The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of Health and Human Development

INVESTIGATING CONSUMER EMBARRASSMENT IN SERVICE

INTERACTIONS

A Thesis in

Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management

by

Luorong Wu

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

December2010

The thesis of Luorong Wu was reviewed and approved* by the following:

Anna S. Mattila
Marriott Professor of Lodging Management
Professor in Charge of Graduate Program
Thesis Advisor

Amit Sharma
Assistant Professor of Hospitality Management

Hubert Van Hoof
Professor of Hospitality Management
Director of Hospitality Management

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the elicitation and consequences of consumer embarrassment in service interactions. As customer embarrassment potentially induces negative word-of-mouth intentions, it is necessary for management to understand the antecedents of consumer embarrassment and provide prevention/recovery strategies. Following a role theory perspective, we identified three potential elements for embarrassment: a vague service script, mishap from the target customer and his/her realization of the mishap, and the presence of fellow customers. We further propose that the attribution of mishap, the number of fellow customers, and the familiarity among the fellow customers will interactively contribute to the elicitation of embarrassment. Further, we propose that embarrassed consumers are more likely to initiate negative word-of-mouth intentions. Adopting an experimental design, we test the proposed hypothesis and provide results, managerial implications and discussions for limitation and directions of future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Another winter approached State College with snow and Christmas bell-ringing, suggesting the ending of my Master's education. Sixteen months at Penn State are in the past - a fortunate journey filled with gratitude. I am grateful for those I have gotten to know here at Penn State: my caring faculty members, my supportive colleagues, the diverse body of HRIM undergraduate students and a large group of devotional alumnus. They helped me learn about Penn State, about hospitality education and research, and about who I am and who shall I be My dear Dr. Mattila, thank you for always having faith in me even when I don't have any. Thank you for your patient listening and respectful guidance which makes me truly enjoy the process of research. Thank you for your gentle understanding and positive company all along my way. Dr. Van Hoof, thank you for teaching me about leadership with your own deeds and being a driving force that I will admiringly look up to all along my word-of-mouth career. Thank you for your thoughtful teaching with inquiring questions that keeps me learning all the time. Thank you for all the encouraging care you shared with me, even when you were flying around the world within half a week. Dr. Sharma, thank you for the invaluable lunch hours you shared with us over research brain storming. Thank you for every opportunity you provided helping me widen my horizons. Thank you for encouraging me with your own model of hard work and your own experience as a graduate student.

Sixteen months at Penn State. It is a struggling journey with growing faith and dreams becoming true. It is a beautiful journey with friendship and shared research enthusiasm. It is a word-of-mouth that I look forward to. Thank you, Penn State.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family and my friends. Thank you for making me who I am, thank you for being there all the time, and thank you for supporting me with tender care and love

Thank you.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Embarrassment is a widely occurring emotion that affects many facets of our social behavior (Dahl et al., 2001). Previous literature have investigated consumer embarrassment in product purchases (Brumbaugh & Rosa, 2009; Dahl, et al., 2001; Wilson & West, 1981) and service interactions (Grace, 2009; Wan et al., 2008). As a negative self-conscious emotion, embarrassment was found to raise individuals' negative self-evaluation or unwanted self-exposure, which further arouses their intention to flee the situation (Robbins & Parlavecchio, 2006). Empirical results from service interaction literature support this general conclusion: consumers tend to avoid being embarrassed (Azar, 2007; White, 2004), embarrassed customers generally will not use the same service in future, and they are more likely to spread negative word-of-mouth about the service/product (Grace, 2007).

Among the growing bulk of consumer embarrassment research in service interactions, Grace (2007) was the very first to identify both the sources and stimuli of consumer embarrassment. She proposed that in a service interaction, there are three basic sources of embarrassment: the service provider, the target customer, and fellow customers. They also suggest that there are six categories of embarrassing situations: criticism, awkward acts, inappropriate image, forgetfulness or lack of knowledge, environment/surroundings, and violations of privacy. In addition to Grace (2007), previous research largely focused on embarrassing stimuli (Iacobucci et al., 2003;

Rehman & Brooks Jr, 1987; Wilson & West, 1981). What remains unclear is the causal

relationship between the elements in service interactions (e.g. service script, servicescape,

focal customer, service provider, other customers, etc.) and the identified embarrassing

stimuli. Simply identifying embarrassing stimuli in service interactions is not adequate to

conceptually propose strategies to avoid such situations. On the other hand, empirical

results investigating the consequences of consumer embarrassment are also sporadic

(Grace, 2009).

Based on role theory (Solomon et al., 1985), this study aims to investigate

customer embarrassment in the service interaction with the focus on both its antecedents

and consequences. This study aims to conceptually articulate the relationship between

elements in a service encounter and the identified embarrassing stimuli. This study also

aims to empirically test the influence of consumer embarrassment on perceived service

experience and future service intentions.

Statement of Purpose

The objectives of this thesis are 1) to conceptually articulate the causal effect of

elements in a service encounter on consumer embarrassment and 2) to empirically

investigate the influence of customers' embarrassment on their perception of the service

experience and their future behavioral intentions.

Contribution of the Research

Given the fact that embarrassment occurs in various types of service interactions, a better understanding of its nature will bring important theoretical contributions as well as managerial implications that will help improve consumers' perceived service experience (Brown & Garland, 1971).

This thesis also attempts to provide a theoretical perspective by identifying elements in a service encounter that could potentially cause consumer embarrassment. This perspective will bring a better understanding of embarrassment as an emotion, its elicitation, and the behavioral consequences. Managerially, implications will be provided to service companies and service providers to adopt certain strategies to help customers to alleviate the experienced level of embarrassment

Summary

This thesis focuses on the antecedents and consequences of consumer embarrassment in service interactions. The following chapter presents a review of the embarrassment literature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

This thesis focuses on the antecedents and consequences of consumer embarrassment in service interactions. In this chapter, a review of the embarrassment literature is presented as the conceptual foundation of this thesis.

Embarrassment as an Emotion

According to Richins (1997), embarrassment is a discrete emotion, which is aroused automatically and involuntarily in social settings. Generally, embarrassment has been regarded as an intrinsically aversive emotion, which is unhappy and unpleasant in nature. Embarrassment was found to be short in duration, lasting for moments, rather than hours. Embarrassment is a unique and observable emotion. Its occurrence is accompanied by a coherent, obvious sequence of nonverbal behavior, typically like an ambivalent approach-and-avoidance posture, and a repeated looking and then looking away, accompanied by smiling behavior (Geppert & Küter, 1983; Lewis et al., 1989). This sequence of nonverbal behavior clearly distinguishes embarrassment from similar self-conscious emotions like shame and guilt (Keltner & Buswell, 1996).

Generally known as one type of discrete emotion (Richins, 1997), embarrassment is different from basic emotions of joy, sadness, etc. It's been identified as one of the

self-conscious emotions (Lewis et al., 2008). Self-conscious emotions appear later in life

and the elicitation of these emotions involves elaborate cognitive processes that have, at

their heart, the notion of self (Stipek et al., 1992). The elicitation of self-conscious

emotions requires an individually incorporated set of standards, rules, or goals (SRG)

which has been developed through every individual's social learning. For each specific

type of self-conscious emotion, there is a specific one-to-one correspondence between

thinking certain thoughts and the occurrence of a particular emotion (Lewis, et al., 2008).

Linked with the attribution literature (Weiner, 2000), Lewis (2008) proposed that self-

conscious emotions are elicited when individuals accept personal responsibility for their

behavior and evaluate this behavior according to the SRG along two dimensions: success

or failure, and attribution of a global self or a specific self. As for embarrassment, its

elicitation typically involves negative self-evaluation, or unwanted self-exposure

(Robbins & Parlavecchio, 2006), and consequently causes real damage to a person's

identity.

Based on the above definition of embarrassment, previous literature has

investigated the elicitation of embarrassment, identifying embarrassing social situations

and proposing processing models to explain the occurrence of embarrassment.

The Elicitation of Embarrassment

Individuals' Cognitive Processing Models

As embarrassment is a self-conscious emotion, its elicitation involves cognitive evaluation of the involved individual's self. On an individual level, previous literature provides various cognitive processing models that explain the occurrence of embarrassment. Based on the conceptualization that embarrassment is a type of self-conscious emotions, the notion of "evaluation" is at the focal point of the proposed cognitive processing models. Each of the proposed models places different emphasis on the source (internal or external, from the self or from others) or nature (negative, neutral, or even positive) of the "evaluation".

The **social evaluation model** (Manstead & Semin, 1981) suggests that any undesired evaluation, whether positive or negative, will result in embarrassment. The **dramaturgic model** (Silver et al., 1987) postulates that embarrassment primarily comes from a disruption of social interaction due to a person's inability to act his or her given social role. In other words, once the person perceives him/herself failing to follow a social script, the embarrassment will occur. The **center of attention model** (Sabini et al., 2000) proposes that merely being the center of attention can be embarrassing, even when there is neither a loss of esteem nor dramaturgic failure. The **loss of self-esteem model** (Modigliani, 1971) emphasizes on the consequences from a loss of self-respect or dignity as a result of perceiving negative evaluations from others. The **personal standards model** (Babcock, 1988) focuses on the role of the embarrassed person, and suggests that embarrassment results from a discrepancy between one's behavior and one's self-

imposed ideals. The **transgression of others' expectations model** (Sugawara, 1992), focuses on the fact that the person is threatened with the possibility of acting in a way that is contrary to the expectations of the other people who are present to witness the behavior.

The Social Situation

While processing models view embarrassment from the individuals' perspectives, other research has investigated embarrassment from a "social setting" perspective, identifying different situations that elicit embarrassment.

