The Influences of Group Size and Tie Strength on Customer Satisfaction to the Service provide in case of Other Customer misbehavior.

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Abstract:

Restaurants are typically experienced in social contexts along with companions. It has been found that these companions determine how customers react to service. This research aimed to how group size and tie strength influence customer dissatisfaction evaluation toward a service firm after suffering from other customer behavior. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 190 participants randomly chosen from restaurants in Alex. The results revealed 94.74% of the sample was bothered by obtrusive customer. Also, results demonstrated that group size significantly affected participants' dissatisfaction evaluations. In addition, participants in weak tie condition scored higher levels of dissatisfaction when the group size was small than when it was large. Therefore. Restaurants policies should consider seating patrons in a separate area where they would be less disturbed by the potential misbehavior by well-designed reservation system and employee training.
Key word: Group size, Tie strength and Customer satisfaction

Introduction:

So many evidence has indicated that other customer misbehavior can damage a customer consumption experience and service evaluation (Pearce, 2005). Huang (2008) demonstrated that phenomenon refers to actions by another customer that disrupts one's service experience. Huang and Hsu, (2010) found that other customers interactions could have a negative effect on customers satisfaction with the service provider. It is obvious that presence of social companions is an indispensable part of the consumption experience (Wei et al., 2010). Restaurants consider a typically experienced in social contexts along with companions, when many companions are involved in the service production they cooperate to create the service experience and determine how customers react to a service (Heeter et al., 2008).

Rajopt and Sharma, (2006) demonstrated that these companions who are present when other customer misbehavior affect on customers complaining

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behavior and influence dissatisfaction with the service provider. Bitner et al. (2009) found that a strain within the environment of the service can cause because of other customer behaviors. And after suffering from other customer behavior companions variables such as the number of companions present (group size) or being alone and tie strength (strong tie or weak tie) influence customer dissatisfaction evaluation toward a service firm. (Ryu and Han, 2011)

1- Customer misbehavior

 Customers misbehavior in the hospitality industry are an important matter for the service encounter (Nicholls, 2011). Customers misbehavior depended on the circumstances surrounding under certain conditions, It is likely to be viewed more negatively (Nicholls, 2010). Belk, 2010 and Bitner,2010 referred to such circumstances as fire objective situational factors, including the physical surroundings (e.g. dinner at restaurant), social surroundings (e.g. dinner with friends) temporal perspective (e.g. time available for dinner) , tasks definition (e.g. dinner for special occasion) and antecedent states (dinner when tired). Daunt and Harris (2012) found that customers can act as triggers for differently motivated acts of other customers misbehavior.

2- Companions present

Finsterewalder and Tuzovic (2011) demonstrated that customers who are in a group act and respond differently than they are being alone . Tacobs et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between companions present   and response behavior in case of other customer misbehavior , the results indicated that their response was less nervousness   when Companions present than when alone. Manstead et al. (2006) found that the displays of negative emotion occurred much less often with companions present than when alone. Similarly, Buck et al. (2009) showed that, the expression of negative emotion was inhibited when with a companion rather than alone. In Jackson and latane (2011)   examined a stage fright, participants reported less tension when they were in groups than when alone. Also , Heeter et al. (2008) evaluated the impact of companions presence during positive and negative service encounters in comparison with conditions with no companions present , companions present their results revealed that companions present significantly reduced the negative effect of other customers misbehavior

In addition Martin (2006) indicated that presence of companions can help to reduce the dissatisfying incidents. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that when customers suffer from other customers misbehavior those who are in companions will report a lower level of dissatisfaction with the service firm than if they are alone.

Finsterwalder and Tuzovic (2010) shed light on an individual in a smaller group may perceive an experience differently than one in a large group.In

other words the number of companions affect the customer's emotional and behavioral reactions. Ryu and FeicK, 2007; Wirtz and Chew; 2002, found that there are groups with strong ties and those with weak ties. Therefore, Walls et al. (2011) ; Hui and Bateson (2010) , demonstrate that the number of companions present (group size) and the strength of ties with these companions interact to influence the customer's satisfaction in case of other-customer misbehavior .

Kolyeshikova and Dodd (2008) showed in case of other-customer misbehavior , those in small groups may produce more negative evaluations of the service provider than those in large group

Prior research on emotional contagions in service encounters has shown evidence that customer who share a consumption experience do influence each other's ongoing evaluations through the processes of mimicry and emotional contagion that can occur outside conscious awareness (Dallimore et al., 2007; Du et al., 2011).

However, the effect of group size on dissatisfaction depended on the strength of ties that customers have with their companions present , the more the strong ties will be the less the impact related to the number of companions become .(Wu,2007and Bake,2012).

