How a group service failure at a restaurant turns into an individual dissatisfaction? A scenario-based experiment#

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:
Group Service Failure,
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Emotional Contagion,
Dissatisfaction,
Restaurants

When it comes to service failures, restaurants are one of the most experienced one in the tourism and hospitality businesses. High level of service interaction and presence of other consumers in a groups of different size make the failures more complicate. Customers whose service expectation is not meet inform other group members through their negative emotions and may lead to a similar change in the emotions of others. Therefore, dealing with service failure requires more inclusive perspective. In this context, the main purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between service failure and dissatisfaction from the point of group service interaction. To that end, this study aims to investigate the effect of the negative emotions and emotional contagion on the perceived service failure and dissatisfaction. To collect data scenario-based experiment was applied through both online and face to face survey. Based on 1437 scenario based questionnaire structural equation modeling analysis was performed. Results show that the dominant factor effecting their service failure perception is the feeling of disappointment rather than anger in group failures. Emotional contagion is also effective on service failure perception. Neither negative emotions nor contagion has direct effect on dissatisfaction. That is, consumers' dissatisfaction feelings occur if they support their emotional reactions with their cognitive assessments of service failure.

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1. Introduction

From the perspective of consumption, the main underlying motivation behind purchasing and consuming is to reach an inner psychological and physiological balance by meeting the needs (Koç, Aydın, Akdeniz-Ar & Boz, 2017, p. 42). Similarly, for businesses, the main reason for selling and providing services is to reach a balance while gaining profit and maintaining their own economic assets. However, service failures in the consumption process cause negative economic and social interactions between consumers and businesses (Smith, Bolton & Wagner, 1999: 357; Koç, 2013, p. 3684), increasing consumer tension and dissatisfaction (Koç et al., 2017, p. 42). This further leads to negative behavioral tendencies among consumers such as talking negatively about businesses, complaining as well as low revisit intention (Richins, 1982, p. 502; Oliver, 1993, p. 418; McAlister & Erffmeyer, 2003, p. 342). As the Prospect Theory proposed by Kahneman and

Tversky suggest, individuals value losses more than gains. Therefore, the negative emotions of consumers that result from poor services are greater than their happiness that results from satisfactory services (Koç, et al., 2017, p. 44).

Service failure is defined as service mishap and/or problems that occur during a consumer's service experience with a business. (Richins, 1982, p. 502; Maxham, 2001, p. 11). Although service-oriented businesses take precautions against potential problems, it is almost impossible to avoid service failures completely due to the characteristics of the service such as intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability (Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1988, p. 46; Maxham, 2001, p. 11; Koç, 2017, p. 1). When such interaction between people and services is very strong and tourism and hospitality businesses, which are mostly experienced with groups of different sizes, are in question (Wei, Miao, Cai & Adler, 2012, p. 764; Koç and Boz, 2014, p. 144), a more inclusive perspective

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than an individual perspective is required for service failure (Schanzel, 2010, pp. 555-556). Group service failure is described as a service that does not meet the expectations of all or most of the customers who experience "common consumption" and that causes complaints (Wei et al., 2012, p. 764; Du, Fan & Feng, 2014, p. 2; Du, Jang & Liu, 2019, pp. 217-218). If the service performance perceived by individuals is below expectations, this causes a feeling of dissatisfaction and leads to negative emotions (Chang, 2008, p. 113; Han and Back, 2008, p. 467; Mattila and Ro, 2008, p. 90; Koç et al., 2017, p. 43). As the severity of negative emotions increases, customers' satisfaction with service interaction gradually decreases (Smith and Bolton, 2002, p. 8; Chang, 2008, p. 113; Han and Back, 2008, p. 467).

The main reason why group service failure causes serious problems for businesses is the high level of interaction and emotional sharing among groups (Spoor and Kelly, 2004, p. 398). The presence of other consumers during the service consumption may have an influence on one's service evaluation due to interpersonal relationships (Huang et al., 2014, p. 182) and cause one to behave differently than when s/he are alone (Du et al., 2014, p. 2; Huang, et al., 2014, p. 182; Koç, 2016, p. 447). Customers who deem the service as inaccurate inform other group members about their negative emotions and may lead to a similar change in the emotions of other group members (Pugh, 2001, p. 1020; Du et al., 2014, p. 3). For this reason, while discussing the issue of group service failure, it is essential to consider inter-group emotional contagion in addition to the emotional reactions of consumers. Just as the perceived service quality gives insights into individuals' satisfaction and future consumption trends based on objective factors, aspects such as emotional reactions and transfer of emotions can provide information on the same variables based on sensory factors (Gracia, Bakker & Grau, 2011, p. 459).

The concept of emotional contagion, is -the act of transferring one's mood and emotions to the individuals next to him/her (Spoor and Kelly, 2004, p. 402). It explains how behavioral tendencies of individuals alter the within the groups (Barsade, 2002, p. 647; Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul & Gremler, 2006, p. 59; Du et al., 2014, p. 3). When people enter a group, they are explicitly exposed to other groups members' emotions which can be by the valence (positive or negative) of the emotion being displayed and the energy level with which the emotion is expressed (Barsade, 2002, p. 647).

Studies in the relevant literature point out that group interaction increases the severity of individuals' emotional responses (Wild, Erb & Bartels, 2001, p. 110; Becker, Tausch & Wagner, 2011, p. 1587). Du et al. (2019) examined the process of group emotional contagion based on service errors at restaurants and revealed that individuals with high levels of negative emotions in the group strongly affect those with low levels of negative emotions.

Restaurant businesses, which are an indispensable part of the tourism and hospitality industry, mostly serve groups (Du et al., 2014, p. 1). They are among the top businesses with the highest number of cases regarding service failures, negative emotional reactions and the contagiousness of these reactions (Mattila, 1999, p. 285). For restaurant businesses, service errors in group service indicate multiple emotional changes that are far more serious and are not easy to deal with than service errors involving individual customers (Du et al., 2014, p. 1). Understanding the emotional state of consumers in the service process, so to say, means understanding their overall evaluations and satisfaction for the service (Kuo and Wu, 2012, p. 128). From this standpoint, this present study seeks to explore the relationship between emotional responses, perceived service failure and dissatisfaction from with reference to restaurant group service errors. To that end, it examines the effect of negative emotions and the emotional contagion on the perceived service failure and service dissatisfaction.