According to Miller (1992), there are two contending theories of what makes a social situation embarrassing: the **Social Evaluation Theory** (Milgram & Sabini, 1978; Modigliani, 1968, 1971) and the **Dramaturgical Theory** (Parrott et al., 1988; Silver, et al., 1987). The Social Evaluation Theory emphasizes the social presence of others in a situation to elicit one's emotion of embarrassment (Zajonc, 1965), while the evaluation could be either negative or neutral. On the other hand, the dramaturgical theory postulates that there exists one specific script in a given social setting and one's behavior is supposed to follow that script. As far as "I" perceive that "my" behavior is not following the script, "I" could be embarrassed.(Miller, 1992, 1997)

Individual Difference

However, as embarrassment is highly "self-conscious", personal trait factors account for a large component of its elicitation (Sabini, et al., 2000). Previous literature has revealed that 8 different personality traits could explain for the individual difference: neuroticism, extraversion, interaction/audience anxiousness, concern for appropriateness and revised self-monitoring, rejection sensitivity, conflict avoidance, self-esteem and stability of self-esteem, and gender.

Behavioral Consequences of Embarrassment

Embarrassment is observable by others (Marcus & Miller, 1999), as it's usually accompanied by physiological changes (e.g.: facial blushing) and a series of non-verbal behaviors.

As embarrassment is closely correlated with the "self" (Keltner, 1995), its elicitation could at the same time cause real damage to a person's desired identity and hurt one's "need to belong"(Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Therefore, embarrassment has commonly been identified as a self-aversive emotion.

Individuals, either consciously or subconsciously, bear the concern that embarrassment usually comes with potential public punishment of certain kinds (Stonehouse & Miller, 1994). Therefore, "*the possibility of being embarrassed seems to dictate and constrain a great deal of social behavior; much of what we do and, perhaps more important, what we don't do is based on our desire to avoid embarrassment"* (Miller & Leary, 1992). At times, individuals overestimate the severity of negative social

consequences of their misbehavior (Semin & Manstead, 1982) and therefore risk their long-term well-being to evade temporary, short-term embarrassment (Lewis, et al., 2008).

What people typically do not realize is that (1) embarrassment is reassuring rather than aggravating to their audiences, (2) others try to avoid potentially embarrassing situations and also dread embarrassing situations, and (3) compared with those who seem undisturbed by their sins, the embarrassed individuals will be more favorably evaluated by others (Sabini, et al., 2000).

Coping Strategies with Embarrassment

Embarrassing situations normally increase individuals' anxiety and stress, as they experience a violation or threat to their fundamental needs (Edwards & Baglioni, 1993). According to Gutman (1982), in stressful service interactions, it is intrinsically more important for consumers to satisfy their fundamental human needs before they are driven to satisfy their consumption needs. Godwin, et al. (1999) showed that when consumers attempt to cope with stress, they try to use strategies to increase control over the situation or to alter the situation to relieve the stress (problem-focused coping strategy). They could also try to use strategies to control their own emotions (emotion-focused coping strategy). Coping strategies that individuals typically use include: confrontive coping, distancing, positive appraisal, accepting responsibility (internal attribution), escape or avoidance, self controlling or symptom reduction, seeking social support, planned problem solving, devaluation, and accomodation (Folkman et al., 1986; Godwin, et al., 1999).

Previous literature has shown that individuals adopt both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies to cope with experienced embarrassment (Gross, 1998). Normally, individuals' coping strategies for embarrassment include 1) apology - to indicate that he/she knows he/she has transgressed and feels badly about it (Schlenker & Darby, 1981), 2) accounts - to provide either justification or excuses (Scott & Stanford, 1968), 3) avoidance – to avoid responsibility by mystification, or simply refusing to give verbal accounts and physically retreating from the social encounter (McLaughun et al., 1983), 4) suprression – to subjectively supress the feeling of embarrassment (Harris, 2001), 5) humors – in certain situations, humor is a technique that can be used to restructure an interpersonal communication when embarrassment has broken down communication patterns (Billig, 2001; Fink & Walker, 1977), and 6) remediation – individuals redress the mistake directly (Sueda & Wiseman, 1992). Empirical evidence has also shown that there is gender difference for embarrassment coping strategies. Females judged excuses more helpful in reducing embarrassment,while males rated justifications as more helpful (Petronio, 1984).

Summary

A review of the embarrassment literature suggests that embarrassment is a negative self-conscious emotion. Its elicitation involves the social "self" and "evaluation" at the center of its notion. Regardless of the source of evaluation (internal or external of the "self") and the nature of the evaluation (negative, neutral, or positive), embarrassment could be elicited with the social presence of other people and when the individual has

perceived that his/her behavior is inconsistent with the pre-assumed social script. Embarrassment could potentially lead to damage of one's sense of self. In general, people risk choosing actions that could bring long-term harm in order to avoid the temporary emotion of embarrassment. The following chapter further provides the focused research objective and conceptualization of this research, with hypothesized relationships presented.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Overview

Adopting a role theory perspective (Solomon, et al., 1985), this study identified the basic elements of a service interaction that could potentially lead to consumer embarrassment. Then, based on the appraisal theory, hypotheses of this study were proposed to conceptualize the elicitation of embarrassment.

Potential Embarrassing Elements of a Service Interaction

Role Theory and the Dramaturgical Model

Based on dramaturgical metaphor, role theory focuses on a "role" – a cluster of social cues that guide and direct an individual's behavior in a given setting – to study social interactions. It is the reactions of fellow actors and observers (the audience) of the setting that together determines whether this "role", or particular part, is acted appropriately (role enactment). As providing consistent service at an acceptable level across individual service providers is one central aim for service quality management, this theoretical perspective fits well with the service marketing literature (Grove and Fisk 1983).

Following this school of thought, Solomon, et al.(1985) proposed that a service encounter is a social setting in which the dyadic interaction between a service provider and a customer is an important determinant of the customer's global satisfaction with the service. Further, the dyadic interaction in a service encounter was conceptualized to consist of three basic dimensions: temporal duration of the interaction, emotional content, and the spatial proximity of a service provider and a focal customer (Price et al., 1995). The audience of a service encounter will be fellow customers (who come together with the focal customer as a group) or other customers (who are present in a shared service environment).

This theoretical perspective relates well with the **dramaturgic model** (Silver, et al., 1987) of the elicitation of embarrassment, which suggests that people feel embarrassed when they are incapable to follow a widely accepted social script. This thesis will adopt this perspective to conceptualize a service encounter (in which embarrassment could potentially take place). We view a service encounter as it consists of the dyadic interaction between one target customer (who will feel embarrassed) and the service provider and the social presence of fellow customers.

"Mishap" as a Prerequisite

According to Grace (2007), in service interactions there are three basic sources of embarrassment: the service provider, the focal customer, and fellow customers. There are six categories of embarrassing situations: criticism, awkward acts, inappropriate image, forgetfulness or lack of knowledge, environment/surroundings, and violations of

privacy. They classified consumer embarrassment by source and situations and further proposed that embarrassed individuals will have different future behavioral intentions in different embarrassment situations or with different embarrassment sources. However, there are situations where the consumer's embarrassment could hardly be attributed to a unique source. There are also times when several different embarrassing situations jointly work to influence the embarrassed individual. Classification of embarrassment by source and situation might be problematic in certain times. In this study, we follow the dramaturgical model of embarrassment elicitation and emphasize on the role of incongruence between service script and actual interaction in its influence on eliciting consumer embarrassment.

Based on role theory, the service script was proposed as an important construct for investigating behaviors in service interactions (Solomon, et al., 1985). By definition, the service script represents the expectation of the target customer for the various activities/actions, temporally organized, in a service interaction. A mutual understanding of the service script secures the smooth processing of the service experience. Consistent with this line of thought, the **dramaturgic model** (Silver, et al., 1987) suggests that embarrassment primarily comes from a perceived disruption of social interaction due to a person's inability to act his or her given social role. When the service script is vague, customers might not know how to behave in the first place. In such situations, customers are more likely to make mishaps, which they would realize later with the assistance of environmental cues in the setting. Then, they would feel embarrassed. Therefore, a "mishap", which is inconsistent with the service script, would be one prerequisite factor leading to consumer embarrassment.

The Situational Influence from Fellow Customers

Previous literarure suggests that the social presence of others is an indispensable element of embarrassment's elicitation (Miller, 1997; Modigliani, 1971). As far as there perceived to exist a source of social presence, either real or imagined (Brown & Garland, 1971; Edelmann et al., 1987; Miller, 1992, 1997; Miller & Leary, 1992), the focal individual could feel embarrassed due to the unwanted exposure of the self (Robbins & Parlavecchio, 2006).

However, in a public social setting like a service encounter, the customer normally perceives his/her self as, to different extents, publically-exposed. The influence from others' social presence will not always be salient as much as in previous findings (Robbins & Parlavecchio, 2006). However, throughout the individual customer's personal interaction with the service provider, he/she is still aware of the fact that he/she is being observed by the audience of the setting - other customers, among which his/her fellow customers are observing most closely. Therefore, when a focal customer's behavior is not consistent with the service script and a mishap has already taken place, the individual will potentially feel embarrassed. Given the fact that the individual is also aware of the fact that his/her mishap is noticeble to his/her fellow customers, the level of elicited embarrassment should further be influenced by his/her fellow customers who are present in the setting.

In conclusion, in a service interaction a mishap would be a prerequisite of consumer embarrassment. Situational factors of the service interaction will jointly determine whether the individual customer feels or how much the individual customer

feels embarrassed. Appraisal theory is adopted to conceptualize the process of embarrassment elicitation.