Granovetter (2005)demonstrated that consumers generally have a two types of ties , strong ties such as those with close friends and family members and weak ties such as those with colleagues and strangers, Grove and Fisk (2007) had shown that with strong ties, customers are more likely to express the true extent of their dissatisfaction, as a result of a negative consumption experience. Yamamoto and Suzuki,(2006) demonstrated that when dissatisfied, customers in strong tie groups are less likely to change their perception. Wagner and Smith (2009) revealed that customers behaviors in a companions with strong ties are significantly more expressive than weak ties in case of other customers misbehavior . Yan and Lotz (2009) strove to determine whether the presence of companions would influence to voice their complaints and dissatisfied from other customer misbehavior ,their findings revealed that consumers who are in a companions with weak ties choose not to complain because they are afraid that others may form a less favorable impression of them. Huage et al. (2010) indicated that people are less concerned about making a good impression with someone who they know well(strong tie) than with those whom they only share weak ties. Thus, Levy,(2010) predicted that   companions sharing strong ties decrease customers' dissatisfaction although within a small companion groups . As a result Harris and Reynolds (2004) found that customers in a strong tie group report insignificant dissatisfaction evaluation between the small and large companion groups. In other words, the strength of the ties acts as a moderator for the effect of group size.

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3- Customer satisfaction

Smith et al. (2009) defined satisfaction the comparison as the comparison of what one expected with what one actually received. Wu,(2008) indicated that customer misbehavior had a negative impact on customer satisfaction. Also, Reynolds and Harris (2009) revealed that other customer behaviors within the environment of the service encounter influence customers' satisfaction . Thus, the aim of this study is consider group size as situational contexts influences that might be used to interpret the dissatisfaction in response to other customer misbehavior, discussing the importance of tie strength relative to customer dissatisfaction toward a service provider in cases of other customer misbehavior .

H1. Services experienced with companions when other customer misbehavior will show a lower level of dissatisfaction toward the service provider compared to services experienced alone.

 H2. Customers with weak ties and small group size will experience a higher level of dissatisfaction when other customers misbehavior

Sample and procedures:

A total of 190 participants were approached individually randomly chosen from restaurants in Alex. city. To collect data an interviewing questionnaire was designed included:

A written scenario describing an incident of other-customer misbehavior in restaurants. This role-playing approach has been successfully used in a number of customer misbehavior studies (e.g., Huang, 2010; Huang et al., 2010; Miao et al., 2011; Rajpot and Sharma, 2006). The scenario method was used to control over the independent variables , saved time , remove unmanageable variables and summarize events (Bitner, 2010).

The participants were asked to read a scenario carefully, really able to imagine themselves in these situations and then they answer the questions.

The questionnaire included also questions as follows: first, distribution of the sample according to demographic variables. Second, were adapted what had been bothered participants by other customers included sharing space with other, present of children, impact of crowding, the noise caused by other customer with service, rudeness behaviors, oral abuse, talking loudly, obtrusive customer, and social deviance were measured on a Likert type five-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Third, to define the group size was by observed the number of groups of people dinning at restaurants according to Huang et al. (2010) they defined a group of two to six individuals as a small group and more than seven as a large group in the control condition no companion is present. Fourth, to define how strength of ties referring to Kleijnen et al., (2005) the strong tie condition the companion is assumed to be a friend who has known each other for over 6 years, in the weak tie condition the companion is assumed to be a colleague

who has known each other for over six months. Fifth to investigate the effects of group size and tie strength on dissatisfaction evaluation of the service provider in cases of other customer misbehavior. A five- point Likert scale was used ranging from1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree adopted from Hess et al., (2007) and analyzed the effects using analysis of variance ANOVA.

Test reliability:

The value of reliability was 0.95 , the mean rating for scenario realism was 4.69and it's a statistical acceptable value.

Statistical manipulation:

Data was fed to the computer using Fox pro data and SPSS version 14.0 software for tabulation and analysis as following: percentage , mean used for continuous variables and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Results and Discussion:

Table 1. Shows that more than half of the sample was male (63.68%) and 75.79 % of the sample between 20 to 32 years old. Most of them had graduate degree (71.061%).

Table1. Distribution of the sample according to demographic variables.