The literature review shows that there has been limited research on emotional reactions and emotional contagion in regard to service failure in groups and examine their effect on consumer dissatisfaction (Bonifield and Cole, 2007; Mattila and Ro, 2008; Du et al., 2011; Yang and Mattila, 2012; Du et al., 2014; Huang, et al., 2014; Maher and Sobh, 2014; Du, et al., 2019). A significant number of the studies in the literature have overlooked the variable of emotional contagion and only focused on the effects of emotional reactions on variables such as service failure and satisfaction/dissatisfaction, mostly based on the perception of individual failure (Du et al., 2019, p. 218). Nevertheless, restaurants are often among the businesses where group service and service interaction the most (Huang, et al, 2014, p. 181; Du et al., 2014, p. 1). On the other hand, numerous studies on restaurants in the literature discussed a single service problem based on service failure scenarios (Ok, Back & Shanklin, 2007; Ha and

Jang, 2009; Söderlund and Rosengren, 2010; Du et al., 2011; Kwon and Jang, 2012; Yang and Mattila, 2012; Huang et. al., 2014; Zhou, Tsang, Huang & Zhou, 2014; Kim, Miao & Magnini, 2016). This study collected its data with a scenario based survey where a multi-service error affects all members of a group of six in an à la carte restaurant. Thus, this study will potentially add new insights to the literature on tourism and service marketing.

2. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

Effect of Negative Emotional Reactions on Perceived Service Failure and Service Dissatisfaction

Emotional reactions are an integral part of everyday life (Vijayalakshmi and Bhattacharyya, 2012, p. 363) and affect behaviors and it is sometimes possible to control them and sometimes not (Odabaşı and Barış, 2015, p. 183). In simple terms, emotions can be defined as "the reflection of one's mood as a result of a state that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or one's own thoughts" (Bagozzi, Gopinath & Nyer, 1999, pp. 184-185). Individuals' emotional responses contain feelings of positivity (happiness, joy, appreciation, satisfaction) and negativity (regret, anger, boredom, fear, etc.) rather than neutral information (Koç, 2016, p. 303). Negative emotional reactions affect individuals' thinking, judgment and other behaviors (Boshoff, 2012, p. 401), and are accompanied by physical indicators such as an increase in blood pressure, accelerated heartbeat, pale skin, shaking hands and tremor, etc. (Koç, 2016, p. 304). Emotional reactions are also a key resource to provide information about service interaction and outcomes in relation to consumer behavior (Mattila and Enz, 2002, pp. 270-271). According to previous studies, emotional reactions lead to a wide variety of consumer behaviors (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006, p. 50). The literature on consumer behavior shows that negative emotional reactions have been mostly discussed in the context of their effects on perceived service failure, service quality, dis/satisfaction, complaint behavior and behavioral intention. On their study on the relationship between service dissatisfaction, anger, and various complaint behaviors, Bougie, Pieters & Zeelenberg (2003) found a moderately significant correlation between anger and service dissatisfaction (r = .510, p≤0.001). They also reported that anger significantly affected the tendency of individuals to convey their complaints to the business (ß= .546, p≤0.001). Bonifield and Cole (2007), in their research based on a service failure scenario related to a delayed delivery, indicated that anger

positively affected the complaint intention of the customers (ß = .418, p≤.01), and had a negative significant impact (ß= .302, p≤.01) on positive behavioral consumption tendencies. They further revealed that the feeling of regret did not have a significant effect on both dependent variables (ß= .410, p=.20). Mattila and Ro (2008) carried out a study based on a scenario on restaurant service and found that feeling of anger significantly affected the tendency of customers to forward their complaints to the business (ß= .135, p≤0.01).

Han, Back & Barrett (2009) also reported that customers' feelings of anger significantly and negatively affected their perceived service satisfaction (ß= -.510, p≤0.01). Similarly, Han and Jeong (2013) determined that feeling of anger among participants that results from poor restaurant services negatively and significantly affected their satisfaction (ß= -.451, p≤0.01). Maher and Sobh (2014) examined the relationship between the collective anger of customers who experienced service failure in groups, employee and perceived cultural distance as well as recommendations. They concluded that the anger of the individuals who perceived high levels of service failure significantly differed from that of those who perceived low levels of service failure ($\bar{x}$ =3.70 / $\bar{x}$=3.33, p≤0.01). Song and Qu (2017) studied with a sample of 435 ethnic restaurant customers and ascertained that the negative feelings perceived by the participants during their service experiences negatively and significantly affected their service satisfaction (ß= -.251, p≤0.001). Cho, Jang & Kim (2017) investigated a scenario involving beverage spills to explore the mediating role of severity of service failure between emotions and dissatisfaction and found out that both regret (ß= .312 p≤0.01) and frustration (ß= .323 p≤0.001) had a significant impact on dissatisfaction. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Negative emotions (anger & disappointment) resulted from service errors have a significant and positive impact on perceived service failure.

H2: Negative emotions (anger & disappointment) resulted from service errors have a significant and positive impact on service dissatisfaction.