Appraisal Theory

Embarrassing situations simultaneously increase individuals' anxiety and stress (Edwards & Baglioni, 1993). Godwin, et al. (1999) suggests that in stressful situations, consumers are found to adopt two different types of appraisals: 1) Primary Appraisal – to identify what is at stake (e.g. goal relevance, goal congruence, and ego involvement) and 2) Second Appraisal – what they can do about it (e.g. blame or credit to be derived, coping potential, and future expectancy) (Godwin, et al., 1999). It is the interaction of these two appraisals that determines the degree of stress and the strength and content of the emotional reaction (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) – for our context, the strength of embarrassment to be elicited.

At the primary appraisal stage, individuals normally decide whether the situation is relevant and congruent with their goals, and whether their self/ego is involved. In a service encounter, if the target customer is accompanied by supervisor, dates, or business partners etc. whom he/she has specific impression management goals with, a mishap, which is relevant but incongruent with their goals, will make the customer feel more embarrassed (Wan, et al., 2008).

At the second appraisal stage, individuals decide what they can do about it – blame or credit to be derived, any potential coping strategy to be adopted, and future

expectancies. In goal-specific situations, the embarrassed individual could adopt coping strategies of confronted coping (e.g. realize the fact that the situation has already happened and choose to face it rather than avoiding it), positive appraisal (e.g. recreate the goals to impress others with their flexibility and adaptability to unexpected social situations), distancing (e.g. persuading oneself that the situation is not closely relevant to him/her). According to Cupach, et al. (1986), people cope with embarrassment by providing accounts, either to others or to themselves, because accounts offer individuals opportunity to redefine the social situation which could alleviate the emotion.

As both primary appraisal and secondary appraisal interactively contribute to the elicitation of embarrassment, we further discuss in detail how this interaction functions along the two appraisal stages.

Primary Appraisal: The Split-effect of "Self" Presentation Goal

Psychological distance was found to have an inverse U shaped relationship with embarrassment (Sasaki et al., 2005). As psychological distance between the focal individual and his/her social company increases, level of felt embarrassment was found to be increasing at first. This can be explained by attribution theory. As an individual's perceived controllability (one dimension of attribution) decreases as the span of control spills out of one's "self", the level of experienced embarrassment will increase. Then, when the psychological distance increases to a certain level that is too far for the involved individual to feel attached to the social setting, the level of experienced embarrassment will start to decrease.

To explain the effect of psychological distance on primary appraisal, we propose that there is a split-effect of "self" presentation goal in the elicitation of embarrassment. We propose a two-dimensional model to conceptualize individuals' self-presentation goals based on familiarity and group size of fellow customers. We propose that, as the level of familiarity among the focal customer and the fellow customers increases from total stranger to close friends, the focal customer's "self" presentation goal changes from "self-protection" (does not want to expose the self) to "self-showing" (want to show the good "self" according to individual's situational goals for image management). Group size would have different effects for the two scenarios causing consumer embarrassment.

More specifically, when the focal customer is not familiar with his/her fellow customers, his/her "self" presentation goal is, by nature, to protect the self. Following the Center of Attention model (Zajonc, 1965), an individual will be embarrassed if the self is perceived at the center of attention. A small group of fellow customers will increase this spotlight effect because the intensity of group interaction is higher in a small group than a large one, and the focal customer is more likely to perceive his/her "self" at the center of attention. Therefore, when the individual's goal is to protect the self, but the social setting contradicts to this "self-protection goal" with unfamiliar fellow customers, a large group size of fellow customers will enhance felt embarrassment.

When the focal customer is more familiar with his/her fellow customers, the social relationship among the group will be perceived as more intimate and friendly, the individual will perceive themselves as more "protected" and no longer be that much self-protective. (MacDonald & Davies, 1983) The intimacy perception will protect the involved individual from the negative effect of embarrassment. However, the intimacy

protection effect will only work when fellow customers are in a small group size and when they are familiar to the focal customer. Therefore, when the individual's goal is no longer to protect the self as he/she is in a social setting with familiar fellow customers, a small group size of fellow customers will protect individuals from embarrassment better than a large group size.

In conclusion, we propose that in terms of embarrassment elicitation, there is an interaction effect from familiarity and group size of fellow customers influencing consumers' primary appraisal of the social setting in service interactions.

Secondary Appraisal – Potential Space for Coping

In secondary appraisal, the focal customer makes appraisals of "what to do". The more the coping potentials the individuals perceives, the more alleviated the individual will be and the less embarrassed the individual will feel. On the contrary, if the embarrassed customer perceives of little coping potential in the situation, the individual will feel more embarrassed. Therefore, if the embarrassed individual thinks that there are no other people realizing his/her embarrassment, he/she will perceive more coping potential. If the involved individual perceives the embarrassment as already exposed, the individual's coping potential will be perceived to be less and will feel more embarrassed.

However, the attribution theory suggests that when a mishap takes place in a service interaction, the target customer could either attribute the mishap to him/herself (e.g. "I" was not familiar to such service setting and "I" did not know how to behave but "I" am supposed to know), or to external factors (e.g. the service provider, the service

organization, etc.). If attribution reaction is the dominant cognitive process invoked by the involved individual, an internal attribution will lead to higher level of embarrassment than external attribution, as an internal attribution means more internal responsibility and less potential space to provide accounts for the situation. In other words, if a customer in a service interaction attributed the mishap to themselves, they would be more embarrassed *than* if they were to attribute this mishap onto the service provider (individual or an organization).

As primary appraisal and secondary appraisal interactively lead to the content and strength of experience emotions, the contrary effects above could be explained by the interaction of "the split effect of self-presentation goal" and "the potential space for coping strategy". Therefore, we propose that:

H$_1$: Familiarity among the group of fellow customers, the group size of fellow customers, and the attribution of the mishap interactively contribute to the elicitation of embarrassment.

Behavioral Consequences of Embarrassment

Service encounters are conceptualized to consist of three basic dimensions: temporal duration of the interaction, emotional content, and the spatial proximity of service provider and customer (Price, et al., 1995). All three dimensions contribute to customers' assessed service experience and future behaviors. Grace (2007, 2009)

proposed that in a service interaction, embarrassed customers report having a strong intention to flee the situation and are less likely to return to the business. They are even more likely to boycott the service when they perceive that their embarrassment is caused by the service provider.

In Verbeke & Bagozzi (2003), self-provoked embarrassment causes individuals to lose adaptive resources: losing flexibility and assertiveness. In service interactions, embarrassed customers, as they lose adaptive resources, they are more likely to "shut-off" themselves from external contact and they are less likely to generate negative word-of-mouth intentions. Therefore, we propose that:

H$_2$: Familiarity among the group of fellow customers, the group size of fellow customers, and the attribution of the mishap interactively contribute to consumers' negative word-of-mouth intentions, mediated by the elicited level of embarrassment.

Summary

Following a role theory perspective, we identify three potential elements for embarrassment: a vague service script, mishap from the target customer and his/her realization of the mishap, and the presence of fellow customers. Based on the appraisal theory, we further propose that the attribution of mishap, the number of fellow customers, and the familiarity among the fellow customers will interactively contribute to the

elicitation of embarrassment. We proposed that consumers will be less likely to initiate

negative word-of-mouth intentions if they are more embarrassed. The hypothesized

relationships are visually presented in Figure III-1.
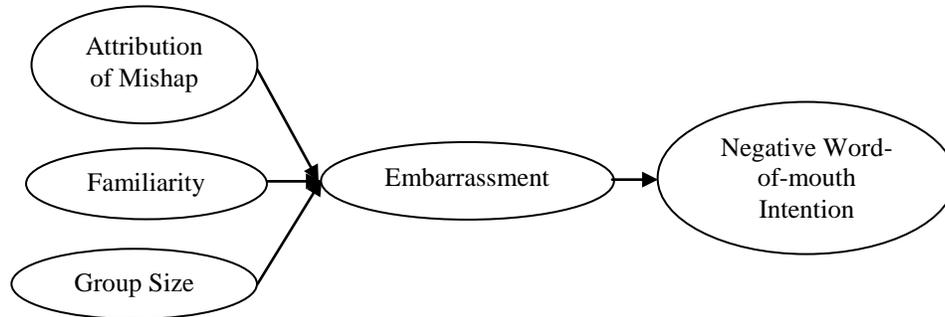
Figure III-1: *Proposed Conceptual Model of the Study*

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST

Overview

This thesis examined factors in service interactions that could lead to the elicitation of a target customers' emotion of embarrassment and further the behavioral consequences of the elicited embarrassment. As we tend to manipulate these independent variables, the efficacy of manipulation is fundamentally significant to the results of this study. Before adopting main study for hypothesis testing, a pilot test was run for manipulation check of the designed vignettes. This chapter presents the method and results of the pilot study.

Design

The primary objective of the pilot study is to check for realism of the designed vignettes and the efficacy of the manipulation of independent variables: the familiarity among fellow customers, the group size of fellow customers, and attribution of the mishap.

Designed vignettes of this study were developed based on the dining experience at an ethnic restaurant. The reasons that this particular context was chosen for this study are: 1) The ethnic restaurant context, which is unfamiliar to the majority of public consumers,

presents a scenario with relatively vague service script. 2) The dining context presents one of the most common service interactions with an existing presence of fellow customers. 3) All three independent variables: attribution of the mishap, the familiarity and the group size of fellow customers all can be manipulated well with high realism in this scenario. 4) Findings in this context would contribute new insights for better understanding of the inter-cultural service encounter.

