

**Perspective Taking as an Intervention for Employee Emotional Labor: A Training and
Development Approach**

A Doctoral Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the
Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management
University of Houston

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Signature Page

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to my family who supported and encouraged me. A special appreciation to my father, for his guidance, care, and direction

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Table of Contents

Title Page.....	i
Signature Page.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Abstract.....	ix
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	3
Purposes and Objectives.....	4
Justification of the Study.....	4
Hypotheses.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	7
Chapter 2. Literature Review.....	9
Emotional Labor.....	9
Evolution of Emotional Labor.....	9
Emotional Labor Theories in Hospitality Literature.....	12
Emotional Labor in Managerial Literature.....	14
Emotional Labor in Hospitality Literature.....	16
Antecedents of Emotional Labor.....	16
Outcomes of Emotional Labor.....	22
Mediators of Emotional Labor Studies.....	28
Moderators of Emotional Labor Studies.....	31
Gaps in Emotional Labor Literature.....	33
Perspective Taking.....	35
Perspective Taking Theories.....	35
Perspective Taking Manipulations and Measurements.....	37
Perspective Taking as Training Interventions.....	38
Chapter 3. Methodology.....	40
Perspective Taking Intervention Training.....	40
Measures.....	42
Longitudinal Perspective Taking.....	43
Measures.....	44
References.....	46
Chapter 4. Perspective Taking as an Intervention Training Technique for Difficult Customer Interactions.....	58
Abstract.....	58
Introduction.....	59
Literature Review.....	62
Affective Events Theory.....	62
Perspective Taking.....	63
Negative Affect.....	65
Empathy.....	66
Deep Acting as an Outcome.....	67
Customer Compensation as an Outcome.....	69
Methodology.....	72

Sample.....	72
Design and Procedure.....	72
Measures.....	73
Results.....	75
Psychometric Analyses.....	75
Test of Hypotheses.....	75
Additional Analysis.....	76
Discussion.....	77
Theoretical Implications.....	78
Practical Implications.....	81
Limitations and Future Studies.....	82
Conclusion.....	83
References.....	84
Tables and Figures.....	92
Chapter 5. Longitudinal Analysis of Perspective Taking.....	98
Abstract.....	98
Introduction.....	99
Literature Review.....	101
Affective Events Theory.....	102
Perspective Taking.....	103
Negative Affect.....	104
Empathy.....	105
Deep Acting as an Outcome.....	106
Helping Behavior as an Outcome.....	109
Methodology.....	110
Design and Procedures.....	110
Sample.....	111
Manipulation Check.....	112
Measures.....	112
Results.....	113
Test of Hypotheses.....	114
Discussion.....	115
Theoretical Implications.....	116
Practical Implications.....	119
Limitations and Future Studies.....	120
Conclusion.....	122
References.....	123
Tables and Figures.....	132
Chapter 6. General Discussion.....	135
Major Findings.....	136
Discussions and Conclusions.....	138
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies.....	141
References.....	143
Appendix 1. Study 1 Survey Scenario.....	145
Appendix 2. Study 1 Control Group.....	146
Appendix 3. Study 1 Experimental Group Manipulation.....	146

Appendix 4. Study 1 Survey Instrument..... 147
Appendix 5. Study 2 Survey Instrument..... 149

Abstract

Hospitality organizations inherently depend on employee-customer interactions. In fact, many of the service quality and satisfaction dimensions rely on human interaction, yet organization training programs usually focus on technical skills. Research is clear that service employees often deal with customers who can be rude and aggressive and that these interactions can have negative impacts on service employees. However, there has been little research examining possible intervention or training tools for employees. Therefore, the purpose of the current studies was to examine how perspective taking can influence affective reactions toward difficult customer interactions (i.e., negative affect and empathy) and critical employee performance outcomes. Perspective taking involves considering situations from another point of view (Galinsky & Ku, 2004; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), and has been used as an intervention to help promote diversity management programs (Madera, 2017), handle customer injustice (Rupp, Silke McCance, Spencer, & Sonntag, 2008), and goal-directed behavior at work (Brown, Westbrook, & Challagalla, 2005).

Using the affective event theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) as a theoretical framework, Study 1 examines how perspective taking can be an intervention for service managers during difficult customer interactions. The theoretical framework of the AET suggests perspective taking can impact service performance by shifting employee's affective reactions during difficult service interactions. Deep acting and customer compensation were examined as outcomes of customer perspective taking. In addition, negative affect and empathy were examined as mediators of the effect of customer perspective taking on the outcomes. A 2-group (customer perspective taking: yes or no) experimental design was used to examine the between-subjects relationship among frontline managers. The results showed that taking the perspective

of a customer led to more deep acting and customer compensation via the mediating effects of affective reactions (negative affect and empathy). The results suggest that perspective taking can be a viable intervention tool to help employees maximize service delivery with difficult and demanding customers.

Service interactions and work events are dynamic and vary in occurrences and how employees appraise the interaction. According to the AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), employees' daily appraisal of work events causes affective reactions, influencing working attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, Study 2 used an experience sampling method (ESM) to examine customer perspective taking through a longitudinal design consisting of five days of baseline measurements, followed by five days of intervention measurements. The ESM approach used in Study 2 accounts for the within-person level variance of daily fluctuations in affective reactions to determine the potency of perspective taking as a training intervention. Frontline service employees completed daily measures of affective reactions (i.e., negative affect and empathy) and employee performance (i.e., deep acting and customer helping behaviors). The results replicated Study 1 in that perspective taking led to lower levels of negative affect and higher felt empathy toward customers. In addition, feeling less negative affect and more empathy led to more deep acting and customer helping behaviors. Study 2 also shows that regardless of fluctuations in daily difficult customer interactions, the positive effect of perspective taking on the outcomes remained consistent at the within-person level.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Frontline employees are often considered boundary spanning employees, bridging the gap between customers and an organization's goals (e.g., Korschun, 2015; Grawe, Daugherty, & Ralston, 2015). To customers, frontline employees are often representative of how the organization views and values their customers (Zablah, Franke, Brown, & Bartholomew, 2012; Menguc, Auh, Katsikeas, & Jung, 2016) and this is often demonstrated in the level of customer service and service delivery provided by frontline employees (Susskind, Kacmar, Borchgrevink, 2003). From an organization's point of view, frontline employees are often tasked with disseminating customer service that is reflective and representative of the organization (Henning-Thurau, 2004). Frontline employees are also crucial in building a lasting relationship between a customer and an organization. These relationships can help foster future business and interactions between a customer and organization, and rather than managers and directors, frontline employees are accountable for building and maintaining these relationships (Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014). However, most organizations focus on technical training rather than training employees on how to handle dissatisfied customers (Hocutt, Chakraborty, & Mowen, 1997).

Additionally, Chu and Murrmann (2006) examined how the hospitality mantra of "the customer is king" results in an unequal power mechanism during customer interactions. Statements like "the customer is king" and "the customer is always right" fuel the power discrepancy between customers and service employees. Organizational display rules mandating how employees should show positive expressions and to serve customers with a positive attitude often results in employees smiling through rude, hostile, and abusive customer interactions (Mattila & Enz, 2002). This equation of empowered guests and employees having to show positive expressions, results in an implicit power imbalance between customers and employees

(Rafaeli, Grandey, Ravid, Wirtz, & Steiner, 2006). The synergetic blend of employees' boundary spanning role and the power imbalance between customers and employees requires employees to exert more effort into solving guest complaints and service failures (Choi et al., 2014).

Emotional labor and customer compensation are tools employees can use when solving guest complaints or service failures. Emotional labor is the process of regulating feelings and expressions to support organization goals. Within the hospitality and service industry, apologetic, compassionate, and sympathetic responses are expected after a complaint or service failure (Choi et al., 2014). Employees can use surface acting (i.e., managing expressions) or deep acting (i.e., managing emotions) in order to achieve and deliver expected expressions when solving complaints and service failures (Grandey, 2000). Complaints are often delivered by angry, rude, or demanding guest and engaging in these interactions can be equally angering for employees. Seventy percent of participants reported verbally abusing an employee during a customer service interaction and this figure is likely under-representative of negative customer service interactions (Harris & Reynolds, 2004). In order to combat the negative affects resulting from angry, rude, or demanding guest complaints, employees must put aside their negative feelings and not only apologize for the service failure, but also express compassion and sympathy. Therefore, emotional labor can support employees' intangible service recovery strategy when solving guest complaints or service failures.

