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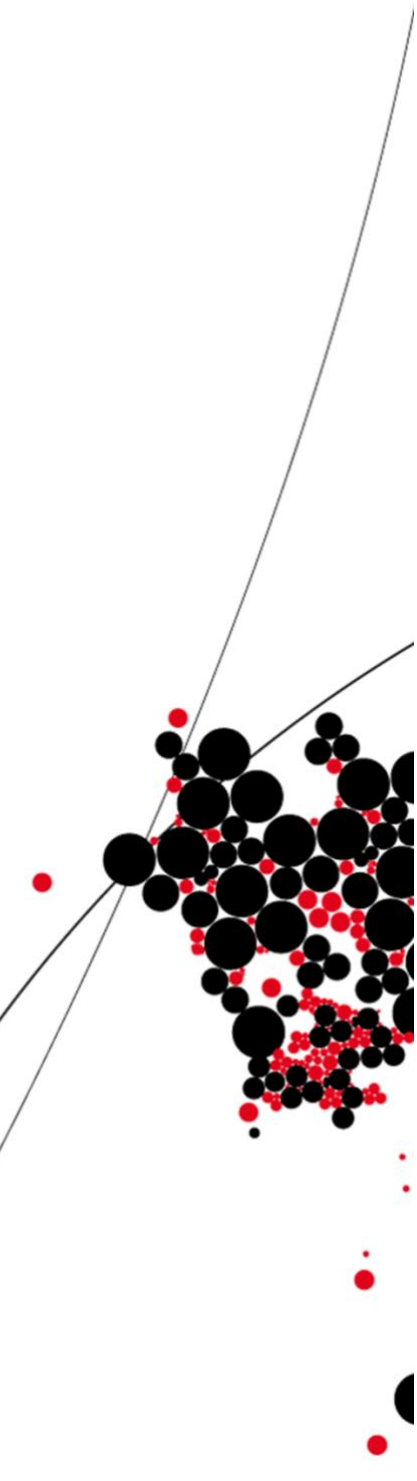
Master Thesis

Good Things Come to Those who Wait? The Effect of Waiting Times on the Perceived Exclusivity of a Restaurant



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Abstract

Objective Most waiting research concentrates on the negative impact of waiting on consumers, which, ultimately, can have negative effects on businesses, for example by negatively influencing the consumer's satisfaction. However, in many instances people seem to accept long waits willingly and the scarce research on positive effects of waiting has supported the assumption that, under certain circumstances, waiting can have a positive impact. This paper looks at one factor that might play an important role on the positive effects of waiting: exclusivity. In the context of the full-service restaurant industry, the goal of this research is to see if long in-process waiting times positively influence the perceived exclusivity and whether high levels of perceived exclusivity will lead to a more positive evaluation of the wait by the consumer. Further, it is examined if the reputation of a restaurant and the availability of seats moderate the relationship between waiting times and perceived exclusivity.

Method An online experiment employing a scenario-based method using a 2x2x2 between–subjects design was conducted in German and English (n=239). The participants were randomly assigned to one out of eight scenarios. In each scenario the objective waiting time (long vs. short), reputation (high vs. low), and availability of seats (high vs. low) was manipulated. Following the scenario, participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire to measure the evaluation of the waiting time, the acceptance of the waiting time and the perceived exclusivity of the restaurant.

Findings The results did partly confirm the expected results. While long objective waiting times lead to lower levels of perceived exclusivity, high levels of exclusivity lead to a more positive cognitive evaluation of the waiting time, i.e. long waits are more accepted and consumers are less annoyed by long waiting times. The number of available seats does not influence the acceptable waiting time if the objective waiting is long, only if the objective waiting time is short. Further, the reputation does not show to have a moderating effect.

Contribution Practitioners can benefit from this research since it provides an insight into acceptable waiting times at restaurants. Especially restaurants that are already perceived as exclusive and have a positive reputation should try to reduce in-process waiting times and manage them properly in order to meet clients` expectations. Additionally, this study adds to the waiting literature by introducing the factor exclusivity to the field, which hasn't been examined in the context of waiting so far.

Conclusion While the expected relations could only be partly shown, this study is a valuable contribution to practitioners and the academic literature on waiting alike. It shows that long waiting times are harmful for the consumers' perception of the business, but when exclusivity is already established it facilitates the acceptance of long waits.

Keywords: objective waiting time – exclusivity – acceptable waiting time – reputation – availability – restaurant - service

1. Introduction

Waiting is an inevitable part of every day's life, which is often perceived as stressful, especially when it occurs in purchasing or service situations. In those instances, people may have to wait in order to pay, to get information and assistance or to try the products, they have to wait for products be delivered or for meals to be prepared. For most companies, it is within their possibilities and aims to reduce and improve the waiting time and experience, because negative waiting experiences might not only have negative effects on the customer, but, ultimately, on the company itself. In fact, even though there has been an increased academic interest in waiting, most research has concentrated on the negative effect of waiting on the emotional state and the satisfaction of customers (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007; Pruyn & Smidts, 1998) and the proper management of waiting times (Pruyn & Smidts, 1999; Davis & Heineke, 1998; Rudolph, Pruyn & Wagner, 2002).

Most of the studies have shown that long waiting experiences will generate negative emotions like anxiety, boredom, anger, stress, demoralization, frustration and more. Those emotions will negatively influence the overall satisfaction with the service experience, which, for example, is also connected to customer loyalty (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007). This gives an insight into the widespread effects of waiting times that are not managed properly. Additionally, it seems that people and companies try to avoid waiting times at all costs, especially since the digitalization there seem to be more and more services aimed at reducing waiting times, such as same-day-delivery, online grocery shopping and so forth. Nevertheless, sometimes it is not possible for companies to reduce waiting times, because some products and service simply need time to be produced or prepared. If waiting times cannot be reduced, companies should find a way to communicate waiting times in a positive way to their customers.

One example of communicating waiting time positively was set by Guinness, the Irish brewery best known for their dry stout. According to the company, it takes 119.5 seconds to pour a pint of Guinness correctly (Stanger, 2013), which was too long for many consumers and negatively influenced their perception of the product. In the early 1990s, the advertising agency Abboott Mead Vickers BBDO pitched the "Good things come those who wait" slogan which eventually turned into a major campaign with television, cinema and print advertising, turning the length of the waiting time into an advantage by emphasizing that good things and high qualitative products are worth waiting for. Guinness used the theme, with slight variations, for about 10 years ("World's most creative partnerships", 2016). Several of the commercials created for the campaign won exceptionally many advertising awards, including "Best Ad of All Time" in 2002 for the "Surfer" commercial ("Guinness Surfer", n.d.). The campaign was not only a critically acclaimed success, but also financially, as it is said to have played a major part in positioning Guinness as the market leader in the United Kingdom beer market ("The revitalization of Guinness", 2007). This gives an example of how waiting time can be strategically used by companies to add value to their products and services.

The approach of communicating quality through waiting has also been supported by literature. Giebelhausen, Robinson & Cronin (2011) showed that required wait can signal quality to the consumers. Undeniably, there are instances where companies seem to deliberately extent the waiting time by creating, for instance, waiting lists or having an extremely long time of delivery and, as a result, having people willingly endure long waits. A

reason why businesses chose not to reduce waiting time and why customers are willing to accept longer waiting times than usual might be the perceived exclusivity. Exclusivity is commonly seen as the access to something that is limited to other people or groups. The term also refers to the state of being expensive and of high quality, which is also, but less often, described as exclusiveness (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). It has been long known that a sense of scarcity, which is strongly connected to exclusivity, can serve as a heuristic for people to think of objects to have a higher value when they are harder to obtain (Cialdini, 1984).

Waiting is in a fact an inherent part of many, if not most, of service experiences, therefore this paper will focus on a specific area of services: restaurants. Full-service restaurants are a very common setting where businesses are not able, and sometimes not willing, to reduce waiting times. There are several factors that are not fully controllable, which influence the waiting times in these establishments, e.g. the number of tables available, the number of customers requiring service at the same time, the number of service and kitchen staff available and manageable at the same time, the time it takes to prepare certain types of food and so forth. Still, longer waiting times may not automatically result in dissatisfaction of the costumer. In this paper, it is proposed that under certain circumstances long waiting times can positively influence the perception of the exclusivity a restaurant and the perceived exclusivity moderates the relation between the objective waiting time and the acceptable waiting time. Most people will have experienced waiting times that would be unacceptable in one restaurant, but are accepted and part of the experience in other restaurants. It`s proposed that the factors influencing the acceptable waiting time and cognitive evaluation of a wait are the reputation of the restaurant and the availability of seats, to say if the restaurant is full or empty. Some other possibly important variables will be controlled for, such as the regulatory focus of the customer, the desire for exclusivity of a participant and the frequency with which they visit restaurants.

To summarize, the goal of this paper is to explore the possible influence of objective waiting time on perceived exclusivity, under consideration of the reputation of the restaurant and the availability of seats, and how exclusivity on the other hand might influence the customers' evaluation of longer waiting times.

1.1 Theoretical & practical relevance

As mentioned earlier, most research addressing waiting time has a focus on how to cut back the actual waiting time as well as on the proper management of waiting lines. For example, a shorter subjective waiting time can be reached through modification of the waiting environment (Pruyn & Smidts, 1998). Nevertheless, there has also been research that concentrates on the positive effects of waiting, for example regarding anticipatory utility (Kumar, Killingsworth & Gilovich, 2014; Loewenstein, 1987). This paper aims to give a deeper insight into the different aspects of waiting and broaden the still scarce academic literature regarding possible positive effects on customers and companies, especially in connection to the perceived exclusivity of a brand.

Moving from the theoretical to the practical relevance of this study, long waiting times are often considered harmful for a successful business. Approaching waiting time as a positive factor on the purchase decision, through e.g. quality and exclusivity, might positively influence the customers' tolerance of waiting times and could help companies to manage unavoidable waits strategically. On one hand, to communicate exclusivity, which may have a

strong social influence on peoples' purchase decisions, and on the other hand, to get the customer to accept these long waiting times, because they consider the service or product worth it.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Waiting times

Three dimensions of waiting times are important to this study: the objective, cognitive and affective dimension (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007). The objective waiting time is the actual, measurable time that has passed (Hornik, 1984; Pruyn & Smidts, 1998; Taylor, 1994). The evaluation of the waiting times as being long versus short (Pruyn & Smidts, 1998), tolerable, reasonable and/or acceptable or not (Durrande-Moreau, 1999) is what constitutes the cognitive dimension of waiting. One important aspect of the cognitive response for this study is the acceptable waiting time, which Pruyn and Smidts (1998) define as the maximum amount of time tolerated in a specific waiting situation. Lastly, the affective dimension consists of the emotional response to the waiting time by the person waiting, for instance boredom, stress, anxiety, but also positive emotions like happiness or pleasure (Taylor, 1994; Hui & Tse, 1996; Pruyn & Smidts, 1998).