The attribution of the mishap was manipulated as the "source of flagging" of the mishap – whether the mishap was flagged by another person or was realized by the individual himself/herself. The attribution literature suggests that the attribution mediates the felt emotion and individual's behavior. Therefore, an external source of flagging suggests an external attribution of the mishap while an internal source of flagging suggests an internal attribution of the mishap. The two levels of familiarity among fellow customers were manipulated as old friends and new friends. The two levels of group size were manipulated to a group of 2 and a group of 7. A sample of the pilot study instruments is presented in Appendix A.

Participants

The participants of pilot study were recruited from the same population as the main study. For economic and convenience concerns, the participants of pilot study were recruited through door-by-door visits to faculty and staff offices at the same state university of U.S. Originally, 4 observations per cell were randomly assigned to each of the scenario. After excluding incomplete data, 29 valid observations were yielded. Table

4-1 presents the number of valid observations per cell for all eight designed scenarios. In total, there were 29 participants recruited among which 13 of them were female. The average age was 33 (range from 20 to 58).

Table IV-1: *Number of Valid Observations per cell for the Pilot Study*

Experimental Manipulation

			Cell Size
Source of Flagging of the Mishap	*Familiarity among the Fellow Customers*	*Group Size of the Fellow Customers*	
Internal Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	4
		Large	4
	Familiar	**Small**	3
		Large	4
External Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	4
		Large	4
	Familiar	**Small**	2
		Large	4

Procedure

As 4 observations per cell were desired for the pilot study, participants were randomly assigned to designed scenarios, using a randomly generated sequence of 4 lists of integers range from 1 to 8. They are asked to read the designed vignettes and then respond to a series of questions assessing emotions experienced, familiarity with the designed service context, realism of the scenario, and the efficacy of manipulation of independent variables.

Measure

We measured elicited emotions, familiarity with the designed service context (Malaysian restaurant)

On a 7-point Likert type scale, we assessed the extent to which participants experienced emotions of anger, cheerfulness, disappointment, delight, embarrassment, guilt, peace, furiousness, shame, happiness, and pleasure.

Familiarity with the designed service context was assessed by 2 questions: 1) "How often have you dined in a Malaysian Restaurant", and 2) "How familiar would you say you are with Malaysian Restaurants".

Realism of the scenario was mainly assessed by 2 questions: 1) "How realistic is the scenario description", and 2) "How difficult is it for you to project yourself into the scenario", also via a 7-point Likert type scale.

The efficacy of manipulation on independent variables was assessed by 4 questions. The manipulation on source of flagging of the target consumer's mishap was assessed by 2 questions: 1) "I realized my mishap before others took notice of me", and 2) "The server made me realize my mishaps". The manipulation on the presence of fellow consumers was assessed by 2 questions: 1) "How would you rate the familiarity between you and your dining company in this dining experience", and 2) "Would you agree that your dining party was composed of a large group". The measure of these questions is also based on 7-point Likert type scale.

Results

Table IV-2 presents the means and standard deviations of the pilot study results. According to the results, participants reported experiencing a significantly higher extent of embarrassment than that of any other emotion. It proves that the manipulation of the designed vignettes is adequate to discriminately elicit embarrassment, not other similar self-conscious emotions, (e.g.: guilt and shame) (Keltner & Buswell, 1996). In general, participants reported perceiving the designed vignettes with relatively high realism. Participants also report relatively low familiarity with the restaurant context of the designed vignettes.

TableIV-2: *Means and Standard Deviations of the Results from Pilot Study*

Dependent Variables of Measure	Means	Std. Dev
Emotions		
Anger	2.27	1.538
Cheerfulness	2.04	1.224
Disappointment	2.88	1.558
Delight	1.74	1.375
Embarrassment	5.79	1.449
Guilt	1.70	1.137
Peace	2.44	1.553
Furiousness	2.15	1.657
Shame	3.92	1.695
Happiness	2.00	1.301
Pleasure	1.81	1.360
Realism Check		
How realistic is the scenario description?	4.90	1.698
How difficult is it for you to project yourself into the scenario?	2.69	1.442
Familiarity with the Context		
*How often have you dined in a Malaysian Restaurant?**	1.31	0.850
How familiar would you say you are with Malaysian Restaurant?	1.59	1.268

Note: All measures are based on the 7-point Likert Type Scale.
      * 4 point of measure: 1= 0-2 times; 2= 3-5 times; 3= 6-12 times; 4= Over 12 times.

We also checked in detail for participants' comprehension accuracy with the assigned reading scenario. As displayed by Table IV-3, means for manipulation check questions are mostly consistent as expected. However, it's been noticed that means for the manipulation question on "Familiarity among Fellow Customers" did not yield the expected pattern. By examining our original question and some of participants' written remarks on the questionnaire, we found the phrasing of "dining company" confusing as it could be comprehended as either the company of the dining restaurant or the fellow customers. Therefore, we changed the original phrasing of "dining company" in the familiarity manipulation check question to "dining party".

Table IV-3: *Means for Manipulation Check Questions per Cell from Pilot Study*

Experimental Manipulation			Familiarity among Fellow Customers	Group Size of Fellow Customers	Source of Flagging	
					Int.	*Ext.*
Internal Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	2.333	3.333	3.333	1.000
		Large	5.000	6.250	3.250	1.250
	Familiar	**Small**	3.667	4.333	4.333	1.667
		Large	2.500	5.500	4.750	3.500
External Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	1.750	1.500	4.750	5.500
		Large	2.333	5.667	2.000	6.667
	Familiar	**Small**	1.000	2.500	3.500	4.000
		Large	3.500	5.500	3.500	5.000

The display of means and standard deviation of embarrassment by different designed scenarios in Table IV-3 showed that the results from pilot study suggested that there is more significant difference between different combination levels of familiarity and group size when the source of flagging is external than internal.

Table IV-4: *Means and Standard Deviations of "Embarrassment" in the Pilot Study*

Experimental Manipulation			*Embarrassment*	
			Mean	*Std. Dev*
Internal Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	5.75	1.500
		Large	6.00	0.816
	Familiar	**Small**	6.00	0.000
		Large	6.25	1.500
External Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	6.75	0.500
		Large	4.50	2.380
	Familiar	**Small**	6.50	0.707
		Large	5.00	1.826

In general, we conclude that the designed vignettes were effectively manipulated and the research instrument was appropriate for adoption in the main study.

Summary

Results from the pilot study suggested that participants report themselves unfamiliar with the designed dining context of a Malaysian restaurant. The designed vignettes have relatively high realism as perceived by participants. The vignettes have effective manipulation with regards to the elicitation of embarrassment. Based on the tested vignettes, the main study was conducted. The methodology of the main study will be explained in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY OF THE MAIN STUDY

Chapter 5 presents the methodology and results of the main study, which was designed for hypothesis testing. Manipulation of the independent variables, the measurement of the dependent variables, and information for the recruited sample were explained in detail.

Overview of Method and Design

The objective of the main study was to test the hypothesized relationship of this thesis – the antecedents and consequences of consumer embarrassment with the presence of fellow customers. As "attribution of the mishap", "familiarity among fellow customers", and "group size of fellow customers" were hypothesized as the independent variables that interactively elicit the target consumers' emotion of embarrassment, we adopted an experimental design that have all three independent variables manipulated and measured the dependent variable of embarrassment and negative word-of-mouth intentions for hypothesis testing.

Methodology of the Main Study

Experimental Design

For hypothesis testing, a 2 (source of flagging of the mishap: internal vs. external) x 2 (familiarity among fellow customers: high vs. low) x 2 (group size of fellow customers: large vs. small) between-subject design was adopted in the main study of this thesis. The research instruments include written vignette, which was tested for validity in the pilot study, and a following questionnaire that measured the dependent variables: extent of felt embarrassment and negative word-of-mouth intentions.

Participants

The study sample was derived from the faculty and staff population at a large Northeastern state university in U.S. A random list of faculty and staff's name and office address was ordered under IRB approval. Participants were approached via campus mail with an invitation letter, an implied consent form (Appendix B) and a survey questionnaire. A drawing to win gift cards for local restaurants was provided as incentives for participation.

In total, 229 surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 22.9 %. The average age was 46 and the gender split was 30% male; 70% female. Number of observations per cell of the main study is displayed below in Table V-1.

Table V-1: *Number of Observations per Cell of the Main Study*

Experimental Manipulation

			Cell Size
Source of Flagging of the Mishap	*Familiarity among the Fellow Customers*	*Group Size of the Fellow Customers*	
Internal Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	27
		Large	29
	Familiar	**Small**	28
		Large	19
External Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	29
		Large	37
	Familiar	**Small**	36
		Large	24

Procedures

Once they accepted the invitation, participants were instructed to read the implied consent form, read the designed vignettes, finish the questionnaire, and then mail the completed survey back to investigators. Participants were not required to sign the implied consent form. Completion and return of survey implies that participants have read the information in the form and consented to take part in the research. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight between-subjects scenarios. Complete designed vignettes for the main study are presented in Appendix C.

Independent Variables

A summary of manipulations is presented in Table V-2.

Manipulation of "source of attribution of the mishap"

The attribution of the mishap was manipulated as the "source of flagging" of the mishap – whether the mishap was flagged by another person or was realized by the individual himself/herself. The attribution literature suggests that the attribution mediates the felt emotion and individual's behavior. Therefore, an external source of flagging suggests an external attribution of the mishap while an internal source of flagging suggests an internal attribution of the mishap.

Manipulation of "group familiarity"

The two levels of familiarity among fellow customers were manipulated as old friends and new friends. Specifically, the new friends were manipulated as "just knew each other earlier today".

Manipulation of "group size"

The two levels of group size were manipulated to a group of 2 and a group of 7.