Effect of Emotional Contagion on Perceived Service Failure and Service Dissatisfaction

Individuals tend to share their thoughts, personal values, and feelings with the groups they are in (Vijayalakshmi and Bhattacharyya, 2012, p. 364). Emotional contagion is one of the concepts that explain this act, which individuals perform

sometimes explicitly and consciously and sometimes unconsciously. Emotional contagion refers to "the process by which a person or group influences the emotions or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioral attitudes" (Schoenewolf, 1990, p. 50). Emotional contagion has been considered to be a multilevel phenomenon because emotional expressions of one individual produce a corresponding experience in the other person (Vijayalakshmi and Bhattacharyya, 2012, p. 364). It can be defined in more detail as "the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures and movements with those of another person's and to converge emotionally." (Hatfield, Cacioppo, Rapson, 1993, p. 96). This three step process of emotion transfer also forms the basis of the emotional contagion theory (Hatfield et al., 1993, pp. 96-99; Wild, Erb and Bartels, 2001, p. 110; Barsade, 2002, pp. 647-648). To summarize, emotional contagion theory explains a process in which people are collectively influenced by psycho-physical, cognitive, behavioral and social decision-making processes (Cakici and Guler, 2017, p. 147).

Fig 1. Group Emotional Contagion Model
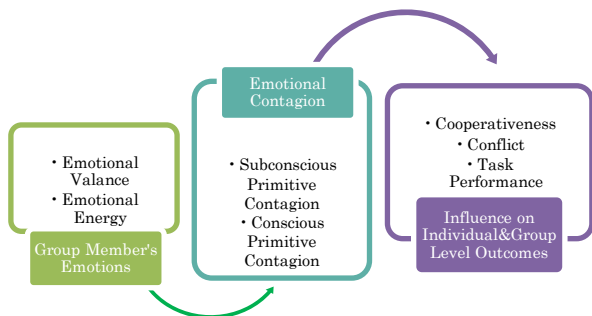
Source: Barsade, 2002.

Groups of different sizes are where emotion transfers specified in the definition of emotional contagion are experienced most commonly and intensely. Genetic codes, gender, previous experiences and personal characteristics are the main factors that affect the tendency to experience emotional contagion (Doherty, 1997, pp. 133-134; Hatfield et al., 2014, pp. 165-166). Besides, variables such as the number of individuals in the group (Du et al., 2014), degree of commitment to the group (Wei et al., 2012, p. 764; Boshoff, 2012, p. 403) and how close individuals in the group are (Du et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2014; López-López, Ruiz-de-Maya & Warlop, 2014) are important variables that affect the severity and direction of emotional responses and thus the extent of the contagion.

Studies in the literature indicate that positive and negative emotional contagion is addressed based on the interactions between both employee-customer and customer-customer and is a significant variable in terms of consumers' emotional reactions, perceived service failure, service quality, the tendency to complain, service satisfaction/dissatisfaction and behavioral tendencies. Barger and Grandey (2006) explored the impact of emotional contagion between customers and employees on service quality evaluations made by customers and their satisfaction from service interaction. Their analyses showed that employees' smile significantly and positively affected customers' smile (β=.370, p$\leq$0.05), that employee smiling significantly and positively affected the perceived service quality of customers (β=.140, p$\leq$0.05) and that perceived service quality significantly and positively mediated the relationship between employee smiling and service satisfaction (β=.510, p$\leq$0.05). In their research based on experimental scenarios, Söderlund and Rosengren (2010) found out that there is a significant difference between delivering service with a smiling facial expression and with a neutral facial expression in terms of customer satisfaction ($\bar{x}$=8.23/ $\bar{x}$=6.21, p$\leq$0.01). Wieseke, Geigenmüller & Kraus (2012) performed a study on empathy, one of the most important indicators of emotional contagion. Results show that empathy between employee and customer had a positive and significant mediating effect on customer satisfaction (β=.160, p$\leq$0.01).

Du et al., (2014) studied the relationship between emotional contagion and complaint intentions in group service failure and determined that group members were affected significantly and positively by the displays of anger by surrounding customers (β_{hotel}=.138, p$\leq$.001/$\beta_{restaurant}$=.607, p$\leq$.001), that customers in group service failure had significantly higher levels of anger than individual customers ($\bar{x}_{group}$=5.80/ $\bar{x}_{individual}$=5.14, p$\leq$0.001) and that customers in group service failure had significantly higher complaint intention than individual customers ($\bar{x}_{group}$=5.67/ $\bar{x}_{individual}$=4.31, p$\leq$0.001). Huang et al. (2014) explored the effect of others companion on complaint intentions when encountering service failure and indicated that customers encountering service failure had higher complaint intentions when they were with others than when alone ($\bar{x}_{others}$=5.80 / $\bar{x}_{alone}$=4.50, p$\leq$0.001). López-López et al. (2014) aimed to determine the relationship between negative emotional reactions and service satisfaction depending on the sharing of emotions with a stranger or a friend. They

concluded that perceived service quality and satisfaction significantly differed depending on tie strength ($\bar{x}_{stranger}$=3.56 / $\bar{x}_{friend}$=2.37, p≤.05) and no/sharing condition ($\bar{x}_{no\text{-}sharing}$=4.71 / $\bar{x}_{sharing}$=5.51, p≤.01) of negative emotions. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₃: Negative emotional contagion resulted from service failures has a positive and significant effect on perceived service failure.

H₄: Negative emotional contagion resulted from service failures has a positive and significant effect on perceived service dissatisfaction.

Effect of Perceived Service Failure on Service Dissatisfaction

The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) is the underlying theory behind the widespread understanding of customer satisfaction (Blodgett and Granbois, 1992, p. 93; Boote, 1998, p. 141; Smith et al., 1999, p. 357; Chang, Khan and Tsai, 2012, p. 602). Disconfirmation is an emotion that affects customer satisfaction when standards are not met (Oliver, 1981, p. 28). The EDT posits that satisfaction occurs as a result of subjective comparison of customers between the expected and perceived attribute levels regarding a product (Oh, 1999, p. 69; McCollough, Berry & Yadav, 2000, p. 121). If the performance of the product is above the expectations of the customer, positive disconfirmation occurs; if it meets their expectations, zero disconfirmation occurs, and if it is below their expectations, negative disconfirmation occurs (Oliver, 1980, pp. 460-462; Blodgett and Granbois, 1992, p. 94; McCollough et al., 2000, p. 121). The general assumption is the higher negative disconfirmation is, the higher the dissatisfaction would be; likewise, the higher the positive disconfirmation is, the higher the satisfaction would be (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987, p. 338; McCollough et al., 2000, p. 122).