Employees can also tangibly solve guest complaints and service failures through the use of customer compensation. Customer compensation involves offering refunds, discounts, or complimentary services to resolve complaints or service failures (Lee, Singh, & Chan, 2011). In the food and beverage industry, compensation could come in the form of a complimentary dessert for an order mistake or complimentary wifi and parking for hotels. The Ritz-Carlton

implements a \$2,000 per guest, per incident recovery strategy where employees are empowered with up to \$2,000 towards service recovery and guest's satisfaction in lieu of a service failure (Partlow, 1993; Reiss, 2009). Additionally, Roschk and Gelbrich (2017) found that customer compensation was the most used service recovery strategy after encountering a service failure and many service employees can use customer compensation to effectively resolve and remedy a complaint of service failure. Thus, although the hospitality and service industry exhibit an inherent power imbalance between customers and employees, post-failure satisfaction can be enhanced through emotional labor and customer compensation.

Statement of Problem

Although emotional labor, its strategies, and the drawbacks of engaging in emotional labor have been studied over the past three decades, the literature lacks solutions or coping tools for employees (Morris & Feldman, 1996; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). While person-job fit can help alleviate emotional labor strain and individuals can have a more positive disposition or affect (Grandey, 2003), research demonstrates that employees reported that more often than not, that their true feelings do not always match their job roles (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). By engaging in deep and surface acting, employees are effortfully modifying their emotions and expressions since these emotions and expressions are not unconsciously or spontaneously generated (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Although many studies suggest engaging in deep acting is linked to more positive outcomes for employees and organizations (e.g., Chu, Baker, & Murrmann, 2012; Geng, Liu, Liu, & Feng, 2014; Kim, 2018), literature to date does not offer any coping tools or training interventions to help employees implement deep acting during customer interactions.

Customer interactions are an inevitable job characteristic for hospitality and service employees and increasing strict display rules and demanding or empowered guests require employees to engage in more emotional labor now than ever (Choi et al., 2014). For hospitality and service employees, interpersonal skills such as positive affect and pleasantness are just as important, if not more important, than technical skills (Walsh, 2011). Industry employees have reported unhealthy coping tactics such as consuming alcohol and tobacco, ignoring or bribing customers, and retaliating against difficult customers (Reynolds & Harris, 2006). Therefore, providing alternative coping strategies to help employees manage difficult customer interactions could benefit both employees and organizations. Additionally, providing employees with trainings and coping techniques could convey to employees that the organization values their personal and professional skill development (Choi et al., 2014).

Purposes and Objectives

The purposes of this study are to: 1) review the existing emotional labor and perspective taking literature from a hospitality and service industry context; 2) to explore the relationship between perspective taking, emotional labor, and customer outcome variables; 3) to develop and validate a perspective taking training intervention technique; and 4) to manipulate perspective taking and track changes in emotional labor and customer outcome variables. The specific objectives of this study are:

- 1) To provide a critical review of emotional labor studies;
- 2) To develop and validate perspective taking as an effective training intervention technique;
- 3) To empirically test perspective taking through experimental designs; and
- 4) To measure changes in emotional labor and customer outcome variables.

Justification of the Study

Although emotional labor and service failure has been studied for several decades, the literature and industry lack strategies focusing on how employees manage the complaint rather than service recovery (Hocutt et al., 1997). Many of the service satisfaction and quality dimensions imply a human exchange element between customers and employees, suggesting hospitality and service organizations should invest in training to enhance employees' abilities to manage difficult customer interactions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Ro & Chen, 2011). Trainings should revolve around inter-personal, problem-solving, and soft skills so employees are better equipped to meet the demands of complex service exchanges. Consequently, perspective taking could answer the call for a training intervention tool for difficult customer interactions.

From a theoretical and academic perspective, this study provides insight into and contributes to the emotional labor literature by providing a critical review of emotional labor in the hospitality and service literature. Emotional labor lacks a clear definition and operationalization of what emotional labor is and is not. While emotional labor lacks an overarching theoretical framework (Gursoy, Boylu, & Avci, 2011), many studies define or measure emotional labor as different constructs. Additionally, the findings of this study could provide a coping technique and strategy to help employees handle and manage difficult customer interactions. Lastly, this study also examines emotional labor through a longitudinal design (Geng et al., 2014; Hur, Won Moon, & Jun, 2013; Jung & Yoon, 2014^b; Lee & Ok, 2012). A longitudinal design allows for daily fluctuations in affect or changes in variables to be measured over time and expands the generalizability of causal emotional labor findings (Lee & Hwang, 2016).

The findings of this study also support perspective taking literature. Perspective taking has been used to increase psychological closeness (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996), team effectiveness (Jehn, 1995), and helping behaviors (Baston, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002) as well as a diversity training technique (Baston, Early, & Salvarani, 1997) and a tool for changing attitudes about diversity management (Madera, 2017; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011).

Implementing perspective taking as a service training tool could add to the scope of perspective taking applications to the hospitality and service industry, as well as training literature, by helping to change attitudes and behaviors towards difficult customers.

For managers, this study highlights the significance for employee training and development. By examining possible employee and customer related outcomes, this study focuses on how perspective taking as a training intervention tool can help employees cope with difficult customers and how doing so will reflect in their customer service. If this study successfully finds perspective taking and its outcomes as an effective intervention tool, managers can utilize and implement perspective taking to help employees enhance the human exchange element of customer service as well as manage the increasing demands of difficult customer interactions. For example, in addition to incorporating perspective taking to orientation trainings, based on the findings of these studies, managers could implement this training tool before high-volume shifts or for particularly difficult clients to help employees successfully navigate service exchanges.

Lastly, this study has implications for hospitality and service industry managers. By equipping employees with this training intervention tool, industry leaders can help shift the power imbalance between customers and employees. The hospitality and service industry and its employees are known for its eagerness to go the extra mile for customers (Huang & Miao, 2016)

and this has fueled the existing power discrepancy between customers and employees; however, giving employees the tools, knowledge, and expertise for the human element of customer service could help tip the power imbalance to favor the industry.

Hypotheses

Study 1

H1: Customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect

H2: Customer perspective taking will increase empathy

H3: Negative affect (H3a) and empathy (H3b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting

H4: Negative affect (H4a) and empathy (H4b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on customer compensation

Study 2

H5: Within individuals, customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect

H6: Within individuals, customer perspective taking will increase empathy

H7: Within individuals, negative affect (H7a) and empathy (H7b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting

H8: Within individuals, negative affect (H8a) and empathy (H8b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on helping behavior

Definition of Terms

Emotional Labor: Emotional labor refers to the management of emotions and expressions to comply with display rules in order to improve work-related outcomes (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey, 2000; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

Perspective Taking: Perspective taking refers to the cognitive process of imagining situations from another person's point of view or standpoint to understand their motivations, intentions, and emotions (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015).

Negative Affect: Negative affect refers to the resulting negative emotions felt as a consequence of engaging in difficult customer interactions and emotional labor (Spector, Zapf, Chen, & Frese, 2000; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005).

Empathy: Empathy refers to feelings of warmth and sympathy towards a target, or parallel emotions experienced by another individual (Vescio, Sechrist, & Paolucci, 2003).

Deep Acting: Deep acting refers to an emotional labor strategy related to managing emotions, rather than managing expressions (surface acting). Deep acting can be achieved by changing one's inner feelings and is associated with authentic expressions. (Grandey, 2003)

Customer Compensation: Customer compensation is a service recovery strategy associated with tangible and intangible financial rewards that are distributed at the discretion of employees (Lee et al., 2011).

Helping Behavior: discretionary behaviors that employees utilize to go above and beyond job descriptions and requirements, upholding high levels of customer service and satisfaction (Bharadwaja, Lee, & Madera, 2018; Wu & Liao, 2016).

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Emotional labor

Evolution of Emotional Labor

Hochschild (1983) proposed employees engage in impression management within a work context to support their organization's goals. In a customer service setting, this often insinuates that employees hide their negative feelings and emotions in order to comply with hospitality and service display rules such as "service with a smile" or "smile, you're on stage". Although display rules can vary from industry to industry and organization to organization, Hochschild (1983) first proposed that employees do so through two emotional labor strategies: surface and deep acting. Surface acting consists of masking one's true emotions and feelings in order to display organizationally appropriate expressions. For instance, an employee could be having a bad day and is experiencing negative affect but can mask these emotions in a work setting by smiling or acting happy. Referred to as "faking in bad faith," surface acting serves as a strategic means to an end for employees trying to comply with display rules or job requirements, rather than for the benefit of the organization or customers (Grandey, 2003; Gosserand, & Diefendorff, 2005). Consequently, employees that engage in surface acting often experience emotional dissonance – the discrepancy resulting from the difference between felt and expressed emotions (Hochschild, 1983).

