the first two scenarios. In this scenario the failure was either perceived to be too severe by the customer (Magnini et al., 2007; Krishna et al., 2014) and/or the recovery actions did not live up to customers’ expectations about it (De Matos et al., 2007; Armstrong et al., 2012). Hence, in accordance with Ok et al., (2007), it can be stated that the service recovery paradox did not occur since the respondents did not feel more satisfied with the service when the recovery actions were taken in comparison to their level of satisfaction pre-failure. As stated by Souca (2014), the service provider in this scenario may have failed to deliver enthusiasm according to the customers. Previous research reveals that it is preferable to conduct the service recovery before the customer has given the time to complain (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). However, in this scenario the customer had to acknowledge the failure and ask the waitress to remove the plates from the table which resulted in a service recovery action, which can be one of the factors for why the paradox did not eventuate here. This scenario concerning *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions* is a type of failure that according to Bitner et al., (1990), is caused by the actions of an employee. Thus a service failure that is in the company’s control which is more difficult to recover from and to achieve a paradox through (Magnini et al., 2007). This scenario resulted in the lowest level of customer satisfaction post-failure and post-recovery, thus furthest away from achieving a service recovery paradox in comparison with the other two scenarios. In this case, the employee shows a lack of interest and not paying attention to the customers’ table. This shows a loss of respect which is argued to be difficult to compensate for and therefore difficult to attain a service recovery paradox for this type of service failure (Krishna et al., 2014). Michel and Meuter (2008) found that service recovery paradox is a possible outcome if the service failure is recoverable, thus this type of service failure might not be possible to fully recover from.
7 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explain how different types of service failures combined with suitable recovery actions impact customer satisfaction. The findings from this study confirm the possibility for an increase in customer satisfaction post-recovery, concerning *Service delivery failures* combined with suitable recovery actions. In the case of *Failure to respond to customer needs and requests* combined with suitable recovery actions, the level of post-recovery customer satisfaction did not quite reach pre-failure satisfaction. The last type of service failure, *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions*, resulted in the lowest level of customer satisfaction both post-failure and post-recovery. This indicates that a service recovery paradox is most difficult to attain in the case of service failures connected to *Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions*. The paradox was not an outcome for the two last type of failures even if suitable recovery actions were applied. The reason for this may be that these two service failure types, and the last one in particular, are perceived as too severe by the customer and hence unrecoverable due to that or that the recovery actions taken were not explicit enough to retain customer satisfaction, even if being suitable according to prior research. In cases where the failure is not caused by an employee, e.g. *Service delivery failures*, customer satisfaction is shown being easier to regain when using preferable recovery actions, even to such extent so that customer satisfaction post-recovery can exceed customer satisfaction pre-failure. In cases where the failure can be caused by both the service provider and the customer, e.g. *Failures to respond to customer needs and request*, it is easier to regain customer satisfaction than if the failure was caused by the employee only but harder than if the failure was caused by someone or something else than the employee. Noteworthy is that service providers should always offer an explicit recovery action in order to increase customer satisfaction as much as possible in each service failure situation, even if the paradox will be a possible outcome or not.
8 Managerial Implications

This research have important implications for service managers and employees and more particularly in a restaurant setting. Service managers and employees should first and foremost strive for delivering reliable, error-free services that will satisfy the customer. However to deliver error-free services is difficult for service brands. In the case of failing to deliver the service correctly, it is crucial to know how to recover from the type of failure as explicit as possible in order to regain customer satisfaction and hence, retaining customers. Service managers and employees should recover from the service failure in a way that corresponds with the type of failure since a recovery action that does not match the failure can lead to a decrease in customer satisfaction even more. The results of this study shows how different types of service failures can affect customer satisfaction after a suitable recovery action is taken. Service managers and employees should also acknowledge that failures caused by the employee, Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions, have shown to be the most difficult to make up for and thus most difficult to regain customer satisfaction from. This type of service failure should therefore be avoided as much as possible.
9 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This research is not without limitations, the three types of failures classified by Bitner et al., (1990) are in this study limited to the restaurant industry. It cannot be surely stated that the same results would be found if another industry would have been the chosen industry of research. Hereof, it is believed that future research should replicate the method of this study and test the types of failures and suitable recovery actions in other service industries as well. By doing this one can understand if any differentiations in service recovery paradox’ occurrence can be found depending on the industry of research.