Table V-2: *Summary of Manipulation*

Independent Variables	Level of Value	Manipulation
source of attribution of the mishap	Internal	Look around how friends behave and then realize one's own mishap
	External	Server comes over to explain the right behavior thus suggested the individual's mishap
group familiarity of fellow customers	Unfamiliar	New friends that you met earlier today
	Familiar	Old friends
group size of fellow customers	Small	2
	Large	7

Dependent Variables

Measure of "Embarrassment"

Consumer embarrassment was measured by one question "How would you feel in this situation? Please state the extent to which you would feel embarrassed." Other than the emotion of embarrassment, emotions of: anger, cheerfulness, disappointment, delight, guilt, peace, furiousness, shame, happiness, pleasure were also assessed in the questionnaire.

Measure of "Negative Word-of-mouth Intentions"

The "Negative Word-of-mouth Intentions" measure was developed based on the findings from Grace (2007) with 2 items: "discourage others to visit this restaurant in the word-of-mouth" and "complain to others about your dining experience at this restaurant". The correlation test indicates that this is a valid scale with Pearson's correlation coefficient = .749 (p-value < .001).

Control Variables

In the main study of this thesis, control variables of "influence on friendship" and "personality" were also measured.

Previous literature suggested that embarrassment is highly correlated with personality traits. Therefore, personality was included in the model as a control variable. As our conceptualization of embarrassment elicitation is highly related to individual's self-presentation goals, we developed a measure of influence on friendship to exclude the influence of individual differences in concern for friendship change.

The control variable of "influence on friendship" was measured by two questions of "this incident will make my friends think less of me" and "this incident will make me lose face in front of my friends". Pearson Correlation of these two questions equals .841(p-value=.000).

The personality measure of 10 items was developed based on the finding from Sabini et al. (2000), which identified personality traits that are most closely related to embarrassment arousal. A sample question would be "Would you agree that social interactions usually make you feel anxious". The reliability check indicates that this is a valid scale with Cronbach's Alpha = .739. The full scale is displayed in Appendix D.

Summary

Chapter 5 provides detailed explanations for the methodology of the main study. The main study adopted an experimental design with tested vignettes for the manipulation on hypothesized independent variables. Dependent variables of embarrassment and negative word-of-mouth intentions were measured. "Personality" and "influence on friendship" were measured to be included as control variables in the model for analysis. Results of the main study will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

RESULTS OF THE MAIN STUDY

Overview

This chapter presents the results of statistical analysis for the main study. First, this chapter presents the general description of data collected in the main study. Then, hypothesis-testing results are displayed.

Data Description

The means in Table VI-1 indicates that in general, respondents reported to experience embarrassment after reading the designed scenarios. Consistent with our hypothesis, respondents reported a higher average level of aroused embarrassment when the mishap is internally flagged than external. There seems to be an interaction pattern by familiarity and group size of fellow customers with embarrassment measure. In general, as the embarrassment level was reported to be relatively high, the intention to spread negative word-of-mouth was relatively low.

TableVI-1: *Means and Standard Deviations of the Main Study Results*

Experimental Manipulation			Outcomes(*N=229*)		
			Embarrassment	**Satisfaction**	**Negative Word-of-Mouth Intention**
			Mean(Std. Dev)	*Mean(Std. Dev)*	*Mean(Std. Dev)*
Internal Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	6.00(1.206)	5.250(1.620)	2.062(1.584)
		Large	5.31(1.806)	4.738(1.463)	2.439(1.489)
	Familiar	**Small**	5.30(1.409)	4.346(1.454)	2.313(1.511)
		Large	6.11(1.100)	4.500(1.620)	2.089(1.075)
External Flagging	**Unfamiliar**	**Small**	5.21(1.771)	4.300(1.732)	2.086(1.478)
		Large	5.51(1.704)	4.603(1.650)	2.153(1.249)
	Familiar	**Small**	5.50(1.745)	4.115(1.883)	1.941(1.275)
		Large	5.35(1.945)	4.500(1.810)	2.470(1.458)

Table VI-2 presents the correlation matrix. According to the significant effects reported in the table, source of flagging and familiarity among the fellow customers both negatively correlates with the perceived influence on friendship (which is negative, e.g. "this incident will make my friends think less of me"). Also, embarrassment was found to positively correlate with the negative perceived influence on friendship and personality measure (which was developed based on a previous study investigating significant personality traits that influence embarrassment arousal, e.g. "Social interactions usually make me feel anxious"). Further, satisfaction negatively correlates with negative word-of-mouth intentions. Negative word-if-mouth intention is also significantly correlated with the negative perceived influence on friendship.

TableVI-2: *Correlation Table of the Main Study Results*

	Source of Flagging	Familiarity	Group Size	Embarrass-ment	Satisf-action	Negative Word-of Mouth	Influence on Friendship	Personality
Source of Flagging	-							
Familiarity	.020	-						
Group Size	.018	-.139*	-					
Embarrass-ment	-.080	.010	.015	-				
Satisfaction	-.077	-.070	.024	.010	(.855**)†			
Negative Word-of Mouth Intention	.024	.013	-.003	-.047	-.668**	(.749**)†		
Influence on Friendship	-.141*	-.149*	.089	.327**	-.099	.257**	(.841**)†	
Personality	.029	-.005	-.098	.203**	.082	-.081	.186**	(.739)

Note: Cronbach's alphas reported on the diagonal in parentheses.
For "source of flagging", 0=internal, 1=external; For "familiarity", 0=unfamiliar, 1=familiar; For "Group Size", 0=small, 1=large.
†. Correlation coefficient instead of Cronbach's alpha was reported for the measure of "Satisfaction", "Influence on Friendship" and "negative word-of-mouth intentions".
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Realism Check

Results from manipulation check showed that participants were relatively

unfamiliar with the dining setting (mean familiarity rating of 1.30). Moreover, the

average realism rating of all scenarios was relatively high (Mean = 5.04), with the lowest

rating of 4.515 for the "External Flagging – Unfamiliar – Large Group" scenario and the

highest rating of 5.417 for the "Internal Flagging – Unfamiliar – Small Group" scenario.

Table VI-3: *Perceived Realism Rating by Scenario*

Experimental Manipulation			Perceived Realism
Source of Flagging of the Mishap	*Familiarity among the Fellow Customers*	*Group Size of the Fellow Customers*	
Internal Flagging	Unfamiliar	Small	5.417
		Large	4.963
	Familiar	Small	5.000
		Large	5.353
External Flagging	Unfamiliar	Small	4.761
		Large	4.515
	Familiar	Small	5.106
		Large	5.364

For hypothesis testing, we fit the data with an ANCOVA model to test hypothesis

one: if the hypothesized factors of "source of flagging", "group size" and "group

familiarity" have significant influence embarrassment. Variables of "Influence on

Friendship" (IOF) and "Personality" were included in the model as covariates. For

hypothesis two, we ran a hierarchical linear regression to check if elicited embarrassment

further induces negative word-of-mouth intentions.

Embarrassment Arousal

Results showed that, for consumer embarrassment, the overall model is significant

($F[9,214]=4.435$, p-value=.000). The three way interaction was significant

($F[1,214]=5.827$, p-value=.017). The covariate effects of IOF ($F[1,214]=20.645$, p-

value=.000) and Personality (F[1,214]=5.718, p-value=.018) were significant. None of

the main effects or lower-order interaction effects was significant.

Table VI-4: *ANOVA Table for Embarrassment*

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	p-value
Corrected Model	93.172	9	10.352	4.435	.000
Intercept	188.081	1	188.081	80.566	.000
IOF	48.195	1	48.195	20.645	.000
PERSONALITY	13.350	1	13.350	5.718	.018
Group Familiarity	2.078	1	2.078	.890	.347
Group Size	.031	1	.031	.013	.908
Source of Flagging	1.730	1	1.730	.741	.390
Group Familiarity * Group Size	4.577	1	4.577	1.961	.163
Group Familiarity * Source of Flagging	.079	1	.079	.034	.855
Group Size * Source of Flagging	.013	1	.013	.006	.941
Group Familiarity * Group Size * Source of Flagging	13.603	1	13.603	5.827	.017
Error	478.568	205	2.334		
Total	7092.000	215			

To better understand the three-way interaction, the whole data set was further split

by "source of flagging", and then ANOVA test was run for embarrassment by "group

familiarity" and "group size" for each of the data sets.

Results of analysis showed that when source of flagging comes from the internal

self, the two way interaction model of "Familiarity" and "Group Size" on embarrassment

with "Influence on Friendship" and "Personality" as covariates was significant

(F[5,89]=3.921, p-value=.003). Within the model, the two way interaction effect of

familiarity and group size was significant (F[1,89]=8.236, p-value=.005) as well as both

covariate effects of "personality" and "influence on friendship". However, none of the

main effects was significant.