The focus of this paper is how objective waiting time can influence the perception of a product or service and how this perception, in turn, might influence the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time. As previously mentioned, long objective waiting times have been shown to generate overall negative effects on the cognitive and affective evaluation of waits. This means that people will accept long waits less and be more annoyed by it, as well as generally feeling bad about it. While the direct relation between objective waiting time and its evaluation is thought to be negative, it is proposed that the objective waiting time, together with other factors, can foster the perceived exclusivity of a product or service. The added value through exclusivity will then positively mediate the relation between the objective waiting time and the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time. The thought behind this assumption is based on the phenomenon of waiting time increasing the pleasure of a future event, which is something that most people have experienced before. In German, a very common proverb is "Vorfreude ist die schönste Freude" which roughly translates into "anticipation is the highest form of joy". In fact, Loewenstein (1987) showed that in some occasions people deliberately choose to wait for positive events, because the anticipation of future consumption can generate a positive anticipatory utility. Berns et al. (2007) claim that anticipation of pleasurable experiences does not only manifest itself in physiological arousal, but under certain circumstances, it has an effect on the decision-making process of immediate or delayed pleasure or pain. This anticipatory utility might be one of the reasons for people to endure longer waits for services and goods than they usually would. This might be based on the fact that anticipation is just one mechanism of decision making situations that have been described by neuro-psychological as well as economic literature as intertemporal choices (e.g. Berns et al., 2007; Frederick et al., 2002; Soman et al., 2005). Literature about intertemporal choices seeks to explain when and why people choose immediate or delayed rewards. Intertemporal choices include decisions that might have consequences over time and in the future. Other factors influencing decisions for immediate or delayed rewards are time discounting, which is the assumption that people discount the future exponentially, self-

control and the representation of the choice, in other words how the choice to delay is framed (Berns et al., 2007). A popular example for framing waiting times differently and positively is given at many amusement parks such as Disney World or Universal Studios in the US. When visiting such a park visitors expect long waits as part of the experience and parks like these concentrate on the management and design of queues and lines to precisely make the wait a more enjoyable part of the overall experience. It has been shown, that even though people often still dislike queues in amusement parks they do not necessarily impact the experience negatively (Norman, 2008).

Another approach to explain why people wait is the Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Norman (2008) refers to Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger 1957) to explain how a longer wait can increase the pleasure and overall satisfaction with the service or product. This approach can give valuable information on how communicators can deliberately use waiting times to promote their products or services. The theory predicts that influence is often an intrapersonal event, occurring when incongruence between a person's attitudes and behaviors creates a tension that is resolved by altering either their beliefs or their behaviors, thereby effecting a change. The amount of dissonance is affected by the ability to rationalize. If people will be able to rationalize or justify the ambiguous behavior, which, in this case, would be excessive waiting time, the dissonance will not be perceived as strong. For instance, because a product is hand-made it usually takes longer to produce, which might be a justification for an increased waiting time. If a persuader can create dissonance while also offering a solution to minimize the disparity, it is likely that the receiver will adopt these suggested new behaviors. By offering a solution, product or course of action that bridges the gap between receivers' incongruent beliefs and behaviors, communicators may influence receivers to use these methods to create cognitive harmony. Based on the cognitive dissonance created through long waiting times and resolved through the exclusivity it is proposed that the effect of this mediation will be stronger for the cognitive evaluation than the affective evaluation of the wait because people need to think about the justification for a certain behavior rather than feel it.

2.2 Exclusivity

After creating long waits and thus a cognitive dissonance in the consumer, it is necessary to offer a solution. One solution might be the communication of exclusivity of a service or product. There is no common definition of the term exclusivity in the literature yet and many marketing-related academic papers that focus on the term exclusivity connect it to high-priced luxury products only (e.g. Hennigs, Wiedmann & Klarmann, 2012; Oh, 2013). However, there are more notions to exclusivity, for instance, it often concerns barriers to entry (Barnhart, 2013). For this paper, the approach by Barone and Roy (2010) serves as an orientation, which defines exclusivity as the level of a consumer's perception to which "an offer is available only to them or to other consumers as well". Exclusivity facilitates the need of belonging to a certain group of people as well as the fear of missing out (FoMo) (Brehm & Brehm, 2013; Cialdini & Garde, 1987) on a unique product or service (Hudders et al., 2013; Caniato et al., 2009), showing that the perception of exclusivity does not need to be necessarily influenced by only the price. Companies can communicate exclusivity, among other things, through offers and services reserved for members, a limited stock, deadlines and

waiting lists or waiting times (Heller, 2014). However, it is important to notice that even though exclusivity might serve as a heuristic or a mental shortcut for people to think of objects having higher value, the importance assigned to an exclusive product or service differs from individual to individual, in other words the desire for exclusivity is different for each person (Kim, 2018).

It is assumed that the objective waiting time influences the perceived exclusivity which, in turn, influences the acceptable waiting time of the customer. Again, exclusivity mediates the relationship between objective waiting time and the cognitive evaluation, which without it would be negative instead of positive. In fact, there are many instances where customers accept even extreme long waiting times as part of the service or brand experience and it does not seem to negatively affect the overall experiences. Of course, this mediating effect of exclusivity can only occur up to a certain point of the objective waiting time and does not continue infinitely the longer the waiting time gets.

Literature suggests that, up to a certain threshold of time, product or service becomes more desirable the longer a costumer waits for the product because it communicates exclusivity (Chavelier & Mezzavalo, 2008), and the more desirable the product becomes the longer costumers are willing to wait.
Therefore, the following Hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Longer objective waiting times will lead to a higher level of perceived exclusivity of a service than short objective waiting times.

Hypothesis 2: High levels of perceived exclusivity of a service will lead to more positive cognitive evaluations of the waiting times than low levels.

As mentioned in the introduction, the service category this paper will use as an example to emphasize the relationship between waiting times and exclusivity is restaurants.

To give a quick insight into the dimensions of the restaurant industry it is useful to look at the statistics. According to the 2018 food report of the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture, 20% of the Germans eat out in a restaurant once or more a week, and 74% at least once a month (BMEL, 2018). Even though the number of full-service restaurants in Germany is decreasing since 2002 their total revenue is steadily increasing and has reached 42.1 billion Euro in 2016 (DEHOGA, 2016). In addition, while corporate restaurant chains are growing too, this study is going to concentrate on independent full-service restaurants that are not part of a chain. These establishments usually offer a relatively broad menu along with table, counter and/or booth service and a wait staff. Meals are offered primarily for immediate consumption. In contrast to limited-restaurants like fast-food chains, there are usually four types of possible waiting scenarios in a full-service restaurant: (1) waiting for a table, which can happen for example in a physical line, a dedicated waiting area like the bar, or another place after making a reservation, (2) waiting to order, (3) waiting on the arrival of the order and (4) waiting for the check. These types of waiting in a restaurant can be categorized into the three stages of waiting types proposed by Dubé-Rioux et al. (1989) in a service encounter: pre-process delay, in-process delay and post-process delay. Pre-process and post-process delays occur respectively before and after the main goal of the service encounter is achieved, in this example eating in a restaurant, while the in-process delay happens exactly during that

phase. Delays, or so to speak waiting times that exceed the expected waiting times, in different stages of the service encounter may provoke different reactions in the customer (Dubé- Rioux et al., 1989; Hui et al., 1998; Yang et al., 2013). For example, initial waits or pre-process delays are perceived as longer and more unpleasant than delays later in time (Dubé- Rioux et al., 1989). Again, literature so far has mostly concentrated how to reduce the negative effects of waiting in restaurant settings, for instance by improving the table management (Hwang, 2008), the waiting environment (Baker & Cameron, 1996; Pruyn & Smidts, 1998) and/or the perceived fairness of the wait (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). In restaurant settings customers judge fairness based on a first come, first serve principle and it does not only influence the consumers' perception of the waiting time itself, but also the overall service experience. Service providers like restaurants have an interest in reducing the waiting experience itself and improving the waiting environment because it has been shown how a negative perception of those factors negatively influences the whole customer satisfaction (Pruyn & Smidts, 1998). Moreover, dissatisfied customers can hold risks for businesses: First, because over 90% of them never return and second and more importantly, because of the negative word-of-mouth (WOM) they generate. On average, a dissatisfied customer complains to ten other people about the poor service quality they experienced (Stevens et al., 1995).

Still, as previously mentioned, waiting times do not only have negative effects on a customer. In fact, they can also signal quality (Robinson & Cronin, 2011) and generate positive anticipation (Loewenstein, 1987; Caplin & Leahy, 2001). Sulek & Hensley (2004) suggest that consumers don't mind waiting in a restaurant if the meal seems worth the wait. Looking at the waiting times it requires to get a table in or access to certain restaurants this might especially true for this sector of the service industry. For instance, the Spanish restaurant "El Celler de Can Roca" only opens reservations via telephone at midnight on the first of every month for tables available 11 months later. "Noma" in Copenhagen has an estimated waiting time of three months, using the same reservation strategy as "El Celler de Can Roca". Most infamous for long waiting times might be U.S.-based "Damon Bahrel", with allegedly no open tables until at least 2025 (Alexander, 2015). Through these extreme waiting times Damon Bahrel managed to be named as one of the world's most exclusive restaurants, at the same time facing allegations that the waiting times might be exaggerated in order to create publicity (Paumgarten, 2016). Furthermore, if food is being served too quickly at a full-service restaurant, to say significantly under the expected waiting time, it might communicate lower quality to the customer, as they might assume the food was not freshly made but rather frozen food. This suggests that long waiting times in restaurants might create or increase a sense of exclusivity.

2.3 Availability

The chosen product category emphasizes another important factor that can play part in both the perception of exclusivity as well as in the creation of waiting times: availability. As mentioned in the introduction, scarcity is a strong persuading factor on the buying intention of people. Cialdini (2008) differentiates between limited-time scarcity (LTS) and limited-quantity scarcity (LQS). While LTS describes an offer that is available during a specific, limited frame of time, e.g. opening the reservation lines only one day a month, LQS is an offer available only in limited numbers, e.g. only one available table. LQS is also the scarcity

dimension important to this study, because it creates competition between consumers as the number of products or service units available (in this case open tables) decreases every time a unit is purchased or used by another consumer (Aggarwal et al., 2011). Literature suggest that a occupied restaurant, or in other words restaurants with LQS in terms of tables, are perceived more positively by the consumers, because people will think link a full restaurant to high food quality, good reputation and low food prices (Tse et al., 2002, Sulek & Hensley, 2004). If scarcity or in other words limited availability, serves as a heuristic for people to think of the product or service of having more value (Cialdini, 1984), it seems likely that communicating scarcity will also often create long objective waiting times because more people will try to obtain it. Additionally, a sense of scarcity might also create a sense of exclusivity. Especially in a restaurant where availability is always limited due to several factors, like available tables, waiters, kitchen staff and so forth the less available these factors are the longer the objective waiting times will be. Therefore, the availability of seats in a restaurant is assumed to have a moderating effect on the relation between the objective waiting time and the perceived exclusivity. The following Hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: When the availability is low, long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than when the availability is high.