Research in the literature have repeatedly shown the linear correlation between perceived service quality and satisfaction through the data obtained from restaurant customers (Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000; Yüksel and Yüksel, 2003; Pedraja-Iglesias and Jesus Yagüe Guillén, 2004; Tam, 2004; Ha and Jang, 2010; Ryu and Han, 2010; Naghizadeh, 2019). Some studies measured the variable of service quality as the perception or severity of service failure and revealed its effects on service satisfaction/dissatisfaction based on service failure scenarios and critical incident techniques (McDougall and Levesque, 1998; Mattila, 1999; Smith et al., 1999; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002; McQuilken and Robertson, 2011; Yang and

Mattila, 2012; Cho et al., 2017). This study is intended to measure the perceived service failure of the participants based on their evaluations on failure in relation to the dimensions of service quality; reliability, responsiveness, trust and empathy. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5: Perceived service failure has a positive and significant impact on service dissatisfaction.

3. Methodology

Research Model

The model of the study has field experimental design. Field experiment implies to determine cause-effect relationships through the data produced in the natural environment under the control of the researcher (Sekeran, 1992, p. 126; Karasar 2014, p. 87). Experimenatal designs allow researcher to manipulate variables and control nuisance affects (Sekeran, 1992, p. 120). Since the study data collection process has some restriction such as following non probability sampling, the model could be called as quasi-experimental just like the studies performed by Blodgett, Hill and Tax (1997), Smith et al., (1999), Mattila and Patterson (2004), Wirtz and Mattila, (2004) and Kim and Jang (2014). In this study, scenario based experiment was used to quantitatively test the research hypotheses to understand the relationships between the perceived negative emotional reactions, emotional contagion, service failure and dissatisfaction of the restaurant customers who experience service errors in groups. The approach of collecting data through scenarios allows an easier, more inclusive, representative, ethical and systematic research on the relevant subject, compared to retrospective research approaches (Smith et al., 1999, p. 362; Smith and Bolton, 2002, p. 10; Ha and Jang, 2009, p. 323).

Scenario Development and Data Collection Instrument

First, a service failure scenario including multi-service failure and group interaction was developed. To develop scenario, previous studies collected data via a restaurant service failure are reviewed. Then, group service failures experienced by 167 people in à la carte restaurants were collected by using an unstructured interview forms. Lastly focus group interview was carried out with graduate students, consumers and restaurant owners in order to finalize scenario. The scenario consists of multi-service errors encountered by all members of a group of six during dinner in an à la carte restaurant (See Appendix 1.).

The first section of the questionnaire consists of 11 items to measure negative emotional reactions of the participants after the service failure. Items were adapted from the previous studies of Kalamas, Laroche and Makdessian (2008), Mattila and Ro (2008), Du, et al., (2011) and Du et al., (2014). All items were measured with five point Likert-type scales where 1=not at all and 5=very much. Second section of the questionnaire is composed of 6 items to measure participant's emotional contagions. The first group of three items (in-group contagion) were taken from study of Du et al. (2014) and the second group of three items (individual contagion intention) were taken from study of Du et al. (2011). All items were measured with five point Likert-type scales where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. The third section of questionnaire consists of 5 items to understand participant's service quality perception. Items serve for the measurement of service quality dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, trust and empathy except for physical assets as there was no manipulation for this dimension in the scenario. The items were compiled from the studies of Cronin et al. (2000), Han et al. (2008) and Kwortnik and Han (2011). All items were measured with five point Likert-type scales where 1=very bad and 5=very good. During the statistical analysis, items were reverse coded and turned into perceived service failure. The fourth section involves 3 items to measure overall service satisfaction. The items gathered from the studies of Oliver, Rust and Varki (1997); Mattila (1999), McCollough et al. (2000), Sparks and Fredline (2007) and Kwortnik and Han (2011). All three items were measured with five point Likert-type scales where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. During the statistical analysis, items converted into the scale of service dissatisfaction by means of reverse coding. The fifth section of the questionnaire includes 7 items to determine whether failures in the scenario were found realistic. Manipulation check items were adapted from previous scenario-based studies (Mattila, 1999; McColl-Kennedy, Daus and Sparks, 2003; Hess, Ganesan, Klein, 2003; Patterson, Cowley, Prasongsukarn, 2006; Ok et al., 2007; Zhou et al., 2014; Weber et al., 2014). The sixth and the last section of the questionnaire is composed of 8 items to solicit information on the respondent's demographic characteristics and dining experiences.

Research Sample and Data Collection Process
The research population are all á la carte restaurant customers in Turkey. As it is not possible to reach out all individuals in a population in terms of time, material resources and human resources, it is essential to perform sampling and to identify sampling method (Karasar, 2014, p. 111). The research sampling was determined based on two steps. The first step included a total of 21.417 people who are faculty members and graduate students at various faculties in state and private universities. The second step included the participants who reside in Mersin, Turkey, to the sampling. To identify the individuals in this sampling to participate in this study, convenience sampling method was used. The questionnaires were administered in two steps. An electronic questionnaire system was designed for faculty members and students and sent to the sample of 21.417 people electronically. A total of 689 usable surveys were collected by June 28th, 2016. All of the surveys collected electronically were completely filled in by the participants and no questions were left blank. Further, a total of 778 usable questionnaires were collected through face-to-face contact in Mersin between May 25th and June 29th, 2016. Consequently, 1.467 surveys were collected in total from these two survey applications.