Table VI-5: *ANOVA Table for Embarrassment, Internal Source of Flagging*

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	p-value
Corrected Model	36.121	5	7.224	3.921	.003
Intercept	90.287	1	90.287	49.002	.000
IOF	13.738	1	13.738	7.456	.008
PERSONALITY	6.293	1	6.293	3.416	.068
Group Familiarity	.946	1	.946	.513	.476
Group Size	.033	1	.033	.018	.894
Group Familiarity * Group Size	15.176	1	15.176	8.236	.005
Error	163.985	89	1.843		
Total	3213.000	95			

The interaction plot suggests that when source of flagging comes from the internal

self and the fellow customers are unfamiliar, a small group size (*Mean* = 6.00) will

arouse higher level of embarrassment than a large one (*Mean* = 5.31) (t=1.675, p-value=

0.100). However, when the source of flagging was internal and the fellow customers are

familiar, a small group size (*Mean* = 5.30) will lead to lower level of embarrassment than

large (*Mean* = 6.11) (t=-2.031, p-value=0.048).
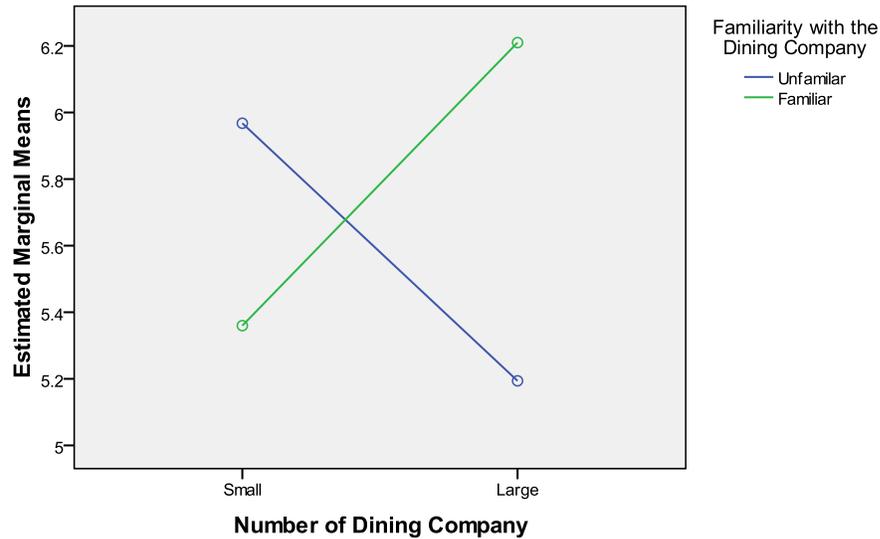
Figure VI-1: *Two-way Interaction Plot for Embarrassment (Internal Flagging)*

When the source of flagging was external, the two way interaction model was significant too (F[5, 119]=4.216, p-value=.001). However, the covariate effect of "Influence on Friendship" was the only significant effect in the model.

Table VI-6: *ANOVA Table for Embarrassment, External Source of Flagging*

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	p-value
Corrected Model	57.584[a]	5	11.517	4.216	.001
Intercept	99.003	1	99.003	36.243	.000
IOF	37.391	1	37.391	13.688	.000
PERSONALITY	5.942	1	5.942	2.175	.143
Group Familiarity	1.105	1	1.105	.405	.526
Group Size	.007	1	.007	.003	.959
Group Familiarity * Group Size	1.377	1	1.377	.504	.479
Error	311.408	114	2.732		
Total	3879.000	120			

Therefore, the three hypothesized independent variables interactively contribute to consumers' embarrassment. Only when the mishap was suggested internally, the interaction of group size and familiarity of fellow customers significantly lead to consumer embarrassment. When the mishap was suggested externally, group size and familiarity of fellow customers does not contribute to consumer embarrassment.

Negative Word-of-Mouth Intention

We ran a hierarchical regression analysis to test the second hypothesis on negative word-of-mouth intentions. We controlled covariate effects and treatment effects to test the effect of embarrassment on negative word-of-mouth intentions. At first stage, only treatment effects and covariate effects were entered as predictors for negative word-of-mouth. At the second stage, embarrassment was entered into the model.

Results of analysis showed that adding embarrassment in the model was significant (*F-change*[1,208]=5.603, p-value=.019). The second-stage model (with embarrassment included) was significant (*F*[6,208]=5.636, p-value=.000). Results revealed that "Influence on Friendship" (β=.383, t=5.434, p-value=.000) and embarrassment (β=-.164, t=-2.367, p-value=.019) were significant predictors of negative word-of-mouth intentions. Personality was marginally significant (β=-1.912, t=-1.912, p-value=.057). None of the other effects was significant.

The value of beta coefficient indicated that embarrassment is negatively related to negative word-of-mouth intentions. That means, the more embarrassed the involved individual is the less likely he/she will spread negative word-of-mouth.

Summary

In conclusion, our results found that in service interactions where a consumer's mishap takes place, the internal or external attribution of the mishap (source of flagging), the group size of customers and the familiarity among the group interactively contribute to the elicitation of consumer embarrassment. Further, embarrassment was found to significantly relate with negative word-of-mouth intentions. (See Figure VI-3 for summary of results).

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Overview

This thesis adopted an experimental design manipulating the hypothesized independent variables and measuring the dependent variables for statistical testing. Results of this study supported the hypothesis of three way interaction of the independent variables – the elicitation of embarrassment and negative word-of-mouth intentions. Chapter VII presents a general discussion of the results.

The Two Stage Appraisal Processing

For the elicitation of embarrassment, this thesis adopted the appraisal theory and proposed that the two stages of appraisal interactively determine the strength of embarrassment to be felt by the individual customer. The results supported our hypothesis with a significant three way interaction effect of source of attribution, familiarity and group size of fellow customers on consumer embarrassment. Also, none of the main effects or two way interaction effects was significantly supported by our results. This implies that the appraisal processing model is appropriate to conceptualize the situational factors in a service interaction leading to consumer embarrassment. This processing was found to be individually based, as the level of elicited embarrassment is

affected by individual traits – their personality and their concerns for the influence on friendship.

The Split Effect

This thesis conceptualized the influence of fellow consumers as important situational factors leading to focal consumer's experience emotion of embarrassment. It was proposed that there is a split effect of customer's "self" presentation goal. And a two dimensional model of familiarity and group size of fellow customers was proposed to conceptualize the split effect of "self" presentation goal. It was proposed that as the level of familiarity among the focal customer and his/her fellow customers increases from total stranger to close friends, the focal customer's "self" presentation goal changes from "self-protection" (does not want to expose the self) to "self-showing" (want to show the good "self" according to individual's situational goals for image management). For the two goal scenarios, the effect from group size of fellow customers contradicts each other in eliciting consumer embarrassment.

The results supported this hypothesis with a significant three way interaction effect on consumer embarrassment. Though the mean results of descriptive analysis showed an interactive pattern among elicited embarrassment across different scenarios, the two-way interaction effect of familiarity and group size was not significant. This suggests that the split effect is only one part of the general appraisal processing model of individuals' embarrassment elicitation. Besides appraising the relevance and congruence of self-presentation goal, coping potential is also appraised by individuals in

embarrassing situations. And the attribution of mishap implies the coping potential for appraisal, which further interacts with the split effect of self-presentation goal to elicit consumer embarrassment.

The Negative Word-of-Mouth Effect

Our results identified the three factors of: attribution of mishap, group size of fellow customers and the familiarity among the group interactively contribute to consumer embarrassment, when consumer's mishap has already taken place. Further, embarrassment leads to negative word-of-mouth intentions. The more an individual feel embarrassed, the less likely he/she will generate negative word-of-mouth intentions.

In our manipulations, we controlled service quality to a constantly high level. That means, when the service quality is high but customers experienced a mishap that could potentially lead to embarrassment, negative word-of-mouth intentions will be induced. Unless the embarrassment level was really high and induce a "shut-off" effect, the embarrassed customers will spread negative word-of-mouth to his/her friends and family in order to disrupt their patronage intentions. Therefore, embarrassment could be a significant potential factor leading to negative word-of-mouth behaviors.

CHAPTER VIII

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Overview

In conclusion, results of this study suggested that in service interactions when customer mishaps happened, the internal or external attribution of the mishap, the group size of customers and the familiarity among the group interactively contribute to induce customer embarrassment and negative word-of-mouth intentions. Contributions of this research, both conceptually and managerially are presented in this chapter. Limitations and directions of future research are discussed as well.

Theoretical Contributions

Supported by empirical results, the role theory perspective was appropriate for the conceptualization of embarrassment elicitation. Our results suggested that the elicitation of consumer embarrassment could be processed along two stages of appraisal – primary stage and secondary stage. It was the effects of both appraisal stages interactively contributing to the elicitation of consumer embarrassment. Previous literature suggested that embarrassment gets aroused automatically and involuntarily and is short in duration. Our findings revealed that the elicitation of embarrassment also involves a self-appraisal process during which the feeling of embarrassment could be alleviated by conscious appraisal of the relatedness between self and situation as well as coping potentials by the involved individual. Consistent with previous findings which suggest that certain

"personality" traits significantly influence embarrassment arousal, results of this study suggested that personality measure is a significant covariate to embarrassment. Perceived influence on friendship (negative) was also a significant covariate to the embarrassment model. Embarrassment then leads to negative word-of-mouth intentions. This further supports the idea that embarrassment gets elicited automatically but how this emotion will influence word-of-mouth intentions could be attenuated by individual's appraisal-based coping behaviors.

Managerial Implications

Different from previous literature which identified situational incidents that leads to consumer embarrassment or potential source that causes consumer embarrassment, this thesis emphasized on the concept of "mishap" in a serve interaction. Mishap was conceptualized as inconsistent behavior according to the socially accepted service script. As the mishap was found to be attributed by individual customer either internally or externally and that attribution further leads to elicit consumer embarrassment, findings of this study suggests the importance of a clear service script accurately comprehended by customers.

The factors of "source of attribution", "group size of fellow customers" and "familiarity among the fellow customers" were found to significantly induce negative word-of-mouth intentions. This suggests the importance of service providers' sensitivity about the on-going service interaction and service providers' ability to read customers. Based on their "reading", service providers' behaviors will further influence customers'

appraisal processing of the situation and that further influences on their emotional reactions.

For service companies, one way to avoid embarrassing situations that will cause negative influence on customers is to train employees to understand the group effect on customers. It is also important for service companies to provide a clear service script and make sure that the script is accurately communicated to customers, especially customers who are not familiar with the specific type of service encounter.