2.4 Word-of-mouth reputation

Surely, a sense of exclusivity does not emerge alone from a long objective waiting time or scarcity. Eating out can be classified as an experience good, a service that is difficult to evaluate in advance, but rather upon consumption. Usually, this leads many consumers to rely on reputation measures to make a purchase decision (Fogarty, 2011). As this paper concentrates on independent full-service restaurant opposed to chain restaurants with a corporate identity and image (like Happy Italy or McDonald's) people often can't base the evaluation of the reputation on previous exposure to the restaurant like advertisement, because restaurant that are not chain bound usually don't use traditional advertisement forms, like print, outdoor, or TV. Research showed, that when choosing in which restaurant to eat there were several categories that influenced consumers' decision: the menu, the characteristics of the restaurant, the service, and the price/value (Harrington et al., 2013; Harrington, Ottenbacher, & Kendall, 2011). But WOM, an information usually given directly from one customer to another potential customer, has shown to be the biggest influence on the restaurant selection decision process (Harrington et al., 2013; Tiwari & Richards, 2016; Gregory & Kim, 2004) and furthermore negative WOM seems to have a greater impact on the decision than positive WOM (Tiwari & Richards, 2016). Also, a consumers' pre-purchase evaluation of a service is much more connected to WOM than when buying a physical product (Gregory & Kim, 2004). Of course, other information sources come into play when making a restaurant decision, such as online WOM (e.g. ratings on Yelp or TripAdvisor), rating in food guides (e.g. Michelin stars), or reviews in blogs, newspapers or magazines (Harrington et al., 2013). In this study, it is argued that a combination of positive reviews of all these information sources leads to a positive perceived reputation of a restaurant. The fear of missing out (FoMo) mentioned earlier in this text is not only connected to availability but also to a high reputation. Some restaurants have such a high reputation, through reviews, WOM, social media, awards and so on, that they might also foster the FoMO, which has been

defined as "'pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent" (Przybylski et al., 2013), which is strongly connected to the exclusivity definition used here by Barone and Roy (2010) supporting the connection between limited high reputation and exclusivity. Therefore, the reputation of a restaurant is assumed to have a moderating effect on the relation between the objective waiting time and the perceived exclusivity. The following Hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: When the reputation is high, long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than when the reputation is low.

2.5 Covariates

2.5.1 Regulatory focus.

As previously mentioned, literature suggest that the subjective waiting time can be positivity influenced through e.g. the environment (Pruyn & Smidts, 1998). But based on personal experience, even within an ideal waiting environment there are still people that will accept long waiting times better than others. Yang et al. (2013) propose that differences in the willingness to wait or acceptance of waiting times is dependent on whether customers have a promotion focus or prevention focus. This proposal is based on the regulatory focus theory by Higgins (1996), which claims that people use two kinds of self-regulatory orientations: prevention and promotion. On one hand, people with a promotion focus tend to concentrate on advancement and accomplishments, and are motived to pay attention to positive outcomes. On the other hand, people with a preventions focus tend to concentrate on safety and responsibility and how to avoid losses, they are more motivated to focus on preventing negative outcomes (Higgins, 1996). Yang et al. (2013) suggest that when faced with both a positive and a negative outcome in a situation, people with a promotion focus will pay attention to the positive outcomes while prevention focused people will pay attention to the negative outcomes. For instance, a long waiting time in a restaurant can be stressful and annoying (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007; Pruyn & Smidt, 1998) but at the same time it can increase the anticipation for the enjoyable experience, the meal, regardless of the perceived exclusivity of the restaurant (Caplin & Leahy, 2001; Loewenstein, 1987). Accordingly, it's expected that people with a promotion orientation will focus on the anticipation of the pleasant experience, while people with a prevention focus will most likely focus on the negative aspects of the wait. In this paper, it is controlled for the predisposition in terms of regulatory focus and examined if it influences the relationship between perceived exclusivity and cognitive evaluation of the waiting time. Yet, this is not the main focus of this study and will be treated as a covariate.

2.5.2 Desire for exclusivity.

Besides regulatory focus, influences of the desire of exclusivity are tested for. Because people differ in how they value the importance of exclusive products and services (Kim, 2018) it will be tested for the individual desire for exclusivity. For example, people with a low desire for exclusivity might be less influenced by the perceived exclusivity of a restaurant which could

result in being more annoyed by long waiting times than somebody with a high desire for exclusivity.

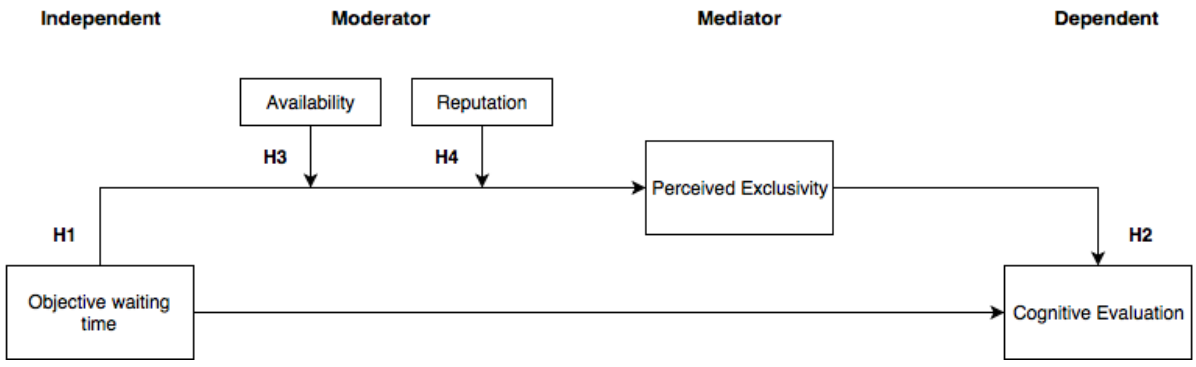
2.5.3 Demographics and behavioural aspects.

Influences of demographics (gender, age, and occupation) on the perception of exclusivity and the cognitive evaluation will be tested for. Another possible influencing factor might be the consumption behavior of the participants, namely, how often they eat out and how much money they spend for restaurant experiences. Based on personal experience and common sense, the more regularly people eat out in restaurants the more will they be able to assess whether they experience a usual or unusual waiting time, which is assumed to be connected to whether people will rate a certain waiting time as acceptable or not. Also, the more money people spend on average on restaurant experiences the more importance they might put on exclusivity and fine dining.

2.6 Research Model

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model for the proposed research. It shows the direct relation between the independent variable objective waiting time and the dependent variable cognitive evaluation of the wait. This direct relation is believed to be mediated by perceived exclusivity. Further, availability together with reputation serve as moderators on the hypothesized relationship between objective waiting time and exclusivity. The covariates do not appear in the model.

FIGURE 1: *Hypothesized relationships in this research*



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The primary goal of the study is to test if objective waiting time together with reputation and availability can positively influence the perceived exclusivity of a restaurant and how this positive perception influences the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time. Additionally, the study examines to which extent covariates, such as the regulatory focus or desire for exclusivity, influence the relationship between perceived exclusivity and cognitive evaluation.

The study utilizes a 2 (objective waiting time: long/short) x 2 (Reputation: high/low) x 2 (availability: high/low) between-subject scenario-based experimental design. The combinations of the variables within the eight scenarios are displayed in Table 1.
The participant is assigned to one out of those eight scenarios. It is necessary that all the scenarios feature the same product or service category and that same type of waiting stage is used. To be more precise, the scenarios are set in full-service restaurant and the type of waiting described is in-process waiting, by waiting for the meal to be served after ordering. One major benefit of experimental studies is that they allow to control and manipulate variables, therefor examine the true casual relations between them. (e.g. Calder et al. 1981). Scenario-based experiments in particular are well established in the marketing and psychology literature. They have shown to have considerable external validity as well as to reduce social desirability effects (Robinson & Clore, 2001). In order to function as intended, scenarios need to include realistic experiences that are similar to those that you would encounter in the field. While being exposed to the scenarios, subjects can adopt an actor stance, where they are asked to imagine themselves as the actor in the scenario, or an observer stance. Either condition would represent a conservative test of the hypothesis, because when events relate to another as opposed to oneself the self-serving bias is reduced (Jones & Nisbett, 1972). The scenarios used by Dubé-Rioux et al. (1989) served as an orientation for the scenarios developed for this paper.

TABLE 1*: Research Design*

		Availability			
		High		Low	
		Objective Waiting time		**Objective Waiting time**	
		Long	Short	Long	Short
Reputation	High	Scenario 1	Scenario 3	Scenario 5	Scenario 6
	Low	Scenario 2	Scenario 4	Scenario 7	Scenario 8

3.2 Pretest

A pre-test is necessary to identify objective waiting times that are considered either long or short for (1) restaurants with a high reputation and (2) restaurants with an average reputation. 53 people participated in the online pre-test, which asked them to indicate what they would consider short, normal and long waiting times in a restaurant, using 3 different scenarios. The first scenario simply asked about “a restaurant”. The second scenario asked about a restaurant that was highly recommended by friends as well as online and the third scenario asked about a restaurant that was rated as average by friends as well as online. The results can be seen in Table 2 which shows the time that was indicated by the particpants in minutes.

TABLE 2: Indicated time in minutes in the pre-test

	Short waiting times	Normal waiting times	Long waiting times
No recommendation	12	24.5	46.5
Average recommendation	12	25.5	43
Good recommendation	14.5	29.5	53.5

For the "*short waiting times*" the answers varied from 2 to 30 minutes, for the "*normal waiting times*" the answers lied between 10 minutes and 60 minutes and asking for "*long waiting times*" participants showed a range between 10 minutes to 120 minutes. These large deviations between answers are based on few outliers, while most people were in the range of the average indicated time.

For the scenarios, these numbers were taken into account and times were chosen that seem short or long to the majority of people under all conditions. Rounding the numbers, this resulted in 10 minutes for the short waiting time scenarios and 60 minutes for the long waiting time scenarios.

3.3 Sample

Ideally, the sample chosen in the study should be limited to a representative fraction of the population. As it has been shown that the average customer has to wait more than half an hour a day (Pruyn & Smidts, 1993), the population would consist of all customers over 18 years. The representative fraction was narrowed to contacts within the extended social network of the researcher through convenience sampling combined with a snowball sampling. The researcher approached potential participants mainly through social media asking them to participate and to recruit more participants. At the time the questionnaire was distributed the researcher was a student, so more students and younger people participated in the study than would be normal for the population average. It should be taken into consideration that this sampling method does not deliver representative results but is suitable for pilot studies. And even though there is criticism due to the non-representativeness of students of the population, which can be a threat to the external validity (e.g. Wells, 1993) others state that samples that consist of students are sufficient to gather relevant data about psychological processes (Kardes, 1996).