Reliability and Validity
The data were first examined through multivariate outlier analysis and multi normal distribution analysis (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2010, pp. 42-44). According to the results of the outlier analysis, 30 surveys were removed from the data set and the number of the usable surveys decreased to 1.437. Prior to the descriptive and hypothesis-testing analyses, the reliability and validity of the data was tested. The only problem about the reliability scores was pertained to the item numbered 6 in emotional contagion scale ("the provocative expressions of my friends irritate me"). The reliability score of the scale increased after the relevant item was removed from the scale. As a result, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were found respectively 0,913 for negative emotional reactions; 0,790 for negative emotional contagion; 0,830 for perceived service failure and 0,823 for service dissatisfaction. Following the basic reliability analyses, various analyses on validity were performed on variables. These analyses were convergent, discriminant and structural validity analyses (Şencan, 2005, p. 742; Sekeran and Bougie, 2013, p. 226).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were carried out to test structural validity. Four different factor

analyses were performed for each variable. For the EFA, it was required that factor loadings and communalities were higher than 0,50 (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2010, p. 119) and threshold value for overlapping were no less than 0,100, and the significance of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser Meyer Olkin test was considered (Hair et al., 2010, p. 104). Based on the results of the EFA, the item numbered 1 "stressful" in the scale of negative emotional reactions and the item numbered 5 "I am very keen to capture the emotional changes of other people." in the scale of emotional contagion were removed from the scales as they had quite low communalities scores. There

was no problematic item regarding other variables. Table 1 presents the detailed statistics of the exploratory factor analyses.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to assess the overall model fit and validity of the measurement model (see Table 2.). For CFA, it was required that the standardized factor loadings for each item was 0.50 or above and that the error variance was below 0.90 and each dimension consisted of at least 3 items (Şimşek, 2007, p. 86; Çokluk et al., 2010, pp. 277-284; Hair et al., 2010, pp. 695-709). Furthermore, for all five constructs, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) estimates were calculated to find

Table 1. The results of the EFA

Factors	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Eigenvalues	$\bar{x}$	Explained Variance %	Alpha
Disappointment Emotional Responses (DER)			3.591	3.73	35.914	0.873
11.Ignored	0.829	0.706		3.91		
4.Contemptful	0.765	0.625		3.44		
10.Upset	0.724	0.655		3.57		
3.Disapointed	0.717	0.570		3.78		
7.Regretful	0.671	0.555		4.05		
9.Distressed	0.636	0.627		3.68		
Anger Emotional Responses (AER)			3.113	3.16	31.131	.877
6.Enraged	0.843	0.804		3.24		
5.Hostile	0.842	0.735		2.59		
8.Irritated	0.840	0.782		3.13		
2.Angry	0.644	0.646		3.68		
Explained Variance= %67.045 , KMO= ,909, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= p≤0.01 Response categories: 1=not at all and 5=very much						
Emotional Contagion (EC)			2.437	4.03	60.934	0.790
1.People around me are having a heated discussion with sharp words.	0.787	0.619		4.14		
2.People around me look quite serious and angry.	0.793	0.628		3.62		
3.People around me frequently shake their heads to complain about the restaurant.	0.843	0.710		4.08		
4.I feel displeased when I see that someone is not in the mood.	0.693	0.480		4.28		
Explained Variance= %60.934 , KMO= ,755, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= p≤0.01 Response categories: 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree						
Service Failure Perception (SFP)*			2.983	4.15	59.658	0.830
1.Service speed failure	0.710	0.505		4.42		
2.Service individuation failure	0.826	0.683		4.20		
3.Staff appearance and manner failure	0.772	0.596		3.89		
4.Service professionalism failure	0.777	0.604		4.30		
5.Service reliability failure	0.771	0.595		3.92		
Explained Variance= %59.655 , KMO= ,844, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= p≤0.01 Response categories: 1=very good and 5=very bad						
Dissatisfaction (DIS)**			2.217	4.16	%73.91	0.823
1.Dissatisfaction of service quality	0.844	0.712		4.05		
2 Dissatisfaction of dining experience	0.869	0.756		4.34		
3.Dissatisfaction of meeting expectations	0.866	0.750		4.11		
Explained Variance= %63.363 , KMO= 0,718, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= p≤0.01 * Items are reverse coded and turned into failure statements. **Items are reverse coded and turned into dissatisfaction statements. Response categories 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree						

Source: Authors

Table 2. The results of the measurement model

Factor items	Std. Loadings	Error Variances	R²	t- values	AVE	CR
Anger Emotional Responses (AER)					0,65	0,88
2.Angry	0.75	0.44	0.56	32.29		
5.Hostile	0.75	0.43	0.57	32.40		
6.Enraged	0.88	0.23	0.77	40.45		
8.Irritated	0.83	0.31	0.69	37.32		
Disappointment Emotional Responses (DER)					0.58	0.84
7.Regretful	0.70	0.52	0.48	28.65		
9.Distressed	0.81	0.35	0.65	35.30		
10.Upset	0.82	0.33	0.67	35.93		
11.Ignored	0.69	0.52	0.48	28.38		
Emotional Contagion (EC)					0.54	0.80
1.People around me are having a heated discussion with sharp words.	0.69	0.53	0.47	26.28		
2.People around me look quite serious and angry.	0.80	0.37	0.53	31.10		
3.People around me frequently shake their heads to complain about the restaurant.	0.72	0.48	0.52	27.92		
Service Failure Perception (SFP)					0.50	0.83
1.Service speed	0.63	0.60	0.40	25.24		
2.Service individuation	0.77	0.40	0.60	33.00		
3.Staff appearance and manner	0.69	0.52	0.48	28.39		
4.Service professionalism	0.71	0.50	0.50	29.27		
5.Service reliability	0.72	0.49	0.51	29.61		
Dissatisfaction (DIS)					0.61	0.83
1.Dissatisfaction of service quality	0.78	0.40	0.60	32.81		
2 Dissatisfaction of dining experience	0.80	0.35	0.65	34.35		
3.Dissatisfaction of meeting expectations	0.76	0.43	0.57	31.60		

Measurement Model Fit: X²/df = 737,99/142=5,19, RMSEA = 0.056, SRMR = 0.044, RMR = 0.036, GFI = 0.95, AGFI=0.93, CFI=0.98, NFI = 0.98, Model CAIC vs Saturated CAIC = 1180.02 / 1571.36
Note: All factor loadings are significant at p < 0.01.