On the other hand, deep acting involves a cognitive and effortful change in one's emotions and feelings in order to display appropriate expressions. By engaging in deep acting, employees are attempting to express authentic emotions and expressions in order to comply with organizational display rules. The purpose and intention of deep acting is to appear authentic and has been classified as "faking in good faith" (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Grandey, 2000) so

although deep acting is still acting and faking, the intention behind deep acting is to appear authentic and requires more effort. Deep acting often requires changing how employees feel, in order to display appropriate expressions. Since deep acting often involves changing how one feels, deep acting does not result in the same negative consequences as surface acting, such as emotional dissonance. However, research suggests that individuals that cannot regulate their emotions, cannot engage in deep acting (Grandey, 2000). Therefore, while surface acting has often been associated with expression management, deep acting is associated with emotion management – consequently, surface and deep acting have been classified as having separate intentions, motivations, and mechanisms.

Hochschild (1983) also proposed that in addition to emotional labor strategies being parallel, the employee outcomes of surface and deep acting are also dissimilar. Surface acting has been associated with emotional dissonance, where individuals experience conflict associated with the disconnect between their emotions and expressions. Surface acting and masking one's true emotions is also associated with negative employee outcomes such as increased stress, turnover, and decreased job satisfaction (Grandey, 2000). However, the outcomes of deep acting are generally more positive for employees. Deep acting requires more effort and has been equated with emotive effort. Although deep acting is more effortful in the beginning, the outcomes of deep acting include decreased stress and increase creativity (Geng et al., 2014) and job satisfaction (Lee & Hwang, 2016). In general, surface acting results in negative outcomes for employees while deep acting is associated with more positive outcomes for employee (Grandey, 2000).

After establishing that emotional labor occurs in a work context and is often expressed as surface and deep acting and their employee related outcomes, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993)

expanded the employee-focus of emotional labor to organizational benefits. Rather than examining how emotional labor positively or negatively impacts employees, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) focused on how employee expressions influence the organization. By examining employee expressions and manifestations of emotional labor, although negative connotations of emotional labor emerged in the literature, the researchers were able to reposition emotional labor as a positive tool for organizations to use in customer service interactions.

Lastly, Morris & Feldman (1996) examined how job characteristics influenced employees' engagement in emotional labor. Four job characteristics emerged as antecedents of emotional labor: 1) duration of interactions, 2) frequency of interactions, 3) variety of emotions, and 4) intensity of emotions. Duration and frequency of interactions are associated with how often service employees encounter customer interactions. For instance, a front desk agent may check in over 20 guests in one hour, with each interaction lasting roughly 5 minutes while a travel agent may interact with one customer in one hour, with the interacting lasting 40 minutes. The job characteristics of a front desk agent compared to a travel agent can influence how the employee engages in emotional labor. Therefore, Morris and Feldman (1996) suggest the duration and frequency of interactions influence employee engagement of emotional labor. Face-to-face versus voice-to-voice customer settings best describes how the variety and intensity of emotions can influence emotional labor. In a face-to-face customer interaction, customers may have to visibly display emotions such as happiness, warmth, sympathy, or compassion. On the other hand, voice-to-voice interactions may not require employees to visibly display these emotions, influencing whether or not employees engage in emotional labor. Thus, the job characteristic of variety and intensity of emotions can also influence how employees engage in emotional labor.

These three seminal perspectives on emotional labor have helped build the current understanding of emotional labor – the process of regulating feelings and expressions to support organizational goals. The hospitality literature has embraced emotional labor and its outcomes on employees, customers, and organizations and hospitality researchers have borrowed Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory and Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) affective events theory to apply emotional labor to hospitality and service contexts.

Emotional Labor Theories in Hospitality Literature

Existing hospitality and service literature has referenced several theories as frameworks to examine and understand the antecedents and outcomes of emotional labor. In addition, many studies apply theoretical frameworks to context-specific situations (i.e., Medler-Liraz, 2014; Wijeratne, Van Dijk, Kirk-Brown, & Frost, 2014), resulting in inconsistent implications of theoretical findings. These theoretical limitations support Gursoy et al.'s (2011) argument that the emotional labor literature lacks an overarching theoretical framework for future studies.

The conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) is a general work demands and work stress framework suggesting employees strive to attain, sustain, and maintain resources to manage work demands and stress. The COR theory suggests emotional labor strategies help employees manage customer demands, work stress, and organizational displays required during customer and service interactions. Consequently, the COR theory has been used to examine both the individual antecedents (i.e., emotional intelligence, personality, and affectivity) and outcomes (i.e., leadership, organizational support) of emotional labor. From an individual-specific context, the COR theory and existing literature suggests engaging in the depleting strategies of emotional labor (i.e., surface acting) simultaneously depletes an individual's work demand resources. However, the COR theory does not explain how hospitality and service

industry work demands drain resources related to employee (e.g., turnover), organization (e.g., job satisfaction), or customer outcomes (e.g., service recovery performance).

Affective events theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) states that discrete affective events at work influence emotions and involves first appraising the relevance of the event to the individual, followed by a second appraisal of an appropriate response. In the hospitality industry, this often translates to negative customer interactions affecting employee affect and mood, and employees engaging in emotional labor to produce an appropriate response. Although the AET describes how organization-related antecedents (e.g., leadership and organizational support) are work environments and events at work can impact employee affective reactions, the AET fails to explain the outcomes of emotional labor. Work events, such as a dispute between a customer and employee can elicit an affective reaction as an antecedent, causing the employee to engage in emotional labor. However, the AET does not fully explain how using emotional labor results in many of the outcomes examined in existing literature.

Although the COR theory and AET explain some of the individual, organization, or customer-related antecedents and outcomes of emotional labor, the hospitality and service literature lack an overarching theoretical framework for emotional labor studies. The depletion of cognitive resources theory (Muraven & Baumesiter, 2000) suggests the psychological capital necessary for emotional labor is a cognitive resource that is both limited and easily drained, potentially explaining the individual, organization, and customer-related antecedents and outcomes of emotional labor. Whether employees are surface acting or deep acting, faking in good or bad faith, or managing emotions or expressions, engaging in emotional labor requires cognitive resources and effort which is fatiguing and draining to employees. The depletion of cognitive resources theory also provides support for the outcomes of emotional labor. The loss

and drain of cognitive resources from engaging in emotional labor can negatively impact customer service (e.g., service recovery performance), individuals (e.g., stress), and organizations (e.g., turnover intentions). Therefore, since the hospitality and service industry enforce strict display rules on its employees, actively changing, correcting, and monitoring emotions and expressions during the numerous customer interactions an employee faces during the work day would deplete their cognitive resources, accounting for the individual and organizational antecedents and outcomes of emotional labor.

Emotional Labor in Managerial Literature

A large body of the general management, non-hospitality, emotional labor literature has focused on how emotional labor manifests through two means: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting and deep acting are often predicated by organization display rules. Hochschild (1983) first described display rules as feeling rules, or organizational norms and expectations for employee emotions and feelings (Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff, 2015; Grandey, Rupp, & Brice, 2015). Surface acting is reflected in both the Hochschild (1983) and Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) viewpoints and involves regulating one's expressed emotion while deep acting involves the effortful alignment of one's emotions with desired expressions (Grandey, 2000; Gabriel, Daniels, Diefendorff, & Greguras, 2015; Bhave & Glomb, 2016). Consequently, surface acting involves suppressing emotions and manufacturing emotions that comply with organization display rules and customer expected emotions. Therefore, surface acting is often more effortful, exhausting, and emotional demanding. The discrepancy between employee felt emotions and expressed emotion has been described as emotional dissonance and has been a popular measure of emotional labor as well. More specifically, Grandey (2000) defined emotional dissonance as "the internal state of tension that occurs when a person must display emotions that are discrepant

from his or her true feelings” (pg. 97). Although emotional dissonance describes the emotional effects of surface acting, the definition of emotional dissonance does not necessarily fully capture surface acting. Surface acting has been associated with negative employee outcomes such as emotional exhaustion (Grandey Foo, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012), burnout (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Lee & Ok, 2014), turnover intention (Lam, & Chen, 2012; Jung & Yoon, 2014^a), well-being (Humphrey et al., 2015, Grandey et al., 2015) and stress (Bhave & Glomb, 2016). These outcomes are negative and potentially harmful to employees and organizations and should therefore be thoroughly investigated to determine how employers and managers can help alleviate the negative effects.