However, the recovery actions formed as suitable for each type of failure in this research are industry-specific and cannot be the exact same in studies with the aim to test the paradox in other industries. Neither can the scenarios connected to each type of failure. This indicates that one can never be absolutely certain that the scenarios and recovery actions tested in one industry are exactly equal to the scenarios and the recovery actions tested in another industry before having investigated it. With equal we mean that scenarios and recovery actions between different industries must be perceived equally severe and equally fair in order to do a cross-industrial study, if the findings should be trustworthy. Hereof suggestion for future research is to qualitatively come up with scenarios connected to the three types of failures and suitable recovery actions for different industries, which between the different industries are perceived as equal. This further creates the ability to test if it is mainly the type of failure or the recovery actions that impact the beingness of service recovery paradox. Thus, future researchers can investigate if the paradox’ existence may depend upon the type of service failure or the type of service recovery action in relation to the paradox one by one.

The scenarios found as suitable to test in this research have been influenced by a focus group which may have affected the result. If another group of people would have been participating in the discussion, other possible issues which the participants had experiences in a restaurant might had been discussed. This indicates that the findings in this study may be argued as being generalizable only for the certain scenarios and that other results could have been seen if other scenarios was provided to the respondents of the questionnaire. Due to this, we again advise future researchers to qualitatively
investigate the different types of scenarios between industries which can arise and aim to not only find one scenario for each type of failure but several.
References


Appendices

Appendix A - Surveys

Survey 1: Service Delivery Failures, Swedish Version

Hej!

Vi är två marknadsföringsstudenter som studerar vår sista termin på Linnéuniversitetet i Växjö. Denna enkät är en del av vår C-uppsats med syftet att förklara kundtillfredsställelse inom serviceindustrin. Enkäten presenterar ett scenario i tre delar som tar plats i en restaurangmiljö. Läs scenariot noga och svara sedan på frågorna som följer.

Det är frivilligt att delta i enkäten men vi uppskattar gladeligen ert deltagande. Alla deltagare kommer förbli anonyma.

Tack,
Nina Dijnér (nd222ci@student.lnu.se)
Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)

Scenario del 1/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

MISSNÖJD: När resultatet av en service inte når upp till dina förväntningar.
NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÄN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.
**Scenariot**

Du och dina vänner har bestämt er för att prova den nya restaurangen som har öppnat i stan. Du har bokat bord klockan 19 för dig och ditt sällskap ikväll. Ni ankommer till restaurangen på utsatt tid, värden välkomnar er och visar er direkt till ert bord och ger er menyer.

1. **Hur nöjd är du i denna situation?**

   Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1  2  3  4  5

2. **Hur nöjd är du med värden i denna situation?**

   Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1  2  3  4  5

3. **Hur nöjd är du med restaurangens punktlighet i denna situation?**

   Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1  2  3  4  5
Scenario del 2/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

MISSNÖJD: När resultatet av en service inte når upp till dina förväntningar.
NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÅN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenariot
Servitrisen har tagit er beställning, du och ditt sällskap väntar hungrigt på er mat. När du besöker restauranger är du van vid att vänta på maten i ungefär 15 minuter. Nu har det gått 30 minuter och ni har fortfarande inte fått er mat eller någon information angående tidsfördröjningen från den anställda.

4. Hur nöjd är du i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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5. Hur nöjd är du med personalen i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

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<th>4</th>
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6. Hur nöjd är du med väntetiden i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

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Scenario del 3/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

MISSNÖJD: När resultatet av en service inte når upp till dina förväntningar.
NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÄN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenariot
Efter 30 minuter kommer er servitris till ert bord och ber upprätts om ursäkt för den försenade maten och förklarar att en köksutrustning plötsligt gått sönder. Servitrisen ger er lite tilltugg gratis och förklarar att er mat kommer att vara redo om bara några minuter. Hon erbjuder er också gratis kaffe efter måltiden.