Source: Authors

out whether they exceeded the minimum threshold values or not (Hair et al., 2010: 709). The scales used in this study are reliable for measuring each construct. All standardized factor loadings of items were significant (p≤0,05), greater than the minimum threshold value of 0.50 and error variances were lower than the threshold value of 0.90 (Şimşek, 2007, p. 86; Çokluk et al., 2010, pp. 277-284; Hair et al., 2010, pp. 695-709).

In addition to composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) estimates exceeded the minimum value of 0.50 and 0.70 subsequently (Hair et al., 2010, pp. 709-710). These estimates indicated a satisfactory convergent validity for the study. The AVE value of each construct was greater than the squared correlation between any pair of constructs, which supports discriminant validity as well (Sekeran and Bougie, 2013, pp. 227-228; Hair et al., 2010, p. 710).

Table 3. AVE and squared correlations of paired constructs - Discriminant Validity

	$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev.	SFP	DIS	AER	DER	EC	AVE
SFP	4.15	.7206	1					0.50
DIS	4.16	.6450	0.4596	1				0.61
AER	3.16	.9481	0.2016	0.1310	1			0.65
DER	3.80	.8604	0.2704	0.1927	0.4225	1		0.58
EC	3.94	.7328	0.1062	0.0691	0.1169	0.1528	1	0.54
SFP: Service Failure Perception, DIS: Dissatisfaction, AER: Anger Emotional Response, DER: Disappointment Emotional Response, EC: Emotional Contagion.								
All squared correlations are significant at p < 0.01.								

Source: Authors

To evaluate goodness of fit of the model firstly the normalized Chi-Square statistics and RMSEA goodness of fit statistics were analyzed (Hair et al., 2010, p. 666; Şimşek, 2007, pp. 47-48). In addition to these estimation statistics, the congruence validity of the measurement model was examined in terms of other goodness of fit indices that consider or do not consider sample size, degrees of freedom in the model and complexity of the model, such as AGFI, GFI, RMR, SRMR, CFI, NFI, NNFI, IFI, RFI, CAIC (Şimşek, 2007, pp. 47-49). The results of the first confirmatory factor analysis revealed some problems regarding the problem due to high normalized Chi-Square statistics (above 7). The item numbered 3 (disappointed) and 4 (contemptful) in the scale of negative emotional reactions and the item numbered 4 (I feel displeased when I see that someone is not in the mood.) in the scale of emotional contagion were found similar to other items and thus modifications were suggested. Then, the relevant items were removed from the model and the analysis was conducted again. Consequently, the Chi-Square statistics decreased to 5.19 and the RMSEA statistics decreased to 0,056; yet, there was no significant modification suggestion in the model output. As a result, all estimates of model fit indices fell within an acceptable range except for slight exceeding for the normalized Chi-Square statistics (See Table 2). However, it is known that the Chi-Square goodness of fit is highly sensitive to sample size (Şimşek, 2007, p. 14; Yılmaz and Çelik, 2009, p. 39), and the Chi-square increases particularly when sample size is more than 750 (Hair et al., 2010, pp. 666-668). Hence, the overall model fit for the measurement model was acceptable.

4. Findings

The respondents' demographic profiles

Table 4 represent the distribution of the demographic characteristics of the participants. As seen, the distribution of gender and marital status of the participants was almost proportionally same. In terms of age, two groups were proportionally predominant; the group aged between 22-35, (55%) and the group aged between 36-50 (30.9%). Regarding the educational level and occupation of the participants, the number of the participants who have high educational level and work as public employees are high due to the selected sample. Most of the participants visit restaurants as a small group (90%) six and more times in a month (39,4). The last but not the least, consumers' overall service quality perception towards restaurant is average (59,0%).

4.2. Manipulation checks

Manipulation and realism issues of the scenarios are the key points for the reliability and validity of the research. The realism of the scenarios is also critical for face validity, content validity, and nomological validity (Ok et al., 2007, p. 679). Based on the answers given by the participants, it is clear that they find the service failure scenario realistic ($\bar{x}$=4.16±,713), they are very likely to experience similar thing in their daily life ($\bar{x}$=4.17±,769), they identify themselves with the people and event in the scenario ($\bar{x}$=4.08±,796) and they believe that a series of errors occur in the scenario affect all

Table 4. Demographic Profiles (n=1437)

| Variables			Variables		
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Occupation**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	713	49.8	Public official	987	69.0
Female	720	50.2	Employee	200	14.0
Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	Craftsman	55	3.8
Married	714	49.8	Retired	22	1.5
Single	719	50.2	Housewife	16	1.1
Ages	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency of visit**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
18-21	90	6.3	At least 1-2 in a month	409	28.6
22-35	787	55.0	3-5 times in a month	458	32.0
36-50	442	30.9	6 and more times in a month	563	39.4
51+	113	7.9	**Group size**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Education	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	2-6 people	1288	90.0
Primary education	18	1.3	7-11 people	132	9.2
High school	110	7.7	12 and above	11	0,8
College	84	5.9	**Rest. Quality Perception**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
University	378	26.4	Low	236	19.9
Postgraduate	842	58.8	Average	699	59.0
			High	248	21.1

Source: Authors

individuals in the group ($\bar{x}$=3.99±,796). Moreover, the participants found the importance ($\bar{x}$ =3.64±,868), severity ($\bar{x}$=3.43±,1,01) and size ($\bar{x}$ =3.13±,970) of the service failure moderate.