Deep acting strategies often involve trying to feel expected emotions by genuinely feeling the emotions that support display rules. Hochschild (1983) theorized that people deep act by either trying to feel and experience desired emotions or relying on memory or imagination to recall similar emotions. Therefore, deep acting has been associated with emotional effort, where people must spend energy to display appropriate emotions (Gursoy et al., 2011; Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Although engaging in deep acting or emotive effort requires energy and resources, the outcomes are in favor of those engaging in deep acting. Deep acting has been found to yield positive, or at the least mitigate the negative outcomes for employees and organizations. These outcomes prompt for a strong push favoring deep acting or emotive efforts for employees.

Adopting Ashforth and Humphrey's (1993) perspective on customer's reactions to emotional labor, research from the general, non-hospitality, management literature has shown that customers have positive reactions toward service employees who deep act, but negative reactions toward service employees who surface act (Groth, Hennig-Thurau, & Walsh, 2009;

Chi, Grandey, Diamond, & Krimmel, 2011). In addition, emotional labor influences customer intentions (Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul, & Gremler, 2006; Tsai & Huang, 2002). Rather than concentrating on the internal processes or mechanisms behind aligning one's emotion with organizational expectations for impression management, this perspective focuses on the effectiveness of emotional labor, which for the hospitality industry is often quantified by customer satisfaction, intention, and loyalty (Grandey, 2000).

Lastly, research from the general management literature has also supported Morris and Feldman's (1997) perspective on customer interactions and organizational display rules. Organizational display rules are standards and benchmarks for employees' emotional expressions (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005). As a result, emotional labor is a byproduct of display rules since employees must align their emotions with the expected emotional expressions of an organization (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Consequently, engaging in emotional labor to comply with display rules has been characterized as job-focused emotional labor (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). For example, management literature shows that the frequency, length, and intensity of employee-customer interaction significantly influences employee emotional labor (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Rotundo, 2004). Brotheridge and Grandey's (2002) suggests these job-focused factors are unique to the hospitality and tourism industry and result in higher levels of emotional labor for hospitality employees.

Emotional Labor in Hospitality Literature

Antecedents of Emotional Labor

Two classifications of antecedents emerged from the hospitality and service literature: individual constructs and organizational constructs. These two types of antecedents will be discussed, highlighting the various factors used to investigate the antecedents of emotional labor.

Individual constructs include emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, mindfulness, individual characteristics, affect, work-family conflict, and exhaustion. Organizational constructs include perceived organizational and supervisory support, job characteristics, display rules, customer orientation, empowerment, recruitment, selection, and training.

Emotional Intelligence and Emotion Regulation. Jung and Yoon (2014^b) examined the influence of emotional intelligence on emotional labor among hotel employees. Following the four-factor model for emotional intelligence, the authors examined how self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and emotional regulation influenced surface and deep acting. Not only did the authors find a stronger effect of emotional intelligence on emotional labor for front of the house employees, but they also suggest emotional intelligence influences the two mechanisms for emotional labor. Kim, Jung-Eun Yoo, Lee, and Kim, (2012) also examined the emotional intelligence and emotional labor relationship among front of the house hotel employees and found emotional intelligence significantly influences emotional labor. Measuring emotional labor as surface and deep acting, the authors conclude that for frontline hotel employees, emotional intelligence is an emotional resource whereas emotional labor is an acting strategy during service encounters. The findings of these studies are consistent with the existing literature stating emotional intelligence influences emotional labor outside of the hospitality industry (Côté, 2014; Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Mindfulness. Li, Wong, and Kim (2017) argue the tedious and repetitive nature of hospitality occupations poses an emotional threat to employees. Mindfulness is hypothesized to be an antecedent, lessening the self-regulatory resource depletion of surface acting. By sampling casino employees, the authors suggested that casino employees being mindful of their behavior and actions would alleviate the monotony and routine nature of their jobs, reducing surface

acting. The findings of this study suggest mindfulness decreases surface acting among casino employees. The results of this study support existing literature on mindfulness reducing surface acting.

Individual Characteristics. Sohn and Lee (2012) measured personality using the HEXACO personality factors and emotional labor as surface and deep acting to examine the influence of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness on emotional labor. The authors also examined how cultural and demographic factors could influence emotional labor but found personality factors were stronger indicators of emotional labor than demographics. Conversely, Gursoy et al. (2011) examined personality and cultural influences on emotional labor, and concluded cultural values strongly influenced the personality traits of neuroticism, predicting emotional labor among hospitality students in Turkey.

Kim (2008) also examined the relationship between personality traits and emotional labor. The personality traits of neuroticism and extraversion were measured while emotional labor was defined as surface and deep acting. The author found hotel employees high in neuroticism, tend to engage in surface acting during customer interaction while employees high in extraversion tend to engage in deep acting. The findings of these studies suggest that in addition to personality traits influencing emotional labor, individual characteristics such as culture and demographics can also impact emotional labor among hospitality employees in various ways.

Newnham (2017) addressed the cultural and demographic gap in emotional labor studies by examining how idiocentrism and allocentrism influenced surface and deep acting between Filipino and Australian populations. Idiocentric individuals value equity while allocentric individuals value need and equality of reward distribution. Similarly, idiocentric individuals

emphasize comforts in life, competition, pleasure, and social recognition while allocentric individuals emphasize cooperation, equality, and honesty (Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985). The results did not support traditional generalizations of societal cultures, suggesting that although cultural influences may impact how individuals engage in emotional labor, individual level differences have a greater impact on emotional labor outcomes. The study also found idiocentrics engage in surface acting more than allocentric individuals, contributing to higher levels of burnout.

Affect. Medler-Liraz (2014) examined the influence of negative affectivity and emotional labor within the restaurant industry in Israel. The study found negative affect impacted both surface and deep acting, but only when employees engaged in high levels of either emotional labor strategies. Secondly, Chu et al. (2012) examined how affectivity is an antecedent for emotional dissonance and effort. The study found employees with higher positive affect report less emotional dissonance, while employees with higher negative affect engage in more emotional labor. The findings of these two studies suggest affect as an antecedent significantly influences emotional labor among hospitality employees.

Work-Family Conflict. Work-family conflict negatively impacts employees during customer service interactions and Zhao, Mattila, and Ngan (2014) examined how work and family conflicts influence hotel employees and emotional labor. The findings suggest a one-way influence of employee families impacting work – work does not necessarily impact employee families. Employees were found to engage in two mechanisms of emotional labor: faking positive emotions or suppressing negative emotions. The authors suggest organizations should assess how family conflicts interfere with an employee's ability to deliver appropriate emotional displays to customers.

Exhaustion. Zhao et al., (2014) also examined the effects of exhaustion on emotional labor. The authors measured emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion, and hypothesized that any form of exhaustion would interfere with an employees' ability to fake positive or suppress negative emotions. The authors found customers were able to discern between employees faking positive emotions or suppressing negative emotions among employees with higher levels of exhaustion. Nevertheless, customer perceptions of employees faking emotions did not affect customer satisfaction, unless employees displayed overtly fake emotions.

Organizational Support. Hur et al. (2013) investigated perceived organizational support and emotional labor among flight attendants. Emotional labor was measured as surface and deep acting and was found to be significantly influenced by perceived organizational support. The authors further concluded that perceived organizational support may have a buffering affect between the proximal variables of surface and deep acting as well as distal variables such as emotional exhaustion, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. More importantly, the authors suggest the attenuating impact of perceived organizational support could benefit employee emotional labor by increasing organizational commitment and reducing turnover intention.

Supervisor support was also studied as a possible antecedent for emotional labor. Lam and Chen (2012) measured emotional labor as surface and deep acting and hypothesized that supervisory support would influence interactional justice and emotional labor. Emotional labor was hypothesized to impact job satisfaction, service quality, and turnover. By examining hotel employees, the authors found supervisory support significantly influenced interactional justice and emotional labor. The two studies examining the role of organizational support as antecedents

of emotional labor were found to significantly impact surface and deep acting within the hospitality industry.

Job Characteristics. The frequency, variety, duration, intensity, autonomy, and display rules of service encounters were examined by Kim (2008) among hotel employees in predicting emotional labor, measured as surface and deep acting. The author found frequency, variety, duration, and autonomy predicted deep acting among employees. Additionally, display rules were measured as positive or negative rules and positive display rules were found to significantly predict deep acting whereas negative display rules were found to predict surface acting. The authors concluded that these job characteristics influenced emotional labor differently in terms of surface and deep acting among hotel employees.