7. Hur nöjd är du med servitrisens ursäkt samt förklaring?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8. Hur nöjd är du med kompensationen ni fått?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Överlag, hur nöjd är du med denna upplevelse?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

<p>| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |</p>
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Survey 1: Service Delivery Failures, English Version

Hi!

We are two marketing students who are doing our last semester at Linnaeus University in Växjö. This survey is a part of our bachelor thesis with the aim to explain customer satisfaction within the service sector. The survey presents one scenario divided into three parts which takes place at a restaurant. Please, read the scenario carefully and then answer each questions that follows.

Participation in this survey is voluntary, however we gladly appreciate your attendance. All respondents will remain anonymous.

Thank you,
Nina Dijné (nd222ci@student.lnu.se)
Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)
The Scenario part  1/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario
You and a group of friends decide to try the new restaurant that has opened in town. You have booked a table at 7pm for you and your company tonight. You arrive to the restaurant at appointed time and an hostess welcomes you and directly shows you to your table and provides you with menus.

1. How satisfied are you in this situation?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1  2  3  4  5

2. How satisfied are you with the hostess in this situation?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1  2  3  4  5

3. How satisfied are you with the restaurants punctuality?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1  2  3  4  5
The Scenario part  2/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario
The waitress has taken your order and you and your company are hungrily waiting for your food. When visiting restaurants you are used to wait for the food for about 15 minutes. Now it has been 30 minutes and you have still not gotten your food or information regarding the delay from the employees.

4. How satisfied are you in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

5. How satisfied are you with the staff in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

6. How satisfied are you with the length of waiting in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

_______________________________________________________
The Scenario part  3/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario
After 30 minutes your waitress comes to your table and sincerely apologizes for the delayed food, explaining that a kitchen equipment suddenly broke. The waitress provides you with some snack for free and explain that your food will be ready in just a couple of minutes. She also offers you free coffee after your meal.

7. How satisfied are you with the apology and the explanation given by the waitress?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

8. How satisfied are you with the compensation in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

9. Overall, how satisfied are you with this experience?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5
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Hej!

Vi är två marknadsföringsstudenter som studerar vår sista termin på Linnéuniversitetet i Växjö. Denna enkät är en del av vår C-uppsats med syftet att förklara kundtillfredsställelse inom serviceindustrin. Enkäten presenterar ett scenario i tre delar som tar plats i en restaurangmiljö. Läs scenariot noga och svara sedan på frågorna som följer.

Det är frivilligt att delta i enkäten men vi uppskattar gladeligen ert deltagande. Alla deltagare kommer förbli anonyma.

Tack,
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Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)

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Scenario del 1/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd

Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

MISSNÖJD: När resultatet av en service inte når upp till dina förväntningar.
NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÄN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.
Scenariot
Du och dina vänner har bestämt er för att prova den nya restaurangen som har öppnat i stan. Du har bokat bord klockan 19 för dig och ditt sällskap ikväll. Ni ankommer till restaurangen på utsatt tid och värden välkomnar er och visar er direkt till ert bord och ger er menyer.

1. Hur nöjd är du i denna situation?  
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

2. Hur nöjd är du med värden i denna situation?  
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

3. Hur nöjd är du med restaurangens punktlighet i denna situation?  
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5
Scenario del 2/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

MISSNÖJD: När resultatet av en service inte når upp till dina förväntningar.
NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÄN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenario

4. Hur nöjd är du i denna situation
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. Hur nöjd är du med personalen i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. Hur nöjd är du med din maträtt i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
Scenario del 3/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd

Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

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NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÄN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenariot

Servitrisen ber uppriktigt om ursäkt och förklarar att hon glömt att berätta för kocken om utbytet av ingrediensen. Hon går direkt tillbaka till kocken och frågar om utbytet är möjligt, därefter informerar hon dig att det inte är möjligt att byta ut den ingrediens som du inte tål från maträtten du har beställt. Hon rekommenderar och erbjuder dig en annan rätt från menyn som går bra för dig att äta, hon förklarar även att du inte kommer behöva betala för din mat.