Regarding the sample size, this study should follow the rule of at least 30 participants per cell given a medium to large effect size (Cohen, 1988). With 8 cells given in the research design this results in at least 240 participants.

3.3.1 Participants.

A total of 271 participants began the questionnaire. Before conducting statistical analyses however the data were thoroughly screened to ensure the accuracy of the data file. 32 Non-finished questionnaires were eliminated, leaving the number of valid cases at 239.

Out of the 239 respondents 125 (52.3%) were male, 110 (46%) female and 3 participants preferred not to answer that question. 147 (61.5%) participants choose to answer the questionnaire in German, while 92 (38.5%) answered the questionnaire in English.

The age ranged from 24 to 53, with most participants being between 26 and 34 years old, only 2% were over 34 years old. However, it is important to notice that 78.2% of the participants decided not to reveal their age.

As for the occupation, 46.9% (n = 112) of the participants indicated they were full-time employed, 29.3% (n = 70) students and 15.5% (n = 37) were self-employed. The rest of participants are either part-time employed, unemployed or have a different occupation.

The participants were equally distributed onto the conditions of objective waiting time (short vs. long), availability (low vs. high), and reputation (low vs. high) as can be seen in Table 3.

TABLE 3*: Frequency of conditions*

		Frequency	Percent
OWT	Short	115	48.1
	Long	124	51.9
Availability	Low	120	50.2
	High	119	49.8
Reputation	Low	118	49.4
	High	121	40.6

3.4 Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed on 14 consecutive days using the online software Qualtrics. Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight scenarios but were able to choose their preferred language setting beforehand, either English or German. Before reading the scenarios, participants were asked to answer questions regarding their regulatory focus. Later, they were asked to take an actor stance, imagining themselves to be in that specific situation. To facilitate this process, the scenarios were designed to include realistic experiences that are similar to those that the participants are likely to have experienced at one point or can easily imagine happening. Participants were then presented with one scenario featuring either descriptions of low or high reputation of the restaurant, low or high availability, in terms of available seats, and short or long objective waiting times. The manipulations of the variables are described below.

The scenarios all start as followed:

"It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to."

The introduction is followed by a description of the reputation, which is indicated through friend's recommendations and online reviews, to say offline and online WOM:

High reputation - *"While the four of you have a beer nearby you remember a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant that friends had highly recommended previously. Just to make sure you look up the online ratings, which turn out to be very good, too."*

Low reputation - *"After the four of you have a beer in the city center you see a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant. You know that some friends have been here before, but they did not tell you much about it. Therefore, you look up the online reviews, which rate the restaurant as average. Still, …"*

Then, the availability is indicated through the number of available seats:

High availability - "*You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be free. The hostess greets you and lets you choose the table you want, because there are many available seats.*
Low availability - *"You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be full. The hostess greets you and walks you to a free table, because so many seats are taken"*

Finally, the objective waiting time is manipulated using the times that were considered to be long or short during the pre-test.

Long objective waiting time – *"After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While your friends go for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.*
The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 60 minutes."
Short objective waiting time – "*After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While your friends go for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.*
The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 10 minutes."

Every scenario is also accompanied by three pictures, one of a restaurant and one of an online review in English as well as German. The picture of the restaurant includes the same restaurant but showing either few or many available tables, depending on what is described in the scenario. However, the pictures differ not only in the number of available seats that are visible but also in the identification possibilities for the participants. In the picture for the low availability scenario the faces of the persons in the restaurant can easily be recognized, while this is not possible for the people in the other pictures. Implications of this are discussed in the limitation section of this paper.

The picture of the online review features either a good review or average review, also depending on what is described in the scenario. The reviews shown in the scenarios are based on real reviews given on the review page yelp.com, but were shortened or altered as not to mention waiting times, to not influence the perception of the waiting times described in the scenario.

After being presented with the scenario, participants were asked to answer questions measuring the regulatory focus, the perception of the waiting time, the perceived exclusivity and desire for exclusivity, and the acceptable waiting time. The complete scenarios as well as the pictures and reviews used can be found in appendix A.

3.5 Measures

In general, the items to measure the different variables should be preferably derived from pre-existing scales which are more likely to be extensively tested and be more reliable. As mentioned previously a pre-test was conducted to determine what is considered long or short waiting time in restaurants with high and average reputations. The questionnaire consists of three main constructs: Evaluation of the waiting time, divided into (1) cognitive evaluation and (2) affective evaluation, and (3) perceived exclusivity. Desire for exclusivity, regulatory focus and demographic items were treated as covariates. All Likert-scales are measured with a 5 point-scale, even if the original scale included a different scale measure. All scales can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C for the German version.

3.5.1 Cognitive evaluation of the waiting time / Acceptable waiting time.

As mentioned previously the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time also includes whether a wait is acceptable or not and therefor is also used to measure the acceptable waiting time. The scale is based on a measure proposed Hui & Tse (1996) and Pruyn & Smidts (1998), with some adaptations to the context of this study. 4 items are measured on a five-point bi-polar scale. The participant is asked what they think about the waiting time described in the scenario ("too short/too long", "not irritating/irritating", "not annoying/annoying", "not acceptable/acceptable). The item is negatively coded.

3.5.3 Affective evaluation of the waiting time.

The measurement of the affective evaluation of the waiting time is also based on a measure proposed by Hui & Tse (1996), again with some adaptations to the context of this study. The items are measured on a five-point bi-polar scale, asking the participant how they feel about the waiting time described in the scenario. The 3 items are "satisfied/unsatisfied", "pleased/annoyed", "happy/unhappy".

3.5.3 Perceived Exclusivity.

The exclusivity scale developed by Hudders et al. (2013) is used to measure the perceived exclusivity of the service. It includes 5 items that describe attributes of the product like "The service experience is rare" or "The service experience is unique". The participants are asked to indicate the level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

3.5.4 Covariates.

Regulatory Focus - Before presenting the scenarios to the participants the regulatory focus of each person is assessed because it assumed that the presentation of a seemingly negative or positive scenario might influence the answers in a later point (Yang et al. 2013). The regulatory focus is measured with a 5-point Likert scale developed by Higgins et al. (2001), which originally includes 6 items for the promotion focus and 5 items for the prevention focus. The set of questions asks how frequently something occurs or occurred in the participants' life. Each subscale was shortened to 3 items to increase the participants' willingness to continue. The subscales are presented in one question block and in random order. An example item for the promotion scale would be "How often have you accomplished

things that got you "psyched" to work even harder“. An example for the prevention focus would be “Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times.”.

Desire for exclusivity - To measure the desire for exclusivity the scale from Kim (2018) was used. Four items are measured on a five-point Likert scale asking for the participants agreement with statements like “I like unique and scarce products or service “ or “I enjoy having things that others do not“ from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The item “I am willing to wait for exclusive services” was added to the scale.

Anticipation - Four items were design that account for the anticipatory part of the evaluation of waiting time. They include statements like “The waiting time in the scenario increased the excitement for the service experience”.

Demographics - The demographic section includes 5 items about gender, age and occupation, as well as asking about the participants regular eating-out behavior. Participants are for example asked how many times a moth they eat out and how much money they spend each month on eating out.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the constructs

To measure the construct validity of the scales used in the research a factor analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted. The scales that were tested were perceived exclusivity, cognitive evaluation/acceptable waiting time, affective evaluation, regulatory focus, desire for exclusivity, and anticipation. The items of perceived exclusivity, cognitive evaluation, affective evaluation, anticipation and desire for exclusivity all load in respectively one construct. The items used for the regulatory focus loaded into three different constructs instead of two, as would be expected because of the division into promotion and prevention focus. The rotated component matrix in Table 4 show how exactly the individual items load onto the components. Two out of three items of the promotion focus scale load onto the first component and two out of three items of the prevention focus scale load onto the second component. The item “How often have you accomplished things that got you "psyched" to work even harder” from the promotion focus scale negatively loads onto the third component. The item “Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times” from the prevention focus scale also loads onto the third component.

TABLE 4*: Component loadings for the regulatory factor scale*

	Component		
	1	2	3
How often have you accomplished things that got you "psyched" to work even harder			-.749
Do you often do well at different things that you try	.795		
Compared to most people, are you typically able to get what you want out of life	.815		
Growing up, how often did you obey rules and regulations that were established by your parents		.770	
Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times			.779
Did you get on your parents’ nerves often when you were growing up		.779	

The Cronbach's Alpha (α) value per scale was calculated to test the internal consistency. In general, for a scale to be deemed as reliable, α should be at least 0.7 or higher (Nunnally, 1978). An overview of all the α vales per construct is provided in Table 5. The table indicates that the α value for the constructs of regulatory effect and anticipation lie below 0.7 and that the α value cannot significantly enough be improved by deleting or recoding items.

TABLE 5*: Cronbach's Alpha (α)*

		N of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	α if item is deleted
Perceived Exclusivity		5	0.797	0.78, 0.75, 0.70, 0.74, 0.79
Cognitive evaluation		4	0.919	0.91, 0.87, 0.87, 0.91
Affective evaluation		3	0.928	0.89, 0.88, 0.90
Regulatory focus	Promotion focus	3	0.513	0.58, 0.30, 0.32
	Prevention focus	3	0.371	0.25, 0.37, 0.17
Desire of exclusivity		4	0.725	0.68, 0.59, 0.63, 0.72
Anticipation		4	0.493	0.53, 0.31, 0.27, 0.52

The results of the factor and reliability analysis of the regulatory focus might be explained by the fact that just some items of a larger scale were selected to form part of this research or that the original scale might not be universally applicable. To still include the concept of promotion and prevention focus into the research, one out of the two items that loaded onto the same construct in the Varimax rotation was chosen to be used in the analysis of data. The author tried to choose the item that best represented the overall idea behind the concepts. For promotion focus the item "Compared to most people, are you typically able to get what you want out of life" was chosen and for the prevention focus the item "Did you get on your parents' nerves often when you were growing up?" was chosen.

As mentioned, the items for the anticipation scale were created by the author and not extensively pre-tested, resulting in an insufficient scale. To also include this concept into the analysis the scale was reduced to one item only, namely "The waiting time would increase my anticipation for the service.".

4. Results

In this chapter, the results of the statistical analyses are discussed. First, the variables were tested for normality. Second, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used, followed by testing for the covariates with a MANCOVA. Third, the model and it`s assumed mediation effects were tested using a hierarchical multiple regression analysis (PROCESS by Hayes).