Gursoy et al. (2011) examined job autonomy as an antecedent and emotional labor measured as emotional dissonance and efforts. Surprisingly, the authors found job autonomy was independent of emotional labor when predicting job satisfaction. The findings suggest job autonomy does not influence emotional dissonance or efforts and does not significantly affect emotional labor.

Customer Orientation. Seeking to measure how employee-customer relationships are established among frontline employees and managers working in hotels, Lee and Hwang (2016) examined the relationship between employee customer orientation and emotional labor. The results suggest employees' customer orientation positively affects deep acting, but negatively affects surface acting. The authors suggest that in addition to their initial findings, since both employees and managers exhibited customer orientation and emotional labor influences, both employees and managers use emotional labor in similar ways during customer service interactions.

Customer Misbehavior. Hu, Hu, and King (2017) examined the effect of customer misbehavior on emotional labor in the airline industry. By examining how customer misbehavior prompts emotional labor among hospitality employees, the authors concluded that customer misbehavior significantly influenced emotional dissonance and emotive effort. During customer interactions and instances of customer misbehavior, the results demonstrate that frontline employees often engage in emotional labor to display appropriate emotions, essentially exhibiting emotions they do not feel.

Empowerment, Recruitment, Selection, and Training. Johanson and Woods (2008) examined how organizations can implement emotional labor strategies by using various factors. The authors found that after sampling hotel employees, selection played a crucial role in maintaining standards and successfully implementing emotional labor strategies. The findings suggest in addition to the existing training, management, and support systems that organizations use to help employees manage their emotions, empowerment, recruitment, selection, and training were most helpful for employees dealing with emotional labor in hotels.

Outcomes of Emotional Labor

The traditional outcomes studied in emotional labor literature reflect the diverging definitions of emotional labor; namely, outcomes are often categorized as those related to the employee or the organization. However, the hospitality and tourism literature have an additional outcome of importance to emotional labor studies: customer outcomes. Thus, the following section will describe the three outcomes of emotional labor: employee, customer, and organization related outcomes.

Wellbeing (employee and customer). Sandiford and Seymour (2002) conducted an ethnographic study of British public houses – colloquially known as pubs. The authors sought to

understand the nature of emotional labor from a service context by observing and participating in service interactions between employees and customers. The authors conducted interviews and used a critical incidents method to understand the consequences of emotional labor for employees and customers and found emotional labor was potentially harmful to not only the employees, as supported by previous research, but also to customers. The unique nature of pubs and how they are managed suggest the sample was vulnerable to the negative effects of emotional labor since many managers often lived near or above the establishments. The authors suggest further investigation into the negative effects of emotional labor on customers, and also how emotional labor impacts the wellbeing for employees and customers.

Employee Creativity. Geng et al. (2014) expanded on employee-related outcomes of emotional labor and examined employee creativity among frontline employees. Although many studies highlight the negative outcomes of emotional labor, the authors examined how surface and deep acting influences creativity and concluded that surface acting thwarted employee creativity while deep acting positively influenced creativity. Their finding supports the limited positive employee emotional labor literature.

Burnout. Newnham (2017) examined how surface acting contributes to employee burnout and found that when participants engaged in surface acting, higher levels of burnout were also reported. Similarly, Kim (2008) sought to examine the outcomes of surface and deep acting among lodging employees. Surprisingly, a weak relationship between emotional labor and burnout was observed, with emotional labor acting as a mediator between personality traits and burnout. The author concluded that although existing literature supports a negative relationship between emotional labor and burnout, since a weak relationship was found between emotional

labor and burnout, perhaps lodging employees who engage in emotional labor may not lead to burnout.

Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment. Depersonalization, a measure of burnout, was studied by Lee and Ok (2012) as an outcome variable of emotional labor, measured as emotional dissonance and emotional effort. Depersonalization refers to employees becoming callous or cynical during customer interactions and emotional dissonance was found to have a negative effect on depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The authors found employees experiencing emotional dissonance detach from the customer interaction in order to cope with the dissonance. As employees continue to depersonalize themselves from service interactions, feelings of job competence and success also decrease, contributing to decreased personal accomplishment.

Emotional Exhaustion. Hur et al. (2013) sought to study emotional exhaustion among flight attendants, measuring emotional labor as surface and deep acting. Surface acting was found to increase emotional exhaustion while deep acting decreased emotional exhaustion. The distal factors of organizational commitment and turnover intention were also found to be outcomes of emotional labor – emotional labor decreased organizational commitment and increased turnover intentions. The authors concluded that managing the effects of emotional labor is emotionally exhausting, and that organizational commitment and turnover intention are outcomes of emotional labor. Hu et al. (2017) also examined employee emotional labor of airline frontline. Their findings supported those of Hur et al. (2013) suggesting emotional labor significantly contributes to emotional exhaustion among frontline employees. Rathi, Bhatnagar, and Mishra (2013) and Lv, Xu, and Ji (2012) also examined surface and deep acting among frontline hotel employees. These findings also support existing literature that emotional labor

influences emotional exhaustion among hospitality industry employees. Similarly, Li et al. (2012) also found that surface acting contributes to emotional exhaustion among frontline hospitality employees.

Chu et al. (2012) examined emotional labor on employee work outcomes and concluded that emotional dissonance and emotional efforts predicted emotional exhaustion. The authors found a negative relationship between emotional dissonance and exhaustion among hospitality employees. The authors suggest further research in this unpredicted finding as well as future training and techniques to help employees manage their emotional labor and exhaustion is needed.

Job Satisfaction. The study by Chu et al. (2012) also used job satisfaction as an outcome variable for emotional labor. The authors found emotional labor, measured as emotive efforts, positively predicted job satisfaction. The authors attribute these findings to emotive effort successfully correlating with deep acting where employees strive to feel the emotions they are expressing, consequently eliminating emotional dissonance and feeling more genuine in their interactions. Customers in turn view these interactions as more authentic and these effects contribute to a feeling of accomplishment and reward for employees during customer service interactions, resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction.

Gursoy et al. (2011) found job satisfaction was strongly contingent upon emotional labor. The findings of their study suggest employees high in neuroticism engage in emotional labor and report low job satisfaction. The authors suggest these findings support existing literature on personality, emotional labor, and job satisfaction. Therefore, organizations should strive to equip and train employees high in neuroticism with emotional labor strategies to maintain job satisfaction. Lee and Ok (2012) and Lee and Hwang (2016) found similar results among hotel

service employees where surface acting was related to lower job satisfaction and deep acting was related to higher job satisfaction. The authors suggest their findings could benefit managers and hospitality organizations by increasing service quality and decreasing turnover.

Tip. Tips are often a reflection of service and Medler-Liraz (2014) measured how emotional labor influenced employee tip size. Although influenced by affectivity, the author concluded that when employees engaged in high emotional labor strategies, surface or deep acting, employees received higher tip sizes when negative affect was also observed. The same findings were not observed in employees who engaged in low emotional labor strategies suggesting in terms of tip size, employees benefit from engaging in both surface and deep acting at higher levels.

Turnover Intention. Lv et al. (2012) examined the role of emotional labor and turnover intention among hotel employees. By measuring participants' surface and deep acting, the authors found that both emotional labor strategies contributed to turnover intention. Turnover intention was found to be not only a direct outcome of emotional labor, but also an outcome of emotional exhaustion.

Turnover Intention and Organizational Commitment. Three hospitality studies examined turnover intention and organizational commitment as outcomes of emotional labor: Hur et al. (2013), Jung and Yoon (2014^a), and Rathi et al. (2013). Mirroring turnover intent findings in the managerial literature, Hur et al. (2013) and Jung and Yoon (2014^a) examined the outcomes of organizational commitment and job stress along with turnover intention, respectively. Seeking to examine surface and deep acting among flight attendants, Hur et al. (2013) found organizational commitment and turnover intentions were consequences of emotional labor. While the proximal outcome of emotional labor was emotional exhaustion, the individual outcome of organizational

commitment and turnover intention were found to be subsequent outcomes of emotional labor. Jung and Yoon (2014^a) studied emotional labor from the food service perspective and found surface and deep acting also contributed to turnover intention among participants. Lastly, Rathi et al. (2013) examined turnover intention and affective organizational commitment among frontline hotel employees. The authors concluded that surface acting demonstrated a positive relationship with turnover intention but a negative relationship with affective organizational commitment.