7. Hur nöjd är du med servitrisens ursäkt samt förklaring?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

8. Hur nöjd är du med kompensationen ni fått?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

9. Överlag, hur nöjd är du med denna upplevelse?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

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Hi!

We are two marketing students who are doing our last semester at Linnaeus University in Växjö. This survey is a part of our bachelor thesis with the aim to explain customer satisfaction within the service sector. The survey presents one scenario divided into three parts which takes place at a restaurant. Please, read the scenario carefully and then answer each question that follows.

Participation in this survey is voluntary, however we gladly appreciate your attendance. All respondents will remain anonymous.

Thank you,
Nina Dijnér (nd222ci@student.lnu.se)
Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)

The Scenario part  1/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted

Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.
The Scenario
You and a group of friends decide to try the new restaurant that has opened in town. You have booked a table at 7pm for you and your company tonight. You arrive to the restaurant at appointed time and an hostess welcomes you and directly shows you to your table and provides you with menus.

1. How satisfied are you in this situation?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1    2    3    4    5

2. How satisfied are you with the hostess in this situation?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1    2    3    4    5

3. How satisfied are you with the restaurants punctuality?
   Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

   1    2    3    4    5
The Scenario part 2/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted

Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario

You want to order a dish that contains an ingredient that you cannot eat, and therefore requests to replace that ingredient with another one that you prefer. The waitress takes your order and serves your table. You notice that your dish still contain the ingredient that you cannot eat and tell the waitress.

4. How satisfied are you in this situation?

Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

5. How satisfied are you with the staff in this situation?

Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

6. How satisfied are you with your dish in this situation?

Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5
The Scenario part  3/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The scenario
The waitress sincerely apologizes explaining that she forgot to tell the chef about the ingredient replacement. She goes directly back to the chef to ask if the replacement of the ingredient is possible and then informs you that it is not possible to change the ingredient in the dish you ordered. She recommends and provides another dish from the menu which is okay for you to eat and tells you that you will not be charged for your food.

7. How satisfied are you with the apology and the explanation given by the waitress?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

8. How satisfied are you with the compensation in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5

9. Overall, how satisfied are you with this experience?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1  2  3  4  5
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Hej!

Vi är två marknadsföringsstudenter som studerar vår sista termin på Linnéuniversitetet i Växjö. Denna enkät är en del av vår C-uppsats med syftet att förklara kundtillfredsställelse inom serviceindustrin. Enkäten presenterar ett scenario i tre delar som tar plats i en restaurangmiljö. Läs sceneriet noga och svara sedan på frågorna som följer.

Det är frivilligt att delta i enkäten men vi uppskattar gladeligen ert deltagande. Alla deltagare kommer förbli anonyma.

Tack,
Nina Dijnér (nd222ci@student.lnu.se)
Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)

Scenario del 1/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd

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Scenariot

Du och dina vänner har bestämt er för att prova den nya restaurangen som har öppnat i stan. Du har bokat bord klockan 19 för dig och ditt sällskap ikväll. Ni ankommer till restaurangen på utsatt tid, värden välkomnar er och visar er direkt till ert bord och ger er menyer.

1. Hur nöjd är du i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1   2   3   4   5

2. Hur nöjd är du med värden i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1   2   3   4   5

3. Hur nöjd är du med restaurangens punktlighet i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

   1   2   3   4   5
Scenario del 2/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
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MER ÅN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenariot
Under kvällens gång så märker du att servitrisen beter sig oprofessionellt och otrevligt. Ert bord får ytterst lite uppmärksamhet från i jämförelse med andra bord och deras sällskap. När servitrisen serverar er visar hon inget intresse, frågar inte hur maten smakade, frågar inte heller om ni önskar mer att dricka och dukar inte av era tallrikar förrän ni ber servitrisen att göra detta.