A frequency analysis showed that reputation, availability, and objective waiting time were equally distributed on the high or low conditions. The test for normality showed a skewness of .15 (*SE = .16)* and kurtosis of .8 (*SE = .31*) for perceived exclusivity, a skewness of - .06 (*SE = .16*) and kurtosis of – 1.05 (*SE = .31*), for cognitive evaluation a skewness of – .19 (*SE = .16*) and kurtosis of – .64 (*SE = .31).* Shapiro-Wilk (*W*) was used to evaluate the

assumptions of normality of variance, which were violate because all variables were tested to be significant (i.e., Sig < 0.05). Fortunately, MANOVA is fairly robust against violations of the normality assumptions when group sizes exceed 30 or so (Allen et al., 2014).

A MANOVA was used to investigate the effects of objective waiting times, reputation, and availability on perceived exclusivity, and cognitive and affective evaluation of the waiting time. The MANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect of the objective waiting time on all the variables together, p <.001, and a statistically significant main effect of the reputation on all the variables together, p <.001. Availability showed no statistically significant main effect on the dependent variables, p = .115. Further, a statistically significant interaction effect was shown between objective waiting time and the availability, p = .026, and a significant interaction effect between the reputation and the availability, p = .007. Table 6 gives a complete overview of the results of the multivariate test for the Wilks' Lambda effect.

TABLE 6: Results of the MANOVA (Wilks' Lambda only)

	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
OWT	,639	43,091b	3,000	229,000	,000	,361
REP	,884	9,988b	3,000	229,000	,000	,116
AV	,975	1,996b	3,000	229,000	,115	,025
OWT * REP	,982	1,428b	3,000	229,000	,235	,018
OWT * AV	,961	3,133b	3,000	229,000	,026	,039
REP * AV	,949	4,098b	3,000	229,000	,007	,051
OWT * REP * AV	,980	1,536b	3,000	229,000	,206	,020

The follow-up analysis showed a main effect of objective waiting time on perceived exclusivity, $F(1,23) = 8.03$, $p = .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .034$, with participants that were given scenarios with short waiting times rating the perceived exclusivity significantly higher than participants with long waiting time.

Additionally, the effect of objective waiting time on cognitive evaluation was also statistically significant $F(1,23) = 126.63$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .354$. Participants that were given scenarios with short waiting times rating showed lower levels of cognitive evaluation, i.e. were less annoyed, than participants with long waiting times.

For reputation, a statistically significant main effect was shown on perceived exclusivity, $F(1,23) = 15.97$, $p < .001$, and partial $\eta^2 = .065$. Participants who read the scenario describing a low reputation indicated lower levels of perceived exclusivity than those who read the scenario describing a high reputation of the restaurant. Another statistically

significant main effect for reputation was shown on the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time, $F(1,23) = 13.11$, $p < .001$, and partial $\eta^2 = .054$. Participants that were presented the low reputation scenario showed higher levels of cognitive evaluation, i.e. were more annoyed by the waiting time than participants that were presented the high reputation scenario.
The exact differences in means and standard deviations for the effects discussed above can be found in table 7.

TABLE 7: Descriptive Statistics for the significant MANOVA results

	Low/Short M (SD)	High/Long M (SD)
Perceived Exclusivity		
Objective waiting time	2.73 (.66)	2.48 (.73)
Reputation	2.42 (.70)	2.77 (.68)
Cognitive Evaluation		
Objective waiting time	2.46 (.97)	3.72 (.84)
Reputation	3.31 (1.09)	2.92 (1.09)

The MANOVA further revealed statistically significant interactions indicating that the effects of objective waiting time on the cognitive evaluation depend on the availability, $F(1,23) = 8.83$, $p = .003$, partial $\eta^2 = .037$. The nature of this interaction is illustrated in Figure 2. It shows, that if the waiting time is short the effect of availability on the cognitive evaluation, i.e. the acceptable waiting time, is bigger than when the waiting time is long. The pairwise comparison showed a significant effect, $p = .001$, for short waiting times and availability on the acceptable waiting time. To be precise, short waits are more accepted when the restaurant is empty than when it is full. Still, participants with long waiting times were generally more annoyed by the wait, especially if the restaurant is empty rather than full. However, with long waiting times the effect of availability is not statistically significant on the acceptable waiting time anymore as shown by the pairwise comparisons, $p = .460$.

FIGURE 2*: The effects of objective waiting time and availability on the cognitive evaluation*

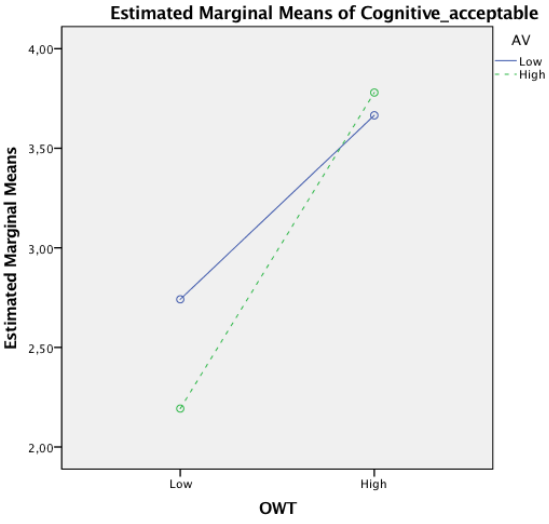
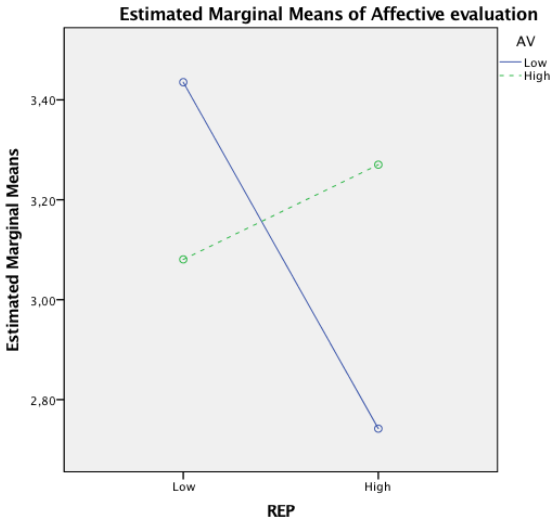


FIGURE 2*:* *The effects of reputation and availability on the affective evaluation*



A statistically significant interaction was also revealed for the effect of reputation and availability on the affective evaluation of the waiting time, $F(1,23) = 9.92$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .041$. The nature of this interaction is illustrated in Figure 3. It shows, that if the reputation is high, the effect of availability on the affective evaluation of the waiting time if bigger than if the reputation is low. The pairwise comparisons only show a significant effect for the high reputation condition, $p = .013$. In other words, participants that were given scenarios with a good reputation felt better about the waiting time when the restaurant was full than when it was empty.

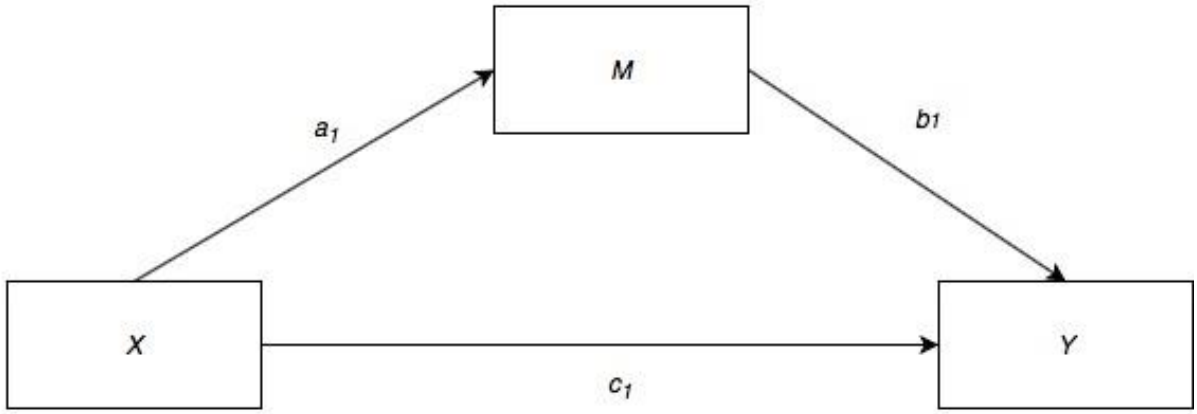
To control for possible effects of covariates on the main interactions a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) is conducted. The covariates that are tested for were promotion and prevention focus, desire for exclusivity, anticipation, frequency of times eating out, money spent eating out and gender. Comparing the significance levels of the MANOVA and the MANCOVA shows that significance levels changed slightly for all the independent and dependent variables, except objective waiting time and reputation. However, the changes in the levels of significance are not statistically significant, which leads to the conclusion that the covariates do not have a statistically significant effect on the main or interaction effects. In other words, neither promotion nor prevention focus, the desire for exclusivity, the anticipation, the frequency of times eating out, the money spent eating out or whether someone is female or male significantly influences the effects of objective waiting time, reputation or availability on the perceived exclusivity, and the cognitive and affective evaluation. The differences in significance levels can be seen in Table 8.

TABLE 8: *Differences of significance levels when testing for covariates*

		MANOVA	**MANCOVA**
	Effect	Sig.	Sig.
OWT	Wilks' Lambda	.000	.000
REP	Wilks' Lambda	.000	.000
AV	Wilks' Lambda	.115	.174
OWT * REP	Wilks' Lambda	.235	.194
OWT * AV	Wilks' Lambda	.026	.008
REP * AV	Wilks' Lambda	.007	.031
OWT * REP * AV	Wilks' Lambda	.206	.273

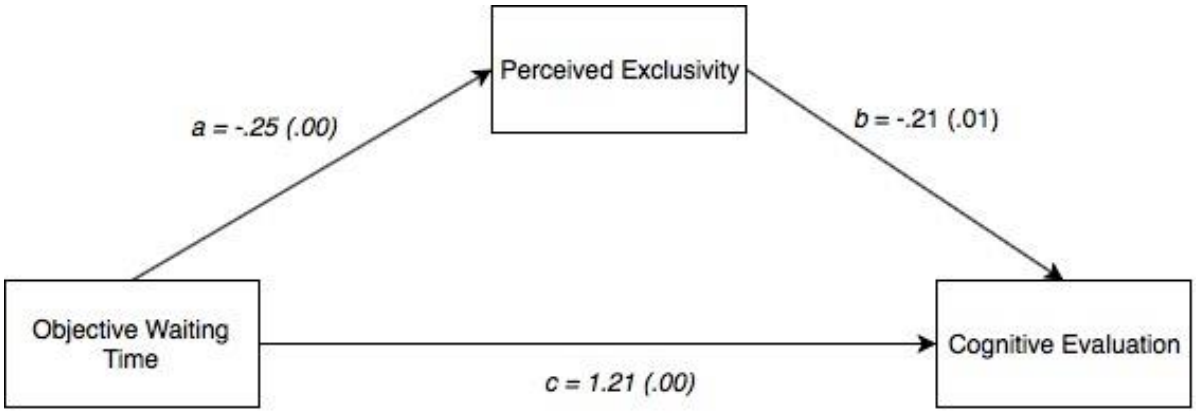
To further explore the relationship between objective waiting time, perceived exclusivity and acceptable waiting time the conditional process modeling to test for mediation as outlined by Hayes (2013) was applied, using the PROCESS macro. This procedure allows to see the direct as well as indirect effect of *X* on *Y* while modeling a process in which *X* causes *M* concluding with *Y* as outcome. In this case, the causal relationship between *X* and *Y* is assumed to be indirect. Figure 4 depicts the relationships between the variables and visualizes the direction and magnitude of the effect of one variable on the other, with the arrows between the variables representing the standardized regression coefficients.