Variables	N.	%
Gender:		
Male	121	63.68
Female	69	36.32
Age:		
20 – 32	144	75.79
33 – 45	34	17.89
46 – 58	12	6.32
Education:		
Undergraduate degree	37	19.47
Graduate degree	135	71.06
Postgraduate degree	18	9.47

Table 2 shows what had been bothered participants by other customer. It was found that the majority of the sample (90.53% - 93.68% - 94.74%) strongly agree that they were bothered from other customer talking loudly, rudeness behavior and obtrusive customer. Respectively. Griffiths and Gilly (2012) found that other customer misbehavior had impact on satisfaction from service. Zhang et al., (2010) demonstrated that other customers misbehavior will produce negative emotional. Huang (2010) showed that misbehavior influence customers service evaluation.

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Table 2 Distribution of the sample according to what had bothered them

What had been bothered you?	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither disagree nor agree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Sharing space with others	5	2.63	20	10.53	70	36.84	54	28.42	15	7.89
Present of children	3	1.58	12	6.32	3	1.58	63	33.15	115	60.52
Impact of crowding	7	3.68	14	7.36	10	5.26	98	51.58	101	53.16
The noise caused by other customers	4	2.11	10	5.26	12	6.32	100	52.63	85	44.74
Rude behavior	3	1.58	8	4.21	11	5.79	102	53.68	172	90.53
Oral abuse	2	1.05	7	3.68	13	6.84	105	55.26	179	94.21
Talking loudly	1	0.53	5	2.63	10	5.26	101	55.16	178	93.68
Obtrusive customer	3	1.58	6	3.16	8	4.21	95	50.0	180	94.74
Social Deviance	1	0.53	3	1.58	5	2.63	80	42.11	98	51.58

Table 3. Shows that the group size of the sample during a visit to restaurant. (66.84%) of participants were in small group. 33.16% were in large groups. The mean rating of small group 1.08 and large group 4.01. Daunt and Harris (2012) explained that companions can act as triggers for differently motivated acts of other customer misbehavior. Also, Baker and Wakefield (2012) indicated that a companions influence perceived feeling toward the service.

Table (3) Distribution of the sample according to the group size

How many companions Do you have	N.	%	Mean
2-6companions(small group)	127	66.84	1.08
More than 7 (large group)	63	33.16	4.01

P < 0.001

Table 4. Shows the distribution of the sample according to tie strength. 42.63% of the sample had weak tie and received a mean rating 3.32% while, 57.37% of the sample had strong tie and received a mean rating of 5.14.

Table 4. Distribution of the sample according the tie strength

How long do you know each other	N.	%	Mean
- over 6 months (weak tie)	81	42.63	3.32
- over 6 years (strength tie)	109	57.37	5.14

P < 0.001

Table 5 demonstrated distribution of the sample according to satisfaction with the service provide in case of other customers misbehavior. Almost half of the sample (52.63%) was not satisfied with the restaurant. 90.53% did not have dinner in peaceful environment, and 93.68% of the sample were dissatisfied with the noise from adjacent table.

ANOVA results demonstrated that group size significantly affected participants' dissatisfaction evaluations. Participants in the one companion and six companion conditions reported lower dissatisfaction with the service provider than those in the control (no companion) condition M no companion = 4.74 , M with companion = 5.68(P < 0.001). Therefore, H_1 was supported. Also, the results revealed that there was a significant two way interaction effect between group size and tie strength P<0.5. Participants in the weak tie condition scored higher levels of dissatisfaction when the group size was small than when it was large M small group = 3.82 , M large group = 3.82,(P< 0.05). Conversely, participants in the strong tie condition scored insignificant dissatisfaction between the small and large companion groups M small group = 5.36 , M large group = 5.60,(P< 0.05). Therefore, H_2 was supported.

Table5: distribution of the sample according to satisfaction with the service provide

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither disagree nor agree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am satisfied with restaurant	85	44.74	100	52.63	4	2.11	10	5.26	12	6.32
The outcome I received was fair	11	5.79	115	60.52	5	2.63	63	33.15	54	28.42
I had dinner in peaceful environment	172	90.53	1.1	53.16	7	3.68	54	28.42	20	10.53
I am dissatisfied with the noise from adjacent table	20	10.35	54	28.41	10	5.26	172	90.53	178	93.68

Recommendations:

1. There is a difference in the level of dissatisfaction expressed by customers accompanied, in order aid in minimizing this; a restaurant could seat patrons in a separate area where they would be less distributed by the potential misbehavior of others.

2. Separate families with young children by well-designed reservation system.

3- Managers should consider redressing affected customers with tangible compensation to raise their level of satisfaction.

4- Providing employee with suitable coping and problem solving skills for working with misbehaving customers, to alleviate dissatisfaction caused by the poorly behaved customer.

5- Ensure the employees express empathy towards the affected customer by solving the problem in an expedient manner or by offering a heartfelt apology.

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