Limitations

As with any research, this study has several limitations. First, the current sample size is small. The rule of thumb for experimental design suggests that for each design scenario, at least a number of 30 observations per cell is required for significant results. It is necessary to collect more data to get robust results for this study. Second, the method of designed vignettes could be problematic as often times it could very likely over-eliciting or under-eliciting the desired emotion. Therefore, the scenario method might not be as effective as a field study in capturing emotions such as embarrassment. Third, an extension of this study to other service contexts (e.g.: hotels) would enhance the generalizability of our findings.

Suggestions for Future Research

As the mishap was conceptualized as any behavior that an individual cannot be able to take but they are supposed to according to a socially-accepted script, an important extension of this concept will be in the inter-cultural service. As service script is socially-shaped, it various across cultures. Therefore, mishap will more likely to be induced by a gap of comprehension between customers and service providers. An extension in this direction will bring us a better understanding of the inter-cultural service encounter.

Another direction for future research would be to identify effective service recovery strategies that could be implemented to prevent the negative impact. As previous literature suggested that individuals cope with embarrassment with remediation strategies that redefine the situation, one direction of word-of-mouth research could be aimed to identify potential resources available for service companies to implement "recovery strategies" that assist individual customers redefine the embarrassing situation soon after embarrassment gets elicited so that the negative feeling could be alleviated to a level that would not influence word-of-mouth behaviors.

This study focuses on the elicitation of embarrassment. However, as embarrassment is supposed to last for only moments. Will the effect of embarrassment function to a same strength level when the individual was not experiencing the elicited embarrassment but rather recalling a past embarrassing experience? Will this recall of memory influence individual's on-going choice behavior in a range of service companies? If so, what strategies could service companies adopt to control the negative influence?

These are the potential directions to pursue regarding consumer embarrassment in service

interactions.

A SAMPLE OF INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PILOT STUDY

Scenario 1, manipulation of independent variables:

1. **"Source of Flagging of the Mishap" = External**
2. **"Familiarity among Fellow Customers" = High**
3. **"Group Size of Fellow Customers" = Large**

Imagine that the following incident takes place during your first visit to a new Malaysian restaurant. Read the scenario carefully and answer the questions that follow.

You are having dinner with seven old friends. The server seats the eight of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. Just as you take the first spoon of it, the server came to you and explained that the steaming liquid was not soup but was for hand washing.

Think about this scenario as what you experienced when answering the following questions:
How would you feel in this situation? Please state the extent to which you would feel the following emotions.

	1= Wouldn't feel like this at all						7= Would feel like this very strongly
angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
cheerful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
disappointed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
delighted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
embarrassed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
guilty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
peaceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
furious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
shamed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
pleased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*How often have you dined in a Malaysian restaurant?

       0-2 times [   ]   3-5 times [   ]   6-12 times [   ]   Over twelve times [   ]

*How familiar would you say you are with Malaysian restaurants?

Very Unfamiliar						Very Familiar	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

* What is your gender?   [   ] Male   [   ] Female

* How old are you?   _____ years

* How realistic is the scenario description?

Highly Unrealistic						Highly Realistic	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

* How difficult is it for you to project yourself into the scenario?

Very Easy						Very Difficult	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

* Based on what you read in the reading scenario, how well do you agree with the following?

    1= highly disagree   7 = highly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I realized my mishap before others took a notice of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The server made me realize my mishap.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* How would you rate the familiarity between you and your company in this dining experience?

Highly Unfamiliar						Highly Familiar	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

* Would you agree that your dining party was composed of a large group?

Highly Unrealistic						Highly Realistic	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

*** *Thank you for your participation!* ***

APPENDIX B

IMPLIED CONSENT FORM FOR THE MAIN STUDY

Implied Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project:	**Investigating Consumer Emotion & Attitudes with the Presence of Other Consumers**
Principal Investigator:	Luorong Wu, Graduate Student 201 Mateer Building University Park, PA 16802-1307 (917) 539-8080; lzw136@psu.edu
Advisor:	Dr. Anna S. Mattila 224 Mateer Building University Park, PA 16802 (814) 863-5757; asm6@psu.edu

1. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research study is to understand consumers' emotions and attitudes.
2. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be asked to read a scenario and answer questions on a survey.
3. **Duration/Time:** It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the survey.
4. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. The survey does not ask for any information that would identify the respondent. In the event of any publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared because your name is in no way linked to your responses.
5. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Luorong Wu (917) 539-8080 orAnna Mattila (814) 863-5757with questions or concerns about this study.
6. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.
7. **Payment for participation:** Participants will be entered into a drawing for one of six $50 gift cards to Olive Garden or Outback Steakhouse. The chances of winning are approximately 6 in 300. The drawing will be held at the completion of the data collection phase of the study and the winner will be notified via campus mail.

You must be above the age of 18 to take part in this research study.

Completion and return of the survey implies that you have read the information in this form and consent to take part in the research.

NOTE: Please follow the instructions when returning the completed survey, separately, from the drawing entry form. It is important that the survey have no identifying information on it connecting your responses to your name or other identifiable information.

Please keep this form for your records or word-of-mouth use.

APPENDIX C

DESIGNED VIGNETTES FOR THE MAIN STUDY

Internal Flagging of the Mishap, Small Group, Familiar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with two old friends. The server seats the three of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. You take a spoonful of soup and find that it tastes like a flavorless green tea. Confused, you glance around the table and find your friends washing their hands in their bowls. You then realize that the "soup" was water for hand-washing…

Internal Flagging of the Mishap, Small Group, Unfamiliar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with two new friends that you met earlier today. The server seats the three of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. You take a spoonful of soup and find that it tastes like a flavorless green tea. Confused, you glance around the table and find your new friends washing their hands in their bowls. You then realize that the "soup" was water for hand-washing…

Internal Flagging of the Mishap, Large Group, Familiar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with seven old friends. The server seats the eight of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. You take a spoonful of soup and find that it tastes like a flavorless green tea. Confused, you glance around the table and find your friends washing their hands in their bowls. You then realize that the "soup" was water for hand-washing…

Internal Flagging of the Mishap, Large Group, Unfamiliar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with seven new friends that you met earlier today. The server seats the eight of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. You take a spoonful of soup and find that it tastes like a flavorless green tea. Confused, you glance around the table and find your new friends washing their hands in their bowls. You then realize that the "soup" was water for hand-washing…

External Flagging of the Mishap, Small Group, Familiar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with two old friends. The server seats the three of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. Just as you take the first spoon of it,

the server came to you and explained that the steaming liquid was not soup but was for hand washing.

External Flagging of the Mishap, Small Group, Unfamiliar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with two new friends that you met earlier today. The server seats the three of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. Just as you take the first spoon of it, the server came to you and explained that the steaming liquid was not soup but was for hand washing.

External Flagging of the Mishap, Large Group, Familiar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with seven old friends. The server seats the eight of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. Just as you take the first spoon of it, the server came to you and explained that the steaming liquid was not soup but was for hand washing.

External Flagging of the Mishap, Large Group, Unfamiliar Fellow Customers

You are having dinner with seven new friends that you met earlier today. The server seats the eight of you at a round table. You order an exciting new dish which turns out to be delicious. The server is speedy and gracious. After serving the main dish, hand-

grasping rice, the server serves you a bowl of steaming liquid that resembles soup. Just as you take the first spoon of it, the server came to you and explained that the steaming liquid was not soup but was for hand washing.

APPENDIX D

MEASURE OF THE MAIN STUDY

Think about this scenario as what you experienced when answering the following questions:

How would you feel in this situation? Please state the extent to which you would feel the following emotions.

	1= Wouldn't feel like this at all						7= Would feel like this very strongly
angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
cheerful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
disappointed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
delighted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
embarrassed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
guilty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
peaceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
furious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
shame	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
pleased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Based on what happened in the scenario, how likely is it that you would feel as the following:

	1= Very Dissatisfied						7 = Very Satisfied
Overall, how satisfied would you be with your experience with this restaurant on this particular occasion?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How satisfied would you be with your service experience on this particular occasion?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Based on what happened in the scenario, how likely is it that you would do as the following:

	1= Not at all likely						7 = Extremely likely
Discourage others to visit this restaurant in the word-of-mouth	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Complain to others about your dining experience at this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Based on what happened in the scenario, how likely is it that you would feel about as the following:

	1= Not at all likely						7 = Extremely likely
This incident will make my friends think less of me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This incident will make me lose-face in front of my friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This incident will bring positive influence on how my friends think of me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

This incident will not affect how my friends think of me at all	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Would you agree that the following description fits your personality?

	1= highly disagree						7 = highly agree
I am a person of neuroticism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am an out-going person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Social interactions usually make me feel anxious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Performing or speaking before large groups makes me feel anxious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I behave in public settings to improve others' impressions of me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I behave in public settings to avoid making a fool of myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am very sensitive to others' rejections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I usually behave to avoid conflicts in public settings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a person with a high level of self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a person with a stable level of self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Based on what you have perceived from your friends/acquaintances in daily interactions, would you agree that your friends think of you as the followings:

	1= highly disagree						7 = highly agree
My friends usually think of me as respectable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My friends usually think of me as of leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My friends usually think of me as sensitive to unfamiliar scenarios	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My friends usually think of me as smart and intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My friends usually think of me as easy-going	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My friends usually think of me as flexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Finally some quick questions….

*How often do you visit Singaporean restaurants every month?

0-2 times [   ]   3-5 times [   ]   6-12 times [   ]   Over twelve times [   ]

*How familiar would you say you are with Singaporean restaurants?

Very Unfamiliar						Very Familiar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* What is your gender?   [   ] Male   [   ] Female

* How old are you?   _____ years

* How realistic is the scenario description?

Highly Unrealistic						Highly Realistic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* How difficult is it for you to project yourself into the scenario?