Affective and Normative Commitment. Hofmann and Stokburger-Sauer (2017) examined how emotional labor influences affective and normative commitment. Emotional labor was measured as emotional dissonance, and affective commitment was described as emotional attachment to an organization while normative commitment describes beliefs about an individual's responsibility to an organization. By sampling hotel employees, the findings suggest emotional labor predicted participants' affective and normative commitment. The authors suggest not only is commitment valuable for hospitality organizations, but the predictive relationship between emotional labor and commitment can also help organizations increase employee retention.

Employee Role Performance and Customer Satisfaction. The outcomes of emotional labor examined by Zhao et al. (2014) illustrate how emotional labor can have outcomes affecting both employees and customers. Role performance refers to the emotions and behaviors an employee must engage in to maintain employee-customer relationships. The authors studied how faking positive emotions and suppressing negative emotions during customer service interactions influenced customer satisfaction. Faking positive emotions or displaying fake, positive emotions was positively linked to customer's ability to identify role performance. The findings suggest

customers not only distinguish genuine positive emotions over faking positive emotions, but also report higher satisfaction in genuine positive emotion service interactions.

Customer Orientation. Lee, Ok, Lee, and Lee (2017) examined the relationship between emotional labor and customer orientation. Surface acting was found to affect customer orientation negatively and deep acting affected customer orientation positively. The findings of this study suggest among airline employees, surface and deep acting generate different levels of customer orientation and that there is a psychological component of emotional labor influencing this relationship.

Visitor Outcome. Van Dijk, Smith, and Cooper (2011) examined how as zoos changed from recreational and entertainment-based organizations to conservation-centered hospitality destinations, the job demands of zoo tour guides changed as well. The emotional labor of zoo tour guides helped influence and convey messages of conservation and environmental education to customers and visitors, which in turn impacted visitor elaboration, word of mouth, and attitudes toward nature and conservation. The authors concluded the emotional labor of tour guides played a critical role in connecting conversation messages with visitors as an outcome of engaging in emotional labor.

Service Recovery Performance. Kim et al. (2012) examined how emotional labor affects service recovery performance among hotel employees. The authors suggest managers should positively reinforce emotional labor strategies to increase service recovery performance among employees. More specifically, emotive efforts should be emphasized during service recovery performance to increase employee performance and customer service recovery in hospitality organizations.

Service Sabotage. Lee and Ok (2014) examined the service sabotage motivations of employees and how organizations manage service sabotage among hotel employees. By measuring emotional dissonance, the authors concluded that emotional dissonance significantly impacts employee service sabotage. The authors found burnout and emotional intelligence mitigated the relationship between emotional dissonance and service sabotage, but suggest further examination into the mechanisms influencing emotional dissonance could help organizations minimize service sabotage resulting from emotional dissonance.

Mediators of Emotional Labor Studies

With emotional labor gaining interest and attention within the hospitality and tourism industry, research has begun to move beyond the possible outcomes and antecedents of emotional labor and have also examined the mediators of the emotional labor-outcome relationships. The following section will describe the mediators of emotional labor studies in hospitality literature.

Perceived Emotional Labor. Van Dijk et al. (2011) sought to examine tour guide emotional labor, measured through customer self-reported data. The authors based their hypotheses on the assumption that customers and visitors are able to perceive a difference between surface and deep acting. However, the authors found visitors were not able to significantly discern the type of emotional labor exercised by an employee. The authors concluded for their sample of guides, the emotions being displayed were consistent with visitor expectations and perceived emotional labor did not influence this emotional expectation-display relationship for visitors. Although this mediation does not support previous literature stating customers can perceive emotional labor through incongruent emotional expectations and displays

of employees, perhaps the unique job characteristics of guides allows for more effective employee use of emotional labor.

Emotional Dissonance. Jung and Yoon (2014^a) studied emotional labor from the food service perspective by examining the mediating effect of emotional dissonance between surface and deep acting and turnover intention. The researchers concluded emotional labor was positively correlated with emotional dissonance. However, emotional dissonance was not observed to have a significant impact on turnover intention. Therefore, in terms of hospitality and the food service industry, these results suggest that emotional dissonance is not a mediator or mechanism for the emotional labor and turnover intentions relationship.

Stress. Geng et al. (2014) examined the mediating role of stress for surface and deep acting on employee creativity. The authors found that surface acting increased stress, contributing to less creativity, while deep acting decreased stress in employees, consequently increasing creativity. More specifically, the authors proposed the cognitive influence of surface and deep acting affects stress through different psychological mechanisms, such that surface acting and stress interferes with employee cognition.

Jung and Yoon (2014^a) also examined job stress as a mediator between surface and deep acting and turnover intentions. The authors suggest that in occupations with high instances of customer contact, the requirement to display certain emotions causes employees to engage in emotional labor. This in turn causes employees to feel incongruence between their felt and expressed emotions, resulting in stress for employees. The authors further suggest this stress contributes to additional negative outcomes for employees such as increased exhaustion and turnover intention. The consensus between these studies and existing literature is that with stress as a significant mediator for emotional labor, countless negative outcomes for employees and

ultimately the organization are to be anticipated and should be investigated to lessen the negative impact of stress.

Hu et al. (2017) examined the mediating influence of stress among airline employees. By measuring emotional labor as surface and deep acting, the authors found role stress relates positively to emotional labor. More importantly, the relationship between role stress and emotional labor is almost synergistic in that role stress and emotional labor enhance the negative outcomes of customer interactions for employees. This interaction is especially harmful to frontline employees and support for methods of reducing stress should be investigated.

Burnout. Lee and Ok (2014) tested the mediating role of burnout on the relationship between employee emotional dissonance and service sabotage. The results of the study found burnout to be a significant mediator for emotional dissonance and service sabotage. The conservation of resources theory suggests engaging in the emotionally demanding nature of emotional labor can lead to burnout. The findings of this study support the role of emotional dissonance and the conservation of resource theory, resulting in a mediating effect of burnout for employees. Consequently, organizations should make efforts to decrease employee emotional dissonance in order to reduce burnout among employees.

Depersonalization. Depersonalization is often examined with emotional labor as a negative outcome for employees. Consequently, Lee et al. (2018) investigated how emotional labor contributed to depersonalization among airline employees. The results suggest depersonalization mediated the relationship between emotional labor and its outcomes. Surface acting was found to be positively related to depersonalization while deep acting was negatively related to depersonalization. The authors concluded that the strength of the relationship between emotional labor and depersonalization may vary with job positions.

Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. Hofmann and Stokburger-Sauer (2017) examined the mediating role of job satisfaction and work-life balance on the relationship between emotional labor and commitment. The authors hypothesized the people work aspect of the hospitality industry often results in negative perceptions of work-life balance for employees and that emotional labor would influence this relationship. By measuring emotional dissonance and positive emotional display, the results of the study suggest both measures of emotional labor impact work-life balance. However, only emotional dissonance was found to influence job satisfaction. The authors conclude that work-life balance and job satisfaction are significant mediators of emotional labor and its outcomes.

Moderators of Emotional Labor Studies

Lastly, a moderator is defined as a “variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable” (Baron & Kenny, 1986; p. 1174). Therefore, identifying variables that could impact the direction or strength of emotional labor on employees, customers, and organizations could help alleviate the negative outcomes of emotional labor.

Leader-Member Exchange. Leader-member exchange has been studied as the relationship between a leader and follower. In the hospitality industry, this often describes manager-employee relationships. Previous findings have examined how supervisory support influences emotional labor strategies for employees (Lam & Chen, 2012). Medler-Liraz (2014) examined the moderating effect of leader-member exchange on employees with negative affect, engaging in emotional labor within the food service industry. The author found leader-member exchange significantly influenced employees with high quality leader-member exchange relationships compared to employees with low quality relationships. This finding suggests the dyadic

relationship between managers and employees can significantly moderate the outcomes of employees engaging in and exercising emotional labor strategies.

Job Position and Gender. The last two moderators were investigated by Jung and Yoon (2014^b) in a study of hotel employees. The authors found that when measuring surface and deep acting, the impact of deep acting was stronger for front of the house employees than back of the house employees. More specifically, the authors measured the use of emotions and found that front of the house employees engaged in deep acting more than back of the house employees. Secondly, when the authors examined how the effects of emotional labor impacted deep acting for employee job positions, the effects of deep acting were stronger for back of the house employees compared to front of the house employees. Lastly, the authors found surface acting was significantly higher for female employees, than for their male counterparts when assessing others' use of surface acting. The authors suggest these findings can be integrated to develop training interventions to boost emotional labor strategies among job positions for males and females.