***FIGRUE 4**: Mediation process*



Specifically, it was tested to see whether the relationship among objective waiting time (*X*) and acceptable waiting (*Y*) is mediated by the perceived exclusivity (*M*) and the proposed model holds to be true.Step 2 to 4 of the conditional process modeling are visualized in Figure 5, showing the relations between the variables and the effect of the mediation.

FIGURE 5: Direction and magnitude of direct and indirect effects in the mediation model



In step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of objective waiting time (*X*) on the cognitive evaluation of the wait (*Y*), ignoring the mediator perceived exclusivity (*M*), is significant, b = 1.26, t(237) = 10.69, p = < .001. Thus, there is a direct effect of objective waiting time on the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time, meaning the longer the waiting times the more annoyed people will be. The direct effect is *not* visualized in Figure 5.

Step 2 showed that the regression of the objective waiting time (*X*) on the mediator, perceived exclusivity (*M*), is also significant, b = -.25, t(237) = -2.78, p = .006, indicating a direct negative effect of the objective waiting time on the perceived exclusivity. This is visualized in Figure 5 with path *a*. In other words, the longer the objective times are the less people will perceive a restaurant as being exclusive.

Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the mediator, perceived exclusivity (*M*), controlling for objective waiting time, is significant on cognitive evaluation (*Y*), b = -.21,

t(236) = -2.46, p = .015 with a negative effect. In other words, the higher the perceived exclusivity the less negative is the cognitive evaluation of the waiting time, because cognitive evaluation was coded negatively for the analysis. This step is visualized in Figure 5 with path *b*.

Step 4 of the analysis revealed that, controlling for the mediator, objective waiting time (*Y*) is a significant predictor of acceptable waiting time (*Y*), b = 1.21, t(236) = 10.19, p = < .001, not confirming the mediation effect. The mediation effect is not significant because the independent variable (*X*) is still a significant predictor of the dependent variable (*Y*), regardless of the presence of the mediating variable (*M*). For a mediation effect to be occurring *X* should not be significant. Additionally, a Sobel test was conducted and found no significant mediation in the model (z = 1.78, p = .076).

Thus, it was not found that perceived exclusivity mediated the relationship between objective and acceptable waiting time.

5. Discussion

The research aimed to investigate the effects of waiting time on the perceived exclusivity of a restaurant and whether the perceived exclusivity mediated the relationship between the objective and acceptable waiting time. Based on literature a further moderating effect of reputation and availability on the relationship between objective waiting time and the perceived exclusivity was suggested. To give deeper insights into the findings, the four hypotheses that were formulated in this study and additional findings are discussed below. An overview of the hypotheses is given in Table 9.

***TABLE 9**: Overview of tested hypotheses*

Hypothesis		**Result**
H1	Longer objective waiting times will lead to a higher level of perceived exclusivity of a service than short objective waiting times	Not supported
H2	High levels of perceived exclusivity of a service will lead to more positive cognitive evaluations of the waiting times than low levels.	(Partly) Supported
H3	When the availability is low, long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than when the availability is high.	Not supported
H4	Higher reputation and long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than a low reputation and long waiting times.	Partly supported

First, hypothesis H1 stated that longer objective waiting times will lead to a higher level of perceived exclusivity of a service than short objective waiting times. This hypothesis could not be supported. In fact, the analysis showed opposite results: People that were presented short waiting times in the scenario rated the exclusivity of the restaurant higher, than people that were presented with long waiting times.

There are several possible explanations for this finding. To start, the chosen duration of the long waiting time: 60 minutes were chosen in the scenarios based on the pre-test, that indicated roughly 53 minutes as a long waiting time for a restaurant that was highly recommend, i.e. has a high reputation. It is very likely that by choosing a time that is considered very to extremely long by most of the population, the effect of a service or product becoming more desirable the longer a consumer waits described by Chavelier & Mezzavalo (2008) could not occur. Because this only holds true *up to a certain threshold of time*. By choosing a waiting time that is considered very to extremely long by most of the population this threshold of time is exceeded and the possible positive effect of longer waiting times results in less perceived exclusivity. Further, Giebelhausen et al. (2011) showed that waiting times can function as a signal of quality as long as the consumers do not already have a well-defined attitude regarding the quality of the service. However, participants were given recommendations about the restaurant that helped them to make judgements about the exclusivity and most likely about the overall quality of the service. In fact, on average the participants with the short waiting time rated the organization and quality of the service better than the participants with the long waiting times. Also, the results might differ for the different forms of waiting identified earlier. The participants got to read a scenario where they had to rate the times it took for the food be served, i.e. an in-process delay. The results might for example significantly change if the waiting time in question would concern the time it takes to get a table when doing a reservation, i.e. the pre-process wait. When looking at the examples previously given for long waits at restaurants many featured pre-process waits, which indicate a difference between waiting to receive a table and the willingness to wait for the arrival of an order. Lastly, even though there are instances where customers accept even extremely long waiting times, based on the perceived exclusivity of a restaurant, the results suggest that the perceived exclusivity is not based mainly on long waiting times, but rather different variables, like the reputation, and surely some other factors that could not be discussed in this paper.

Second, hypothesis 2 proposed that high levels of perceived exclusivity of a service will lead to more positive cognitive evaluations of the waiting times than low levels. Addtionally, the effect of perceived exclusivity was thought to be a mediating one on the relation between the objective waiting time and acceptable waiting time, turning the negative relation into a positive one.

PROCESS analysis did partly support the hypothesis. While no mediation effect could be found, there is a direct, negative effect of exclusivity on the cognitive evaluation, indicating that the higher the perceived exclusivity the better the overall cognitive evaluation of the wait, including the acceptance of the waiting time. While long waiting times did not foster the perception of exclusivity, possibly due to poorly chosen timeframes, the participants that perceived the restaurant as exclusive also showed a more positive evaluation of the waiting times.

Third, hypothesis 3 stated that when the availability is low, long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than when the availability is high. This hypothesis is not supported. The MANCOVA did not show any statistically significant interaction effect between the objective waiting time and availability on the cognitive evaluation, i.e. acceptable waiting time, nor a main effect of availability on perceived exclusivity. This means, that the number of tables that are free or occupied does not have any

influence on the perceived exclusivity of a restaurant. For the participants, the importance of the number of available seats on the exclusivity did not change based on the time they had to wait for their food to be served. Again, people with short waits rated the exclusivity of a restaurant higher than people with the long wait, independently if the restaurant in the scenario was crowded or not.

Different approaches can be taken to explain these results. On one hand, a possible explanation could be that participants had knowledge about the reputation of the restaurant beforehand through online reviews and friends' recommendations and were able to make judgements about the exclusivity of the restaurant before they had information about the availability of seats. While exclusivity was defined earlier as "the level of a consumer's perception to which an offer is available only to them or to other consumers as well" (Baron & Roy, 2010), this approach might not be applicable across all context. In the restaurant sector, there are many different factors influencing the availability of the seats, e.g. size of the restaurant, day of the week, time of the day etc. therefore making it harder for people to judge the exclusivity based on the availability. Based on the scenarios, the objective waiting time could be a more important factor when assessing the exclusivity of a restaurant than the number of available seats. On the other hand, the low quantity scarcity effect that was intended to trigger the participants to think of the restaurant to be exclusive might not have occurred at all. Because even though the restaurant was described as full or empty, in each scenario the participants got a seat at a table immediately, indicating that the restaurant is available to everybody. This again is closely connected to the definition of exclusivity given earlier, concerning that the offer is available only to the customer or to others as well (Baron & Roy, 2010). And while a full restaurant indicates high food quality, good reputation and low food prices to costumers (Tse et al., 2002, Sulek & Hensley, 2004) this does not necessarily indicate exclusivity or LQS, if seats are still available even those a restaurant is crowded. Taking a different perspective, the scenarios did not mention the overall number of tables available. LQS might be transmitted differently a restaurant with 200 tables is fully booked or a restaurant with only 20 tables. Presumably, exclusivity might be fostered stronger by restaurants that overall have fewer tables, because according to the definition exclusivity is the degree to which an offer is available only to you or other people as well. However, other important factors aside from LQS most likely play in role in forstering that pereception, such as price or décor for example.

Fourth, hypothesis 4 proposed that a higher reputation and long waiting times will lead to higher levels of perceived exclusivity than a low reputation and long waiting times. This hypothesis is partly supported. As previously stated, the analysis revealed a statistically significant, positive correlation between reputation and perceived exclusivity. People that were presented with a good reputation, i.e. positive reviews by friends and online, rated the exclusivity higher than those that were presented with average reviews. However, the hypothesis suggests a moderating effect of reputation on the relationship between objective waiting time and perceived exclusivity. This moderating effect was not supported by the analysis. While the reputation of a restaurant influences its perceived exclusivity, it does not influence the relationship between waiting time and the exclusivity.

Further, the results showed the longer people have to wait the more negative the evaluation fo the waiting time will be, with people being more annoyed. This is in line with prior research

that focused on the negative effects of waiting time (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007; Pruyn & Smidt, 1998).

The analysis additionally revealed a significant relationship between short objective waiting times and the availability on the acceptable waiting time. People with short waiting times tend to rate the waiting time as less acceptable when there are many seats available than when there a few available seats. A possible explanation could be that even though in the long waiting scenario the waiting time was a negative influence on the perception of the quality of the service, in the short waiting scenario the waiting time together with many available seats could also signal bad quality of the service. People might possibly think of the food as being rushed and not prepared properly if theoretically the service and kitchen staff is not stressed because there aren't many guests in the restaurant anyway and the service could take more time to prepare it.

Also, an effect of reputation and availability on the affective evaluation of the waiting time was revealed. When the reputation was high participants felt better about the waiting time than when it was low. A full restaurant might reaffirm the positive perception of the restaurant that was created through a positive reputation and thus make people feel better about the wait, because if many people are eating there and willing to wait it must be worth it.