4. Hur nöjd är du i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|

5. Hur nöjd är du med personalen i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|

6. Hur nöjd är du med hur du blir behandlad i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
Scenario del 3/3

Definition av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd
Vänligen läs definitionerna av Missnöjd, Nöjd och Mer än nöjd noggrant för att kunna svara på frågorna på ett så precis sätt som möjligt.

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NÖJD: När resultatet av en service matchar dina förväntningar.
MER ÅN NÖJD: När resultatet av en service överträffar dina förväntningar.

Scenariot
Servitrisen ber upprättigt om ursäkt och erkänner att hon inte gett ert bord tillräckligt med uppmärksamhet denna kväll och förklarar att hon har varit stressad. Servitrisen försäkrar dig om att det inte kommer hända igen och att hon framöver ska tänka på hur hon agerar i stressiga situationer. Hon avslutar därför med att fråga om det finns något mer hon kan stå till tjänst med denna kväll.

7. Hur nöjd är du med servitrisens ursäkt samt förklaring?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

8. Hur nöjd är du med servitrisens löfte om förbättring i denna situation?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

1 2 3 4 5

9. Överlag, hur nöjd är du med denna upplevelse?
Vänligen ta ställning till frågan på den 5-gradiga skalan där; 1 = Missnöjd, 3 = Nöjd, 5 = Mer än nöjd

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Survey 3: Unprompted and unsolicited employee actions, English Version

Hi!

We are two marketing students who are doing our last semester at Linnaeus University in Växjö. This survey is a part of our bachelor thesis with the aim to explain customer satisfaction within the service sector. The survey presents one scenario divided into three parts which takes place at a restaurant. Please, read the scenario carefully and then answer each questions that follows.

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Thank you,

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Jennifer Claesson (jc222gz@student.lnu.se)

The Scenario part 1/3

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SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.
The Scenario
You and a group of friends decide to try the new restaurant that has opened in town. You have booked a table at 7pm for you and your company tonight. You arrive to the restaurant at appointed time and an hostess welcomes you and directly shows you to your table and provides you with menus.

1. How satisfied are you in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1   2   3   4   5

2. How satisfied are you with the hostess in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1   2   3   4   5

3. How satisfied are you with the restaurants punctuality?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1   2   3   4   5
The Scenario part  2/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
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SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario
During the evening you notice that the waitress acts unprofessionally and rude. Your table gets minimal attention by the waitress in comparison to other tables. When the waitress serves you, she shows no interest, does not care to ask how your food tasted, not asking if you would like more to drink and she does not clear the table until you have to ask for it yourself.

4. How satisfied are you in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1 2 3 4 5

5. How satisfied are you with the staff in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1 2 3 4 5

6. How satisfied are you with the way you are treated in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

1 2 3 4 5
The Scenario part 3/3

Definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted
Please read the definition of Dissatisfied, Satisfied and Delighted carefully in order to be able to answer the questions as fairly as possible.

DISSATISFIED: When your expectations of a service exceeds the outcome of it.
SATISFIED: When your expectations of a service precisely match the outcome of it.
DELIGHTED: When the outcome of a service exceeds your expectations about it.

The Scenario
The waitress sincerely apologizes and admits that she has not payed enough attention to your table this evening and explains that she has been under stress. The waitress ensures you that this will not happen again and that she from now on will think about how she acts in stressful situations. She therefore finishes with asking you if there is something else she can do for you this evening.

7. How satisfied are you with the apology and the explanation given by the waitress?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

8. How satisfied are you with the waitress promise for future improvements in this situation?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted

9. Overall, how satisfied are you with this experience?
Please take a stand on the liquid scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 5 = Delighted
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Appendix B – Foundation to Survey Scenarios

Have you, as a restaurant guest, ever experienced a service delivery failure?
One respondent said that she had gotten rare chicken once which was not what she expected. Another respondent said that sometimes hygienical failures had came across and explained that he has had negative experiences with hair shaft in the food. A third respondent brought up the discussion about cold food which she argued being unpleasant. Then the group discussed issues which concerns delays in the restaurant when they had to wait for a unacceptable long time, a problem which most of the participant could relate to. One respondent added that it is disappointing to find out that the dish that you have decided on is unavailable for some reason, especially disappointing when the waitress already took the order and then comes back to tell you that the dish is finished.