In conclusion, the hospitality and service literature has measured emotional labor as both surface and deep acting, as well as emotional dissonance and emotive effort and although emotional labor antecedents and outcomes have been measured and studied, a consensus on the framework of antecedents, outcomes, mediators, and moderators has not been achieved. The conceptual model (Figure 1) demonstrates the various variables that have been studied within the hospitality and service industry and serves as a critical review of existing emotional labor studies from the past three decades.

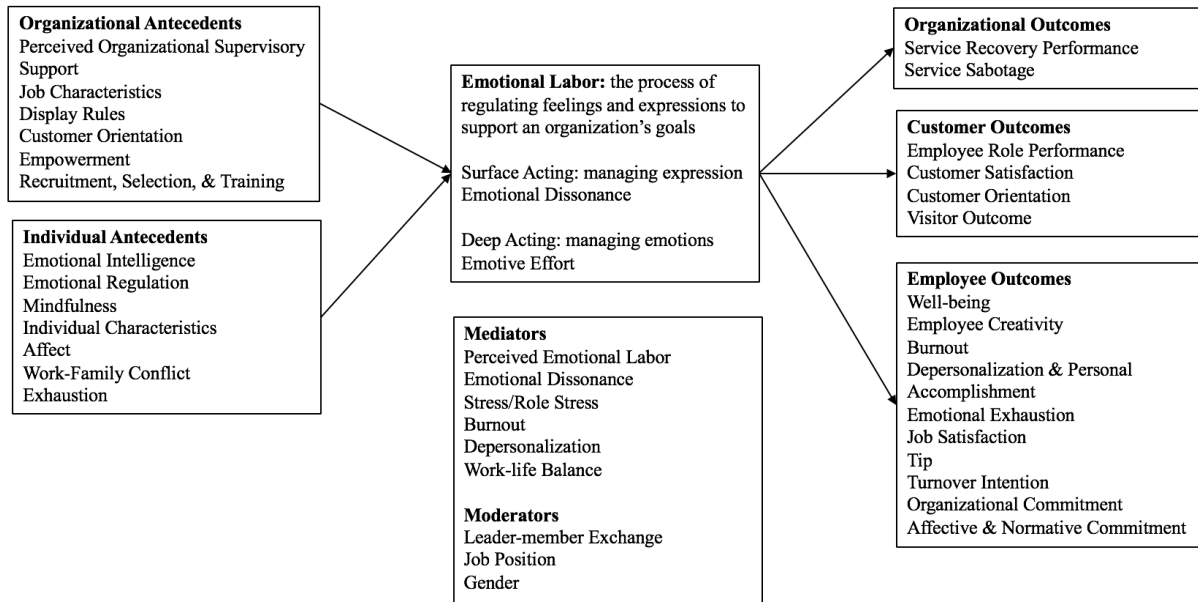


Figure 1. Emotional Labor Literature Variables

Gaps in Emotional Labor Literature

Although emotional labor has been extensively examined in hospitality and service contexts, there are four glaring gaps in the hospitality literature: 1) lack of an overarching emotional labor framework, 2) inconsistent definitions and measurement of emotional labor, 3) limited cross-sectional studies, and 4) no potential training or interventions.

Gursoy et al., (2011) suggested the hospitality literature lacked an overarching framework for emotional labor. In fact, although COR theory and AET were the most referenced theories for emotional labor, most hospitality literature lacked a theory behind investigating emotional labor. The COR theory has been used to explain how emotional labor and its strategies drain employee resources (e.g., cognitive and emotional effort) resulting in negative outcomes of emotional labor, and how emotional labor and its strategies serve a protective role against work demands (e.g., rude and difficult guests) and should be conserved. However, the COR theory in emotional labor literature does not address how work resources (e.g., employee social support,

financial compensation) help conserve or buffer against the draining nature of engaging in emotional labor strategies. Therefore, the limited theoretical applications of the COR theory and the lack of comprehensive adaptation of the theory to emotional labor studies suggests a uniform theoretical framework for emotional labor is still needed.

Moreover, the COR theory and AET explain the antecedents of emotional labor but fail to provide a theoretical conceptualization for the outcomes of emotional labor. Muraven and Baumesiter's (2000) depletion of cognitive resource theory could potentially support outcomes of emotional labor, such as stress and turnover intention. This theory suggests engaging in emotional labor is cognitively depleting for employees, contributing to outcomes like increased stress or reduced job satisfaction and should be used to support emotional labor findings.

Secondly, although emotional labor has been most frequently measured as surface and deep acting in hospitality literature, the inconsistent operationalization and measurement of emotional labor spate existing hospitality literature. Surface and deep acting, as well as emotional dissonance and emotive effort have been used to measure emotional labor, however, it is argued that surface and deep acting are immediate outcomes of emotional labor, while emotional dissonance and emotive effort are outcomes of surface and deep acting, respectively. Surface and deep acting has also been argued to be emotional labor strategies, where employees engage in either surface or deep acting in order to perform emotional labor and comply with organization display rules and customer expectations (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Although emotional labor has been defined, studied, and conceptualized as surface and deep acting in the seminal works of Hochschild (1983) as well as Morris and Feldman (1996), surface and deep acting are emotional labor strategies where employees perform emotional labor through surface and deep acting. Additionally, the Hochschild (1983) and Morris and Feldmann (1996)

perspectives support measuring emotional labor in terms of surface and deep acting, and emotional dissonance and emotive effort as outcomes of surface and deep acting.

Thirdly, emotional labor in the hospitality literature is limited to cross-sectional studies. By expanding study designs to examining the long-term impact and outcomes of emotional labor, potential mediators and moderators of emotional labor can be examined. The managerial literature has expanded their study designs to include longitudinal (Grandey, Cordeiro, & Crouther, 2005), and multi-level studies (Diefendorff, Erickson, Grandey, & Dahling, 2011). These studies allow for changes in variables to be measured over time as well as individual, unit, and multi-level analyses of emotional labor that could greatly contribute to hospitality and service literature.

Lastly, emotional labor has been extensively studied in not only hospitality, but also in organization behavior and human resource literature. However, there is a lack of training or interventions studies to help employees cope with the negative outcomes or enhance the positive outcomes of emotional labor. Testing potential training techniques or intervention methods could help expand the overall emotional labor literature. Emotional labor studies provide valuable insight into the relationship between emotional labor and outcome variables, as well as understanding of how employees and customers view emotional labor, but there is a dearth of studies examining possible intervention or training tools to help employees engage in and benefit from emotional labor.

Perspective Taking

Perspective Taking Theories

There are two underlying theories that support how perspective taking can influence emotional labor strategies: Metcalfe and Mischell's (1999) hot/cool self-regulation theory and

Korss, Ayduk, and Mischel's (2005) "what" versus "why" theory. Focusing on negative feelings can magnify and reactivate negative affect. The intention of perspective taking is to allow individuals to attenuate negative feelings, subsequently reducing anger and negative affect, by redirecting focus and attention to re-present experiences positively (Kross et al., 2005).

Metcalf and Mischell's (1999) proposed that self-regulation can take place through two mechanisms. The first mechanism is through what the authors call, a hot, reflexive process. Reflexive processing results in automatic responses and defensive scripts, such as blaming and avoidance. Hot, reflexive processing often involves re-activating anger and negative affect as well as automatic responses. Individuals can potentially re-experience anger and negative affect and resort to defense mechanisms like wrongly attributing or verbalizing blame. On the other hand, the cool, reflective process allows individuals to think about their emotions, inhibiting automatic responses associated with hot self-regulation. The reflective nature of cool self-regulation allows individuals to cognitively process an event without re-activating or re-experiencing anger and negative affect. (Metcalf and Mischell, 1999)

Kross et al. (2005) proposed a "what" versus "why" processing of emotions. Perspective taking often requires recalling of emotions or feelings and Kross et al. (2005) suggest recall can be framed as "what emotions did you experience" or "why did you experience those emotions". The "what" emotional processing taps into a direct memory of emotions, potentially increasing anger and negative affect. The "why" emotional processing on the other hand, draws attention away from the direct emotional memory, allowing individuals to process the emotion without re-experiencing anger or negative affect. (Kross et al., 2005)

Therefore, by utilizing both the hot/cool self-regulation and "what" versus "why" emotional process of perspective taking, individuals should be able to focus their attention on

why certain emotions were experienced, successfully reducing anger and negative affect, by coolly reflecting on an experience. Perspective taking is hypothesized to effect emotional labor strategies in a similar way by helping employees take a cooling, why perspective of customers, attenuating their negative feelings from a service encounter and effectively reducing anger and negative affect rather than re-activating anger and negative affect as well as automatic defense scripts.