5.1 Theoretical and practical implications

The main goal of this study was to explore the effect of waiting times on perceived exclusivity and the effect of high perceived exclusivity on the acceptable waiting time. While the hypothesized direction of the relationship between objective waiting times and perceived exclusivity could not be confirmed, the PROCESS analysis indicates that high perceived exclusivity does lead to a more positive cognitive evaluation of the waiting time, i.e. the acceptable waiting time. Therefore, this research adds to existing literature by introducing and analyzing a new type of variable influencing the acceptance of waiting times in a service environment. Even though the objective waiting time was not found to have positive effects in this setting, the general potential positive effect of waiting should still be considered in future research designs. As noted by Giebelhauser et al. (2011) controlling for positive variables even when concentrating on negative outcomes of waiting will result in a more complete picture of the effects of waiting times on the consumer. A more nuanced distinction between waiting times than 10 vs. 60 minutes might have an crucial impact on the results and should be taken into consideration.

Also, it is assumed that the effects of objective waiting times on the perceived exclusivity could change if the type of wait, pre-process, in-process, pots-process, is changed.

Of course, there are many additional variables such as the justification of the wait (e.g. "This meat is slow-cooked", "It might take a bit longer today because …"), friendliness of the service staff, setting expectations of the wait that all deserve a deeper look and should be taken into account into in future research.

For practitioners, the key implication is that long waiting times will harm the perceived exclusivity. However, higher levels of perceived exclusivity do seem to positively influence the cognitive evaluation of the wait, i.e. the customers' acceptance of the wait. Still, good reputation and high perceived exclusivity of the restaurant does not justify long waits in the

eyes of the consumer and should be avoided. Instead, if people expect high quality service based on the exclusivity, the waiting time it takes to serve the food should reflect those expectations and not exceed a certain amount of time. However, the results indicate that waiting times can also be deemed as too short, especially if the restaurant is empty. If possible, a balanced amount of waiting time should be found. While exclusivity itself does not widen the acceptance for long waiting times, the reputation does help to make consumers feel good about the wait, especially if the restaurant is well visited.

Still, it is advisable for restaurants to reduce long waits regarding the time it takes to serve the food when they want to foster an exclusive image. As mentioned positive WOM, which fosters the reputation, has been shown to be the biggest factor on the restaurant selection decision process (Harrington et al., 2013; Tiwari & Richards, 2016; Gregory & Kim, 2004) and negative WOM has a greater impact on that decision than positive WOM (Tiwari & Richards, 2016). Therefore, practitioners should try to build up positive WOM and be careful not to rely on it alone, but to live up to the expectations of the costumers.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for future research

Several limitations need to be addressed. The first limitation pertains to the representativeness of this study. As this study was conducted internationally with two possible language settings, the lack of representativeness of a specific population, may have influenced the results. A more concentrated sampling within a specific population might result in different results.

The second limitation is the generalizability of the scenario findings. Scenarios provide the possibility to examine factors that predict channel preference under rigidly controlled conditions that remain unaffected by other unpredicted factors that complicate research in real-life setting. However, this can also be seen as a weakness of scenario based designs, as this may limit the generalizability. Additionally, participants were not actually required to wait which most likely also influenced the results, as waiting is an experienced that should be lived to make judgements about it rather than imagined. A more qualitative method could confirm whether the results found in this study are applicable to real-life settings. Another problem with the scenario designed for this study might be that they indicate the variables availability and objective waiting time with one sentence only. This might not emphasize the constructs well enough for participants to really remember it while answering the questionnaire.

The third limitation concerns the availability of the questionnaire. As it was only available online, people who do not know how to use the internet were excluded from this study which could have influenced the results.

The fourth limitation concerns the two scales that were not reliable and consistent and had to be reduced to one item only, specifically regulatory focus and anticipation. Even though an existing and supported scale was used to measure the regulatory focus (Higgins et al., 2001) it was deemed unreliable. Most probable, the deletion of various items reduced the reliability significantly or it might not be applicable across all contexts. Also, the translation from English to German could have led to a different interpretation of the scale`s items. This resulted in the fact that consumer characteristics could not be considered in the analysis of the data. However, it is an interesting approach to be followed in future research by using the complete scale.

Additionally, as mentioned in the theoretical implications only a narrow range of wait lengths and types was examined. In order to develop insight regarding when the waiting time becomes annoying future research may wish to examine a wider range of wait lengths. Looking at the pretest improvements could be made to get a better idea of the perceptions of waiting time and are advisable for future research. The pretest showed huge variations in the answers and some more in-depth questions could help to get better insights into the perceptions. Of course, this could also be a result of the way the questions were phrased. Again, the effect of waiting time on exclusivity and the cognitive evaluation of a wait seems to be curvilinear, i.e. positive up until a certain point and passing that point turning negative. Therefore, it is essential to take this point into consideration.

Lastly, as mentioned in the methodology part, the pictured used in the questionnaire not only differed in the number of available seats but also that in one case participants could see and identify people and in the other picture they could not. The people pictured in the image are predominately young, white people that might have made identification with them easier for the participants, who too are mostly young and with the same ethnicity. Even though ethnicity was not part of the demographic questions it is likely to be the case because of the social network of the researcher. This identification with the pictured people could influence the answers and thus the results. Future research should take this into consideration and choose the picture differently.

5.3 Conclusion

To conclude, this is one of the first studies that measured the effects of waiting times on the perceived exclusivity and the effect of perceived exclusivity on the acceptable waiting time in the context of restaurants. While a moderating effect of perceived exclusivity on the relation between objective waiting times and the cognitive evaluation could not be found, the study did reveal a direct effect of the perception of exclusivity on the acceptance of waits in restaurants. By adding a new construct to the waiting literature this study provides valuable insights for future research and practitioners.

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Appendix A

Scenarios

		Availability			
		High		Low	
		Objective Waiting time		**Objective Waiting time**	
		Long	Short	Long	Short
Reputation	High	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 5	Scenario 6
	Low	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 7	Scenario 8

Scenario 1 – High Reputation x High Availability x Long Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. While the four of you have a beer nearby you remember a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant that friends had highly recommended previously. Just to make sure you look up the online ratings, which turn out to be very good, too.

You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be free. The hostess greets you and lets you choose the table you want, because there are many available seats.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While your friends go for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 60 minutes.

German

Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Während ihr in der Nähe ein Bier trinkt, erinnerst du dich an ein hippes, aber preislich akzeptables Restaurant, welches dir von Freunden schon einmal ans Herz gelegt wurde. Um sicher zu gehen, schaust du dir die Online-Bewertungen an, die auch alle sehr gut sind.

Ihr einigt auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische frei sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und lässt euch den Tisch aussuchen, da ja viele Plätze nicht besetzt sind.

Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.

Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 60 Minuten.

Scenario 2 – High Reputation x High Availability x Short Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. While the four of you have a beer nearby you remember a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant that friends had highly recommended previously. Just to make sure you look up the online ratings, which turn out to be very good, too.

You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be free. The hostess greets you and lets you choose the table you want, because there are many available seats.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While your friends go for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 10 minutes.

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Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 10 Minuten.

Scenario 3 - Low Reputation x High Availability x Long Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. After the four of you have a beer in the city center you see a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant. You know that some friends have been here before, but they did not tell you much about it. Therefore, you look up the online reviews, which rate the restaurant as average.

Still, you agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be free. The hostess greets you and lets you choose the table you want, because there are many available seats.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 60 minutes

German
Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Nachdem ihr in der Nähe ein Bier getrunken habt, kommt ihr an einem hippen, aber preislich akzeptablen Restaurant vorbei. Du weißt, dass Freunde von dir schon hier waren, aber sie haben dir nicht viel davon erzählt. Deswegen schaust du dir Online-Bewertungen an, welche durchschnittlich sind.
Trotzdem einigt ihr euch auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische frei sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und lässt euch den Tisch aussuchen, da ja viele Plätze nicht besetzt sind.
Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.
Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 60 Minuten.

Scenario 4 - Low Reputation x High Availability x Short Objective Waiting Time
It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. After the four of you have a beer in the city center you see a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant. You know that some friends have been here before, but they did not tell you much about it. Therefore, you look up the online reviews, which rate the restaurant as average.
Still, you agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be free. The hostess greets you and lets you choose the table you want, because there are many available seats.
After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.
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German
Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Nachdem ihr in der Nähe ein Bier getrunken habt, kommt ihr an einem hippen, aber preislich akzeptablen Restaurant vorbei. Du weißt, dass Freunde von dir schon hier waren, aber sie haben dir nicht viel davon erzählt. Deswegen schaust du dir Online-Bewertungen an, welche durchschnittlich sind.
Trotzdem einigt ihr euch auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische frei sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und lässt euch den Tisch aussuchen, da ja viele Plätze nicht besetzt sind.
Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.
Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 10 Minuten.

Scenario 5 - High Reputation x Low Availability x Long Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. While the four of you have a beer nearby you remember a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant that friends had highly recommended previously. Just to make sure you look up the online ratings, which turn out to be very good, too.

You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be full. The hostess greets you and walks you to a free table, because so many seats are taken.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served rather quickly, and the main courses arrive after 60 minutes.

German

Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Während ihr in der Nähe ein Bier trinkt, erinnerst du dich an ein hippes, aber preislich akzeptables Restaurant, welches dir von Freunden schon einmal ans Herz gelegt wurde. Um sicher zu gehen, schaust du dir die Online-Bewertungen an, die auch alle sehr gut sind.

Ihr einigt auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische voll sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und begleitet euch zu einem Tisch, da ja viele Plätze besetzt sind.

Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.

Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 60 Minuten.

Scenario 6 - High Reputation x Low Availability x Short Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. While the four of you have a beer nearby you remember a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant that friends had highly recommended previously. Just to make sure you look up the online ratings, which turn out to be very good, too.

You agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be full. The hostess greets you and walks you to a free table, because so many seats are taken.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 10 minutes.

German
Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Während ihr in der Nähe ein Bier trinkt, erinnerst du dich an ein hippes, aber preislich akzeptables Restaurant, welches dir von Freunden schon einmal ans Herz gelegt wurde. Um sicher zu gehen, schaust du dir die Online-Bewertungen an, die auch alle sehr gut sind.
Ihr einigt auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische voll sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und begleitet euch zu einem Tisch, da ja viele Plätze besetzt sind.
Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.
Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 10 Minuten.

Scenario 7 - Low Reputation x Low Availability x Long Objective Waiting Time
It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. After the four of you have a beer in the city center you see a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant. You know that some friends have been here before, but they did not tell you much about it. Therefore, you look up the online reviews, which rate the restaurant as average.
Still, you agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be full. The hostess greets you and walks you to a free table, because so many seats are taken.
After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.
The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 1 hour.