How did the restaurant recover the failures that happened?
One participant explained that he once went to a burger restaurant where one person in his company did not get the burger which the person had ordered, he said that the staff tried to recover it by offer to add the ingredients which was missing from the burger, which the person actually ordered, to the burger he got instead of preparing a totally new one. That felt unprofessional and that the staff just wanted to get rid of the problem as fast as possible. The focus group agreed that such situations, which gives the guest a feeling of guilt, is the worst ones and refereed to recovery situations where the waiter or waitress explains that they can replace your food but that it will take time and that it is quite troublesome for the restaurant, even if the fault were on them. One participant had experienced a similar situation and added that sometimes the staffs’ look show that they are thinking “you are an annoying guest right now”. However, one respondent had experienced a pleasant recovery when he thought the chicken was rare inside, he told the employee who explained that is actually was not, but the participant was asked if he wanted a new plate anyway which he got directly, without additional expenses. The respondent stated that this was a good recovery since the employee listened to him and changed his food even if it may not have been any trouble with it.
What type of recovery would you like to get in the situations you have discussed?
The respondents agreed that if a guest gets wrong or cold food, the dish should be replaced directly with a whole new one. One employee said that she once had experienced a service failure at a restaurant which the employee recovered in a very good way during that point, when the participant then came back to the restaurant another day, the employee remembered them and offered free food this day too. The respondents explained that that was a very good service recovery, indicating that the restaurant are careful with their reputation and tries to please every customer in the best way to keep a positive reputation. All respondents agreed that as a customer, one will not have to fight for a fair recovery, but want the employees to offer a recovery themselves. The respondents discussed that if being compensated with a free drink, dessert or similar, the satisfaction level increases. They said that a small compensation like that is not costly for the restaurant. One participant said that she fancy a restaurant even more if she gets things for free when a failure occurs, she stated that this can make her even more satisfied than before, she further argue that if the employee only corrects the failure without giving her any extra, she will be satisfied but not overly satisfied. One participant joined the discussion and suggested recovery actions such as compensations, discounts and free food.

Have you as a restaurant guest ever experienced that the employees failed to respond to your customer needs and requests?
One respondent explained that she is gluten intolerant and has experienced restaurants that cannot offer gluten free alternatives. Another respondent stated that she also used to be sensitive to gluten and had experienced lack of gluten free alternatives in some restaurants. A third respondent joined the discussion, explaining she had dinner with her pregnant friend at a restaurant where the friend wanted a pasta dish without any chili in it. The waiter listened to the request of excluding chili from the dish and took their order, however when she received the food some other ingredients from the dish had gone missing too. The respondent stated that she understood that some ingredients are not possible to remove from a dish, the chili might have been a core ingredient that was already included in the pasta sauce which makes it difficult to change or remove. She further explained that those things needs to be explained by the employee so the customer do not get an unpleasant surprise when the food comes in and the other respondents agreed. Another respondent explained that she was not allergic to anything
or had a special diet, however she does not like onions and usually order meals with the request of excluding onions where she sometimes gets a dish with onions anyway. She further state that it is absolutely not as severe if a restaurant fails to deliver an onion-free dish to her since she can eat it, in comparison if someone with allergies receives a dish which includes the wrong ingredient. However it is still a disappointment. Another respondent suddenly remembers a restaurant scenario where a vegetarian sitting at the table next to hers received his vegetarian spring rolls, took a few bites and then realized that the dish was in fact not vegetarian. The waitress sincerely apologized but the guest and his friends walked out of the restaurant. Two of the respondents had visited a restaurant together once were they asked the waitress if the food was spicy, since they did not enjoy too spicy food. The waitress had answered that the dish was not spicy and the two respondents ordered the dish but noticed that it was too spicy for them to eat, and since they had asked the waitress about it before, they got unsure about if it was themselves who were weak when it comes to spicy food or if it was the waitress who had told them wrong. Due to their unsureness they did not take the risk to ask if they got the wrong dish. Another respondent explained a scenario where he had been to a restaurant with his gluten intolerant girlfriend but she was still served a dish that contained gluten. This resulted in that the restaurant had to make her a new, gluten free, dish from scratch which was served 30 minutes after the first dish so that the respondent then already had finished his before his girlfriend got her dish.