Hypotheses Testing

This study drew on structural equation modeling to test the hypotheses. The structural equation model is a statistical methodology that combines confirmatory factor analyses with path models, and allows one to make inferences about latent variables based on the information obtained from covariance between observed variables (Yılmaz and Çelik, 2009, p. 11). As the variable of negative emotional reactions was explained by the sub-dimensions of anger and frustration based on the results of the EFA and CFA, the hypotheses H1 and H2 were tested as sub-hypotheses. In order to test the hypotheses, a structural equation model path analysis was carried out through LISREL. The hypotheses tested with path analysis were discussed in terms of statistical significance, direction and degree of impact of the correlations between variables (Şimşek, 2007, p. 12; Yılmaz and Çelik, 2009, p. 20). Figure 2 presents the symbolic representation of the findings obtained from the path analysis. First, it was examined whether all the correlations between the variables were statistically significant in terms of t-statistics values. It was found out that the impact of the variables of AER, DER and EC on SFP and the impact of SFP on DIS were statistically significant whereas the impact of the variables of AER, DER and EC on DIS were not statistically significant (p>0,05). Also, negative emotional reactions that include the dimensions of anger (0,11, p≤0,05) and disappointment (0,45, p≤0,01) as well as emotional contagion (0,14, p≤0,01) have positive and statistically significant impact on SFP.

Feeling of disappointment had the greatest impact on perceived service failure (0,45, p≤0,01). The perception of service failure of the participants would increase by 0,45 for each unit increase in their feeling of disappointment. Besides, the effect of perceived emotional contagion within the group on perceived service failure was higher than the feeling of anger. These three variables can explain 39% of service failure perceived by the participants. These findings also support the hypotheses H1a, H1b and H3. The path analysis yielded that AER, DER and EC did not have a statistically significant impact on the service dissatisfaction (DIS) of the participants (p>0,05). Therefore, the hypotheses H2a, H2b and H4 were not supported. The last relation tested in the model

was between SFP and DIS. The analysis showed that perceived service failure had a positive and statistically significant impact on service dissatisfaction (0,80, p≤0.01). The service dissatisfaction of the participants would decrease by 0,80 for each unit increase in their perception of service failure. The perception of service failure of the participants explained 67% of their service dissatisfaction. These results support the hypothesis H5. According to the first four hypotheses tested, AER, DER and EC did not have a direct impact on service dissatisfaction and this impact occurred through SFP. Figure 2 presents the symbolic representation of the findings on the structural equation path analysis.
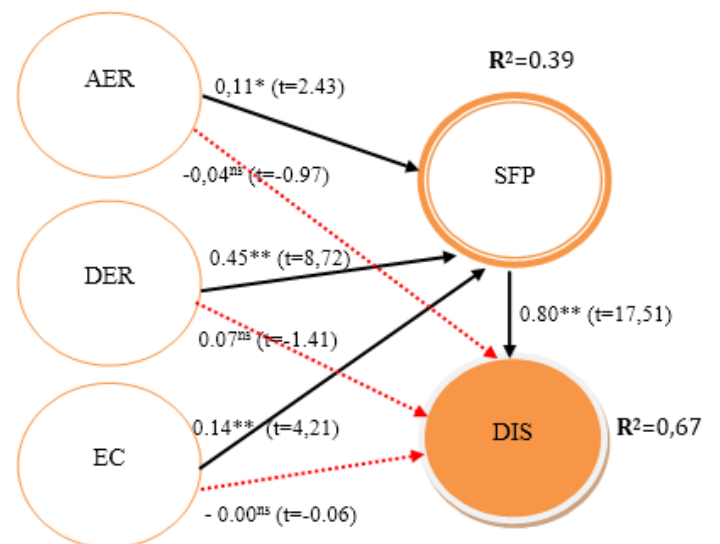
*p≤0,05, **p≤0,01

AER: Anger Emotional Response, DER: Disappointment Emotional Response, NEC: Emotional Contagion, SFP: Service Failure Perception, DIS: Dissatisfaction
(DIS= -0.80*SFP(t=17,51) + 0.044*AER(t=-0.97) + 0.067*DER(t=1.41) + 0.0017*NEC (t= -0.06), Error var.= 0.33, R^2 = 0.67)
Structural Model Fit: X2/df = 732,37/142=5,15, RMSEA = 0.056, SRMR = 0.044, RMR = 0.036, GFI = 0.95, AGFI=0.93, CFI=0.98, NFI = 0.98, Model CAIC vs Saturated CAIC = 1179.32 / 1571.36
Note: All factor loadings are significant at p < 0.01.

Fig. 2. The results of structural model and hypothesis testing

Source: Authors

5. Discussion and Implications

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study, which examines the impact of the negative emotional reactions and emotional contagion on perceived service failure and service satisfaction based on the group service experience in a restaurant, are congruent with the findings of some studies in the literature to a certain extent; on the other hand, this study also

reveals several unique findings, which offer distinctive insights. First of all, a scenario, which was proven to provide reliable and valid results through the assessment of literature review, participant interviews, focus group interviews and expert opinion, was produced. This scenario differs significantly from previous research in the literature in that all group members experienced the service failure (Du et al., 2011; Yang and Mattila, 2012; Huang et al., 2014) and also in terms of the variety of service errors experienced (Yang and Mattila, 2012; Huang et al., 2014)

This study ascertained that the feelings of disappointment and anger had a positive and significant impact on perceived service failure (p≤0,05). These findings are mostly congruent with the literature regarding the effect of negative emotional reactions on perceived service failure (Bougie et al., 2003; Jones, Reynolds, Mothersbaugh & Beatty, 2007; Mattila and Ro, 2008; Han et al., 2009; Kuo and Wu, 2012; Han and Jeong, 2013; Maher and Sobh, 2014; Nikbin et al., 2015; Cho et al., 2017; Song and Qu, 2017) and only differ from the study conducted by Bonifield and Cole (2007) who drew on a service failure scenario related to a delayed delivery. The authors claimed that the dimension of "anger" had a significant impact on complaint intention, which is an indicator of perceived service failure, but the feeling of regret (disappointment) did not have any significant impact. It is notable that just like negative emotional reactions, the variable of emotional contagion had a positive and significant effect on perceived service failure. These findings are congruent with the findings of Du et al. (2014), Chuang and Lin (2014) and López-López et al. (2014). It is new for the literature that the effect of the variable of negative emotional contagion on perceived service failure was higher than the feeling of anger. This is a consistent finding with the nature of being a group. When the group members in crowded groups encounter any service failure, they may avoid showing sudden and harsh reactions not to disturb the group; however, they may communicate the intense negative emotions they experienced such as neglect and regret to other group members. The findings of this study showed that perceived service failure, which consists of the dimensions of service quality, had a positive and significant impact on service satisfaction (0,80, p≤0.01). This finding supports the findings of Smith et al. (1999), Mattila (1999), McQuilken and Robertson (2011) and Yang and Mattila (2012), who explored the correlation between individual service failure perception and