German
Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Nachdem ihr in der Nähe ein Bier getrunken habt, kommt ihr an einem hippen, aber preislich akzeptablen Restaurant vorbei. Du weißt, dass Freunde von dir schon hier waren, aber sie haben dir nicht viel davon erzählt. Deswegen schaust du dir Online-Bewertungen an, welche durchschnittlich sind.
Trotzdem einigt ihr euch auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische voll sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und begleitet euch zu einem Tisch, da ja viele Plätze besetzt sind.
Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.
Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 60 Minuten.

Scenario 8 - Low Reputation x Low Availability x Short Objective Waiting Time

It is Saturday evening. You and your friend have decided to have dinner with another couple, but you are not sure which restaurant to go to. After the four of you have a beer in the city center you see a hip, yet reasonably priced restaurant. You know that some friends have been here before, but they did not tell you much about it. Therefore, you look up the online reviews, which rate the restaurant as average.

Still, you agree to try it and arrive at the restaurant at 7 p.m. As you look around, you notice that most tables seem to be full. The hostess greets you and walks you to a free table, because so many seats are taken.

After she presents you with your menus, the waiter comes to take your order about ten minutes later. Everybody orders drinks and a main course. While the other couple goes for fish and a salad, you and your friend order a steak and pasta.

The drinks are served quickly, and the main courses arrive after 10 minutes.

German

Es ist Samstagabend. Du und ein Freund wollt mit zwei weiteren Freunden essen gehen, aber ihr seid euch noch nicht sicher wo genau ihr hinmöchtet. Nachdem ihr in der Nähe ein Bier getrunken habt, kommt ihr an einem hippen, aber preislich akzeptablen Restaurant vorbei. Du weißt, dass Freunde von dir schon hier waren, aber sie haben dir nicht viel davon erzählt. Deswegen schaust du dir Online-Bewertungen an, welche durchschnittlich sind.

Trotzdem einigt ihr euch auf das Restaurant und kommt um 19:00 Uhr an. Als du dich umschaust, bemerkst du, dass die meisten Tische voll sind. Eine Kellnerin begrüßt euch und begleitet euch zu einem Tisch, da ja viele Plätze besetzt sind.

Etwa 10 Minuten nachdem sie euch die Speisekarte gereicht hat, nimmt die Kellnerin eure Bestellung auf. Jeder bestellt ein Getränk und einen Hauptgang. Während eure Freunde Fisch und Salat bestellen, entscheiden du und dein anderer Freund sich für Pasta und ein Steak.

Die Getränke werden rasch serviert, und der Hauptgang kommt nach 60 Minuten.

Pictures used

High availability / empty restaurant

Low availability / Full restaurant

High reputation - Excellent review

Megan T
Somerset, United Kingdom
18 11

Reviewed February 10, 2018

Wonderful and Different

We met a lady on the train, who recommended this venue.
Beautiful place and the staff was wonderful and so friendly. The dinner blew me away – absolutely delicious!!
Honestly, some of the most tasty food I have ever had. Not at all pricey either. A really gem!!! I'll be back for sure.

Value

Service
Food

German

Megan T
Somerset, United Kingdom
18 11

Reviewed February 10, 2018

Wunderbar anders

Wir haben eine Frau im Zug getroffen, die uns dieses Restaurant empfohlen hat.
Wunderschöner Laden und der Service war auch herausragend und so freundlich.
Das Abendessen hat mich vom Hocker gehauen - köstlich!!
Ehrlich, eins der leckerste Gerichte, die ich jemals hatte.
Außerdem war es auch überhaupt nicht teuer. Ein echter Tipp!
Ich werde auf jeden Fall wiederkommen.

Preis-Leistung

Service
Essen

Low reputation – Average review

jacquelinek548
97 25

Reviewed February 21, 2018 via mobile

Average

The place looked gorgeous and the inside is beautiful, but the food is just so-so. They made it a point to make the food look as great as possible, which they succeeded in, but it doesn't taste nearly as good as it looks. The service was nice though.
Good for instagram worthy pictures, but overall average.

Value

Service
Food

German

jacquelinek548
97 25

Reviewed February 21, 2018 via mobile

Durchschnittlich

Der Laden sieht von Außen und Innen wirklich super aus, aber das Essen war so la-la. Obwohl man sich offensichtliche Mühe gegeben hatte das Essen so schön wie möglich zu servieren - es hat leider nicht ansatzweise so gut geschmeckt, wie es ausgesehen hat. Der Service war aber gut.
Nett für Instagram Bilder, aber insgesamt eher durchschnittlich.

Preis-Leistung

Service
Essen

Appendix B – Measurement scales

Regulatory focus

Promotion focus

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often have you accomplished things that got you "psyched" to work even harder?	○	○	○	○	○
Do you often do well at different things that you try?	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to most people, are you typically able to get what you want out of life?	○	○	○	○	○

Prevention focus

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Growing up, how often did you obey rules and regulations that were established by your parents?	○	○	○	○	○
Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times.	○	○	○	○	○
Did you get on your parents' nerves often when you were growing up	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Regulatory Focus

Evaluation of the waiting time

Cognitive evaluation

Please indicate what you think about the waiting time described in the scenario.

Too short	○	○	○	○	○	Too long
Not irritating	○	○	○	○	○	Irritating
Not annoying	○	○	○	○	○	Annoying

Affective evaluation

Please indicate how you would feel about the waiting described in the scenario?

Unsatisfied	○	○	○	○	○	Satisfied
Not pleased	○	○	○	○	○	Pleased
Unhappy	○	○	○	○	○	Happy

Anticipatory evaluation

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements about the waiting time in the scenario, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The waiting time would increase my excitement for the service.	○	○	○	○	○
The waiting time would increase my anticipation for the service.	○	○	○	○	○
The waiting time would indicate high quality of the service to me.	○	○	○	○	○
The waiting time would indicate poor organization of the service to me.	○	○	○	○	○

Acceptable waiting time

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The waiting time described in the scenario is acceptable.	○	○	○	○	○

What would be the maximum amount of waiting time for the main courses to be served before you feel upset?

	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120
Slide right to indicate the time in minutes. ()	

Exclusivity

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The restaurant experience is unique.	○	○	○	○	○
The restaurant experience is extravagant.	○	○	○	○	○
The restaurant experience is exclusive.	○	○	○	○	○
The restaurant experience is hard to obtain.	○	○	○	○	○
The restaurant experience is available only to a few people.	○	○	○	○	○

Desire for exclusivity

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I like unique and scarce products or services.	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy products or services more when only a few people possess them.	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy having things that others do not.	○	○	○	○	○
I am willing to wait for a product or service that is exclusive	○	○	○	○	○

Demographics

What is your age in years?

_____

What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Prefer not to indicate

What is your main occupation?

- [ ] Part-time employed
- [ ] Full-time employed
- [ ] Self-employed
- [ ] Student
- [ ] Unemployed
- [ ] Other

On average, how many times do you eat out?

- ○ More than 3 times a week
- ○ Once a week
- ○ Two to three times a month
- ○ Less than once a month

On average, how many money do you spend on eating out each month?

- ○ Less than 50 Euros/Dollar
- ○ Between 50 – 150 Euro/Dollar
- ○ 150 – 250 Euro/Dollar
- ○ More than 250 Euro/Dollar

Appendix C – Measurement scales in German

Regulatory focus Questionnaire (Higgins et al., 2001)

Promotion

1) Wie oft hast du Dinge erreicht, die dich "gepusht" haben noch härter zu arbeiten? ○○○○○○

2) Wie oft gelingen dir neue und verschiedene Dinge, die du ausprobierst? ○○○○○○

3) Verglichen mit den meisten Leuten: Erreichst du typischerweise die Dinge, die du im Leben willst? ○○○○○○

Prevention

1) Wie oft hast du Regeln und Weisungen deiner Eltern befolgt, als du aufgewachsen bist? ○○○○○○

2) Unvorsichtig zu sein hat mich schon in Schwierigkeiten gebracht.

○○○○○○

3) Bist du deinen Eltern auf die Nerven gegangen, als du aufgewachsen bist? ○○○○○○

Evaluation of the waiting time

Three- item cognitive evaluation

1) Zu kurz	○○○○○○	Zu lang
2) Nicht lästig	○○○○○○	Lästig
3) Nicht nervig	○○○○○○	Nervig

Three-item affective evaluation

1) Zufrieden	○○○○○○	Unzufrieden
2) Befriedigend	○○○○○○	Unbefriedigend
3) Glücklich	○○○○○○	Unglücklich

Four-item anticipatory evaluation

1) Die beschriebene Wartezeit würde meine Aufgeregtheit für den Service steigern. ○○○○○○

2) Die beschriebene Wartezeit würde meine Vorfreude auf den Service steigern. ○○○○○○

3) Die beschriebene Wartezeit deutet auf eine hohe Qualität des Service hin. ○○○○○○

4) Die beschriebene Wartezeit deutet auf eine schlechte Organisation des Service hin. ○○○○○○

Acceptable waiting time

1) Die beschriebene Wartezeit ist akzeptabel. ○○○○○○

2) Was wäre die maximale Wartezeit bis der Hauptgang serviert wird, bevor du dich aufregen würdest.
Bitte gib dies in Minuten an, z.b. eine halbe Stunde als "30"

Exclusivity

Five-item Perceived Exclusivity

1) Das Erlebnis im Restaurant ist einzigartig. ○○○○○○

2) Das Erlebnis im Restaurant ist extravagant. ○○○○○○

3) *Das Erlebnis im Restaurant ist exklusiv.* ○○○○○○

4) Das Erlebnis im Restaurant ist schwierig anderswo zu bekommen. ○○○○○○

5) Das Erlebnis im Restaurant ist nur für wenige Leute zugänglich. ○○○○○○

Four-item desire for exclusivity

1) Ich mag einzigartige und seltene Produkte oder Services. ○○○○○○

2) Ich habe mehr Vergnügen an Produkten oder Services, wenn nur wenige andere Leute diese besitzen oder in Anspruch nehmen können. ○○○○○○

3) Ich mag es Dinge zu besitzen, die andere nicht besitzen. ○○○○○○

4) Ich bin bereit, auf exklusive Produkte oder Services zu warten. ○○○○○○

Demographics

1) Wie oft isst du im Durschnitt außer Haus?

- Öfter als drei Mal die Woche
- Einmal die Woche
- Zwei oder drei Mal im Monat
- Seltener als einmal im Monat

2) Wie viel gibst du im Durschnitt für Essen außer Haus aus, also z.b. Restaurantbesuche?

- Weniger als 50 Euro
- Zwischen 50 – 150 Euro
- Zwischen 150 – 250 Euro

- Mehr als 250 Euro

3) Wie alt bist du?
- 18- 24
- 25 – 30
- 31 – 40
- 41 – 50
- 51 – 65
- 66 +

4) Was ist dein Geschlecht?
- Männlich
- Weiblich
- Möchte ich nicht angeben

5) Was ist deine Haupttätigkeit
- Teilzeit angestellt
- Vollzeit angestellt
- Selbstständig
- Student
- Arbeitslos
- Andere