How did the restaurant recover from the failure?
The respondent who is gluten intolerant states that sometimes the restaurant solves the problem quite good and sometimes you just get boring food like a salad and still have to pay the same price or even more. The respondent further state that she has never experienced a discount in price even though a large part of the dish is often gone when ordering a gluten free dish. Two other respondents starts to talk about a restaurant they both have gone to where the employees successfully managed to respond to customer needs in terms of adding for example portabello mushroom or halloumi to the dish instead of meat or gluten. The respondent who explained the scenario when a restaurant failed to provide his girlfriend with a gluten free meal, resulting in a 30 minutes extra wait for her dish, further stated that the restaurant compensated with a new dish and also reduced the price. This recovery was argued to not making up for the loss of time during their restaurant visit and the fact that they had to eat their dishes in turns.
What type of recovery would you like to get in the situations discussed?
It is discussed that the restaurant should go about to replace the excluded ingredient with something else that compensate for the loss in the dish. The respondent who is gluten intolerant adds that she would appreciate if the employees told her if the price of the dish would be more expensive in that case so it won’t come as a surprise. Another respondent agrees and state that restaurant employees should also go about explaining for the customer what the dish will look like if excluding a particular ingredient. Hence, referring back to her example of when her pregnant friend did not want chili in the pasta dish which resulted in getting a completely new dish of pasta. In the scenario where a restaurant failed to provide a gluten free meal to the respondents girlfriend, resulting in a 30 minutes extra wait for her dish, one respondent argued that it would be better if the restaurant offered them both new dishes or at least to keep the other dish warm in the meantime while they prepared the new, gluten free dish. Hence, giving the customers a chance to still eat their meal together.

Have you, as a restaurant guest, ever experienced unprompted and unsolicited employee actions?
One respondent said that she do not like the situation which appears when the employee ask for the order and she has not yet decided what to eat, because then she often experience that the waiter or waitress waits too long to come back to the table and ask again. Another respondent joined the discussion and said that it is annoying when you have to wait too long for the employee’s attention and seek eye contact with him or her. It was argued that the experience is better if the employee shows a lot of attention to the guest. One participant said that employees could be better at understanding customers’ behaviour in such situations, e.g. find out if the guests are reading the menu still or not. One respondent said that some employees can feel a bit rude when she express that she cannot eat gluten, and that the employee does not know what that is, which means that she as a guest has to teach the employee something he or she should know about. It was hence discussed that some employees behave unprofessional. Once this respondent visited an italian restaurant and asked for gluten free pasta and the employee answered “No one eats pasta without gluten in Italy!” which was believed being a very strangely expression. Another respondent joined the discussion and said that this could be seen as one type of discrimination since the employee discriminated the guest’s request for a gluten free dish. The same respondent said that it sometimes could feel discriminating
when employees at restaurants used a too professional language which could make a fool of the guest, especially in situations where the employee explains wines. However, most of the respondents would most likely not complain to such failures, instead they would not give any extra tip and they would not come back to the same restaurant. One participant said that she might have complained, especially if the employees had been very rude. She said that she would have taken that confrontation with the waiter or waitress directly.

**How did the restaurant recover from the failure?**
Since none of the respondents had ever complained to such failures, they did not have any experiences regarding it.

**What type of recovery would you like to get in the situations discussed?**
The participants agreed that an apology would be a suitable recovery action in these situations. It was discussed that employees must always act professional and therefore swallow their own pride and give the guest a worthy apology. One participant said that if another employee would have seen or noticed the bad behaviour of his or her colleague, that employee could offer to replace the employee who behaved badly. Another participant said that it would feel good to know that the restaurant would improve their flaws in the future.