Very Easy						Very Difficult
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* Based on what you read of in the reading scenario, would you agree the following facts as true?

	1= highly disagree					7 = highly agree	
I realized my mishap before others took a notice of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The server made me realize my mishap.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* How would you rate the familiarity between you and your dining party in this dining experience?

Highly Unfamiliar						Highly Familiar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* Would you agree that your dining party was composed of a large group?

Highly Unrealistic						Highly Realistic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*** *Thank you for your cooperation* ***

References

Azar, O. H. (2007). Why pay extra? Tipping and the importance of social norms and feelings in economic theory. *Journal of Socio-Economics, 36*(2), 250-265.

Babcock, M. K. (1988). Embarrassment: A window on the self. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 18*(4), 459-483.

Baumeister, R., & Leary, M. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological bulletin, 117*, 497-497.

Billig, M. (2001). Humour and Embarrassment: Limits of `Nice-Guy' Theories of Social Life. *Theory, Culture & Society, 18*(5), 23-43.

Brown, B., & Garland, H. (1971). The effects of incompetency, audience acquaintanceship, and anticipated evaluative feedback on face-saving behavior* 1. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 7*(5), 490-502.

Brumbaugh, A. M., & Rosa, J. A. (2009). Perceived Discrimination, Cashier Metaperceptions, Embarrassment, and Confidence as Influencers of Coupon Use: An Ethnoracial-Socioeconomic Analysis. *Journal of Retailing, 85*(3), 347-362.

Cupach, W., Metts, S., & Hazleton, V. (1986). Coping with embarrassing predicaments: Remedial strategies and their perceived utility. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 5*(3), 181.

Dahl, D. W., Manchanda, R. V., & Argo, J. J. (2001). Embarrassment in consumer purchase: The roles of social presence and purchase familiarity. [Article]. *Journal of Consumer Research, 28*(3), 473-481.

Edelmann, R. J., Asendorpf, J., Contarello, A., Georgas, J., Villanueva, C., & Zammuner, V. (1987). Self-reported verbal and non-verbal strategies for coping with embarrassment in five European cultures. *Social Science Information, 26*(4), 869-883.

Edwards, J., & Baglioni, A. (1993). The measurement of coping with stress: Construct validity of the Ways of Coping Checklist and the Cybernetic Coping Scale. *Work & Stress, 7*(1), 17-31.

Fink, E. L., & Walker, B. A. (1977). Humorous responses to embarrassment. *Psychological reports, 40*(2), 475-485.

Folkman, S., Lazarus, R., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 50*(5), 992-1003.

Geppert, U., & Küter, U. (1983). The Emergence of 'Wanting to Do It Oneself': A Precursor of Achievement Motivation. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 6*(3), 355.

Godwin, B., Patterson, P., & Johnson, L. (1999). Consumer coping strategies with dissatisfactory service encounters: A preliminary investigation. *JOURNAL OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION DISSATISFACTION AND COMPLAINING BEHAVIOR, 12*, 145-154.

Grace, D. (2007). How Embarrassing! An Exploratory Study of Critical Incidents Including Affective Reactions. *Journal of Service Research, 9*(3), 271-284.

Grace, D. (2009). An examination of consumer embarrassment and repatronage intentions in the context of emotional service encounters. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 16*(1), 1-9.

Gross, J. (1998). Antecedent-and response-focused emotion regulation: Divergent consequences for experience, expression, and physiology. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 74*, 224-237.

Gutman, J. (1982). A means-end chain model based on consumer categorization processes. *The Journal of Marketing, 46*(2), 60-72.

Harris, C. R. (2001). Cardiovascular responses of embarrassment and effects of emotional suppression in a social setting. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 81*(5), 886-897.

Iacobucci, D., Calder, B., Malthouse, E., & Duhacheck, A. (2003). Psychological, Marketing, Physical, and Sociological Factors Affecting Attitudes and Behavioral Intentions for Customers Resisting the Purchase of an Embarrassing Product. *Advances in Consumer Research, 30*, 236-240.

Keltner, D. (1995). Signs of Appeasement: Evidence for the Distinct Displays of Embarrassment, Amusement, and Shame. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 68*(3), 441-454.

Keltner, D., & Buswell, B. N. (1996). Evidence for the distinctness of embarrassment, shame, and guilt: A study of recalled antecedents and facial expressions of emotion. *Cognition and Emotion, 10*(2), 155-171.

Lazarus, R., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*: Springer Publishing Company.

Lewis, M., Haviland-Jones, J., & Barrett, L. (2008). *Handbook of emotions*: The Guilford Press.

Lewis, M., Sullivan, M., Stanger, C., & Weiss, M. (1989). Self development and self-conscious emotions. *Child Development, 60*(1), 146-156.

MacDonald, L., & Davies, M. (1983). Effects of being observed by a friend or stranger on felt embarrassment and attributions of embarrassment. *The Journal of psychology, 113*(2), 171-174.

Manstead, A., & Semin, G. (1981). Social transgressions, social perspectives, and social emotionality. *Motivation and Emotion, 5*(3), 249-261.

Marcus, D. K., & Miller, R. S. (1999). The perception of "live" embarrassment: A social relations analysis of class presentations. *Cognition & Emotion, 13*(1), 105-117.

McLaughun, M., Cody, M., & O'Hair, H. (1983). The management of failure events: Some contextual determinants of accounting behavior. *Human Communication Research, 9*(3), 208-224.

Milgram, S., & Sabini, J. (1978). On maintaining urban norms: A field experiment in the subway. *Advances in environmental psychology, 1*, 31-40.

Miller, R. S. (1987). Empathic Embarrassment: Situational and Personal Determinants of Reactions to the Embarrassment of Another. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 53*(6), 1061-1069.

Miller, R. S. (1992). The Nature And Severity of Self-reported Embarrassing Circumstances. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 18*(2), 190-198.

Miller, R. S. (1997). *Embarrassment: Poise and peril in everyday life*: The Guilford Press.

Miller, R. S., & Leary, M. (1992). Social sources and interactive functions of emotion: The case of embarrassment. 210.

Modigliani, A. (1968). Embarrassment and embarrassability. *Sociometry, 31*(3), 313-326.

Modigliani, A. (1971). Embarrassment, facework, and eye contact: Testing a theory of embarrassment. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 17*(1), 15-24.

Parrott, W. G., Sabini, J., & Silver, M. (1988). The roles of self-esteem and social interaction in embarrassment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 14*(1), 191-202.

Petronio, S. (1984). Communication strategies to reduce embarrassment differences between men and women. *Western Journal of Communication, 48*(1), 28-38.

Price, L., Arnould, E., & Deibler, S. (1995). Consumers' emotional responses to service encounters: the influence of the service provider. *International Journal of Service Industry Management, 6*(3), 34-63.

Rehman, S., & Brooks Jr, J. (1987). Attitudes toward television advertisements for controversial products. *Journal of health care marketing, 7*(3), 78.

Richins, M. (1997). Measuring emotions in the consumption experience. *Journal of Consumer Research, 24*(2), 127-146.

Robbins, B. D., & Parlavecchio, H. (2006). The Unwanted Exposure of the Self: A Phenomenological Study of Embarrassment. *The Humanistic Psychologist, 34*(4), 321-345.

Sabini, J., Siepmann, M., Stein, J., & Meyerowitz, M. (2000). Who is embarrassed by what? *Cognition & Emotion, 14*(2), 213-240.

Sasaki, J., Sugawara, K., & Tanno, Y. (2005). Why is the diverse U letter relationship between embarrassment and psychological distance observed?: In view of Schlenker and Leary(1982)'s self-presentation model of social anxiety. *Japanese Journal of Psychology, 76*(5), 445-452.

Schlenker, B., & Darby, B. (1981). The use of apologies in social predicaments. *Social psychology quarterly, 44*(3), 271-278.

Scott, M., & Stanford, M. (1968). Accounts? *American Sociological Review, 3*, 46-62.

Semin, G. R., & Manstead, A. S. (1982). The social implications of embarrassment displays and restitution behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 12*(4), 367-377.

Silver, M., Sabini, J., & Parrott, W. G. (1987). Embarrassment: A dramaturgic account. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 17*(1), 47-61.

Solomon, M., Surprenant, C., Czepiel, J., & Gutman, E. (1985). A role theory perspective on dyadic interactions: the service encounter. *The Journal of Marketing, 49*(1), 99-111.

Stipek, D., Recchia, S., McClintic, S., & Lewis, M. (1992). Self-evaluation in young children. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 57*(1).

Stonehouse, C., & Miller, R. (1994). *Embarrassing circumstances, week by week*.

Sueda, K., & Wiseman, R. L. (1992). Embarrassment Remediation in Japan and the United States. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 16*(2), 159-173.

Sugawara, K. (1992). A study on embarrassment in new role situation: Using the data from university students at their probation in nursery school for the first time. *Communication and Society (Bulletin of Edogawa University), 2*, 31-39.

Verbeke, W., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2003). Exploring the role of self- and customer-provoked embarrassment in personal selling. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 20*(3), 233-258.

Wan, F., Bhatnagar, N., & Qiu, P. (2008). *All Friendliness is Not Created Equal: The Role of Impression Management Goals and Server Connectedness in Consumer Embarrassment and Server Experience.*

Weiner, B. (2000). Attributional thoughts about consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research, 27*(3), 382-387.

White, T. (2004). Consumer disclosure and disclosure avoidance: A motivational framework. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 14*(1), 41-51.

Wilson, A., & West, C. (1981). The marketing of unmentionables. *Harvard Business Review, 59*(1), 91-102.

Zajonc, R. (1965). Social facilitation. *Science, 149*, 269-274.