individual dissatisfaction feeling in a restaurant sampling. We herein report a distinctive finding; that neither negative emotional reactions nor emotional contagion had a direct significant impact on the service dissatisfaction in spite of the previous research findings (Bougie, Pieters & Zeelenberg, 2003; Han, Back & Barrett, 2009; Han and Jeong, 2013; Song and Qu, 2017). The findings reveal that consumers' dissatisfaction is not affected by their emotional situations but cognitive assessments of service failure. This is most probably due to nature of being group. That is, consumers' dissatisfaction feelings occur in case of supporting their emotional reactions with service failure.

Practical Implications
Restaurant businesses, where consumption in groups is common, are among the top businesses with the highest number of cases regarding service failures (Mattila, 1999, p. 285) and service failures are inevitable even in the best restaurants, no matter how hard business managers and employees try. Restaurant employees should know that service errors may lead to feelings of regret, neglect and uneasiness among group members when they visit the restaurant, and such feelings may spread within the group. Employees are required to understand the negative mood and emotions of customers by looking at their gestures, tone of voice, mimics and hand-arm movements and to prevent these emotions from spreading within the group (Çakici and Guler, 2017, p. 154). Therefore, businesses should empower, educate and encourage their employees, who are in direct contact with customers, by authorizing them and conferring them responsibilities and initiatives to meet and value customers' expectations (Hart et al., 1990, p. 154; Shamdasani and Balakrishnan, 2000, p. 401; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2003, p. 46). Training opportunities should be developed for employees such as emotional intelligence techniques, complaint management and communication techniques and empathy, etc. (Cakici and Guler, 2017, p. 154). Business owners and managers also need to design the service atmosphere and products in a way that they support more positive emotions and moods among customers. Although service failure is inevitable in restaurants, negative emotions may be experienced less intensely or their onset may be postponed. For example, the physical atmosphere of a restaurant, a pleasant music, and a menu that consists of delicious food and drinks full of serotonin can create more positive emotions in individuals and prevent negative emotions from

spreading within the group (Koç and Boz, 2014, pp. 142-145).

6. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study is not without its limitations. The findings of this study are limited by the variables, the method, the sample and the statistical analysis methods used in the study. The first limitation of this study is the use of non-probability sampling methods as the sampling method for the data collection process. The impossibility of compiling a list of people aged 18 and over who eat at à la carte restaurants at least once a month has entailed the use of non-probability sampling methods. The second limitation is that the service failure and service compensation scenarios experienced by the participants are limited to the atmosphere of an à la carte restaurant. Another limitation is that the group service experiences of the participants were explored merely based on hypothetical scenarios. The service failures used in these scenarios were not divided into major or minor failures. All participants were asked to read the same scenario. The service failure scenario mentioned about a) errors in the service delivery process, b) failures to respond to the needs and requests of consumers, and c) unexpected employee behaviors, but no errors on the taste of the food or cooking were included.

Considering these limitations, this study offers the following suggestions for researchers interested in exploring service failures. Future research may address different service errors (undercooking, hygiene, slow service, reservation error, service being rude, etc.) in different scenarios and ask the participants to read two different scenarios involving major and minor service errors to explore the emotional reactions and service evaluations of the group members. Secondly, the service failure scenario used in this study involves a service experience that six close friends participated in. Further studies may focus on different relationships between the participants (relatives, close friends, coworkers, family, etc.), group size (small, medium, large) and occasion reasons (business lunch, casual meeting, special events, etc.) to investigate the emotional reactions and service assessments of the group members. Thirdly, the measurement of the perception of the service failure of the participants was based on the hypothetically developed scenarios in the survey form that the participants were asked to read. Future research may draw on video recording as an alternative to the survey form, as in the studies performed by Barsade (2002), Du et al. (2014) and

Du et al. (2019). Fourthly, scholars may investigate the interaction between employees and customers in relation to emotional contagion. The personal interaction of customers with employees is a critical factor for their service experiences. The mental, physical or emotional involvement of customers in the service they receive is closely related to both their evaluation of the service and the way they perceive and react to service failures (Koc et al., 2017, p. 393).

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Appendix A. Scenario Describing a Group Service Failure at a Restaurant

Tonight, you and five of your close friends are coming together for a dinner at a high-end à la carte restaurant with a table service to relax after a busy week. You make the reservation by calling Rumeli Restaurant and inform your friends. That said, please consider the following scenario…

When you enter the restaurant, the receptionist greets you, confirms your reservation and escorts you to your table. The receptionist brings the menu to your table and leaves by saying that a waiter will come to take your orders. After 15 minutes, your friend Beril, who realizes that no waiter has come over, calls out a waiter. The waiter welcomes you and asks "May I take your order?" and three of you order mixed grill and the other three order pizza. One of you asks for his/her mixed grill rare cooked. And you specifically ask the waiter, "to serve the main dishes at the same time." Meanwhile, the waiter does not look at you as he is busy noting the orders on the bill and just nods his head and walks out. Your friend Sercan serves your water. Around 20 minutes pass, but no one checks on you and you again call out a waiter. The waiter replies "Let me check with the kitchen now" but you see that he checks on another table to give their bill. Ten minutes later, the waiter brings the pizzas that 3 people ordered and leaves by saying he will bring the mixed grills in a minute. You tell your friends to start their dinner and "Our orders will arrive soon, do not let yours go cold." After ten minutes, the waiter comes with the mixed grills and forgets which of you ordered the underdone grill. Gürkan, telling that he ordered it and complains to the waiter saying that "Wish we all ordered pizza, at least we would not wait for each other."

Source: Authors