Perspective Taking Manipulations and Measurements

Perspective taking is the active, cognitive process of imaging oneself in someone else's shoes or from someone else's vantage point in order to understand their intentions, motives, point of view, or actions. Perspective taking helps individuals navigate mixed-motive social interactions, where people's motivations and intentions are not always clear and impact social bonds between individuals (Ku et al., 2015).

Davis (1980) created the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) to measure individuals' disposition to imagine themselves in someone else's shoes. The IRI consists of four subscales measuring perspective taking, empathetic concern, fantasy, and personal distress. A second frequently used measure of perspective taking is Parker and Axtell's (2001) scale, measuring two indicators or manifestations of perspective taking. By measuring empathy and positive attribution, the scale measures two dimensions of perspective taking related to an individual's ability to feel empathy for the target and re-direct negative attributions as positive attributions.

Additionally, perspective taking can be manipulated in order to measure its impact on participants. Manipulations involve exposing participants to a target, usually indirectly via video, vignette, or description, followed by specific instructions on how to consider the target. Typical instructions are "what is the target experiencing," "if you were the target, what would you be

experiencing,” or “write about the target in the first person”. These instructions are often domain and context specific, and the responses are compared to those without specific instructions on how to consider the target for any potential impacts of perspective taking.

Perspective Taking as Training Interventions

Using these manipulations and measures of perspective taking, perspective taking has been found to influence several different attitudes and behaviors of targets. Davis et al. (1996) found perspective taking increased liking and psychological closeness of targets. After engaging in a perspective taking exercise, participants were found to report more liking and feelings of closeness with a target. Since perspective taking involves imagining oneself as the target, and this not only increased liking for the target, but participants also reported seeing themselves as the target or feeling more same-ness or one-ness with the target.

Perspective taking has also been demonstrated to increase team effectiveness (Jehn, 1995). Perspective taking was found to not only increase liking for team members but was also found to increase creativity and performance among team members. Perspective taking is thought to increase social bonds necessary to work in teams and the findings of this study support this notion.

After engaging in a perspective taking exercise, participants also reported higher helping and helping behavior, as well as future willingness to help a target. Through mechanisms such as increased liking and closeness with a target, Baston et al. (2002) concluded that participants were more willing to help a target, after engaging in perspective taking.

Perspective taking has also been used in diversity trainings where targets were out-group members. After engaging in perspective taking, participants reported reduce prejudice and stereotyping of a target group. By imagining themselves as a target out-group member,

participants were able to attenuate their prejudice and stereotypes against an out-group (Baston et al., 1997).

These attitudinal and behavioral changes after engaging in perspective taking demonstrate how the exercise can help individuals build social bonds necessary for collective and social interactions. The underlying principle of perspective taking is that since the motivations and intentions of individual can vary greatly and social interactions are inevitable, perspective taking and seeing things from their point of view helps individuals navigate and support social bond by increasing liking and closeness, as well as reduce prejudice and stereotyping (Ku et al., 2015). Therefore, this study seeks to apply the beneficial outcomes of perspective taking to customer and service interactions to improve employees service performance during negative service interactions.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Based on emotional labor theories and the hot/cool mechanism of perspective taking, this research examines the relationship between perspective taking, emotional labor, and customer outcomes. This research incorporates quantitative and experimental methods to explore the influence of perspective taking. For Study 1, a between-subjects experimental study will be used to examine whether customer perspective taking could be a viable intervention training technique for both hospitality and service employees. For Study 2, a within-subjects longitudinal study will be used to measure the influence of perspective taking on employee's emotional labor and helping behaviors towards customers.

Perspective Taking Intervention Training

Study 1 will use a 2-group (customer perspective taking: yes or no) between-subjects experimental design in order to examine if perspective taking could be an intervention training technique for hospitality and service employees. Prior to a management session, the researchers will approach managers to request their participation in completing an experiment described as a “survey” to study “role playing as a training method.” This description is included as a way to eliminate priming for the actual purpose of the experiment. After consenting to the study, the participants will read a description of a hypothetical full-service hotel that includes filler information about the amenities of the hotel. The participants will be asked to read a “role playing scenario,” where participants assume the role of the front desk employee, checking in a customer to the hotel. The scenario described a service failure where the wrong room was given to the customer and the customer yells at and insults the front desk employee (see appendix for complete scenario). Participants randomly assigned to the experimental condition will read the following scenario:

“Instructions: For this survey you are going to do a role play exercise. Role playing is one of the most common methods to train employees in the Hotel and Lodging Industry. You are going to play the role of a front desk hotel agent at a full-service hotel located in the city center.

About the Hotel Service Environment: Our hotel has a climate of enthusiasm and friendliness; therefore, all employees are evaluated on the ability to be outgoing and enthusiastic and show positive emotion to your customers. Providing “service with a smile” in any circumstance is the requirement here. It is extremely important for the sake of quality customer service if you have any negative feelings or reactions, please try your best not to let those feelings show, and instead always be friendly, enthusiastic, and show positive emotion despite circumstances. Therefore, if you get irritated or stressed, don’t ever let them know you are feeling bad—and instead put on a smile and be friendly”

After reading the “role playing scenario” the independent variable (customer perspective taking: yes or no) will be manipulated by having the participants write a statement taking the perspective of the customer (“yes” condition) or their own perspective (“no” condition). In the “yes” customer perspective manipulation, the participants were asked to “think about how you would feel if you were in the shoes of the customer” and “provide reasons for why the customer reacted the way he did.” This manipulation forces the participants to take the perspective of the customer by writing reasons for his reaction. In the “no” customer perspective taking condition, the participants will be asked to write down how they would feel as the front desk employee. This requires the participants to take their own perspective as the front desk employee instead of the customer’s perspective. Since the participants will be asked to play the role of the front desk employee while reading the role-play scenario and then write about how they would feel, this

manipulation resembles how individuals naturally think about their own perspective versus having them take on the perspective of the customer. This manipulation of customer perspective taking is based on existing perspective taking manipulations (Ku et al., 2015). After the perspective taking manipulations, the participants will complete the measures of interest and demographic variables (see appendix for measures).

Measures

Negative affect. Negative affect will be measured using six items from the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) scale (Watson & Clark, 1999). A 5-point scale ranging from “very slightly or not at all” (1) to “extremely” (5) will be used to indicate to what extent participants experienced negative affect today. An example of negative affect is “angry,” “hostile,” and “irritable”.

Empathy. Empathy toward the customer will be measured using the five items by Oswald (1996). Participants will respond to a 5-point scale ranging from “does not at all describe how I feel” (1) to “describes how I feel extremely well” (5) by indicating the extent to which they felt “concern,” “warm,” “empathy,” “compassion,” “softhearted,” and “sympathy” toward the customer.

Customer compensation. The participants will be asked to indicate the extent to which they would give the customer the following five complimentary gifts as a way to address the service failure: “a free breakfast for two at the hotel restaurant,” “free wifi during the entire stay,” “free parking during the entire stay,” “a discount on a spa service for two” and “a discount on a next hotel booking.”. The five items will be rated using a 5-point response from 1 (“not likely”) to 5 (“very likely”). They will then be asked to indicate the amount of discount they

believe the customer deserved for his next hotel booking at their hotel using five options: 0%, 5%, 15%, 20%, or 25%.

Deep acting. Deep acting will be measured with the three item scale developed by Brotheridge and Lee (2003), using a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). The participants will be asked to indicate how they would react in the situation as a front desk employee. An example item measuring deep acting includes “I would make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others.”

Control variables. Demographic information regarding gender, ethnicity, industry tenure, job position, and property type (i.e., limited service, full service, luxury) will be collected.

Manipulation and realism checks. The written responses to the perspective taking manipulation will be visually examined to ensure participants completed the directions and wrote a statement taking the perspective of the customer (“yes” condition) or their own perspective (“no” condition). A realism check will also be used to verify the realism of the role playing scenarios with two items developed by Dabholkar and Spaid (2012): “it was easy imagining myself in the scenario situation” and “the scenario situation was realistic”. A five-point Likert-type scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used.

Longitudinal Perspective Taking

Study 2 will use a within-subject longitudinal experimental design. Perspective taking and emotional labor has often been studied as an intrapersonal process, but this study seeks to examine both variables as an interpersonal process. Interpersonal emotion processing refers to how emotional can influence expressions and behaviors during interactions (Zhan, Wang, & Shi, 2016). Additionally, the longitudinal design of this study answers the call to examine emotional labor from more than a cross-sectional point of view (Geng et al., 2014; Hur et al., 2013; Jung &

Yoon, 2014^a; Lee & Ok, 2014). Control variables will be measured and analyzed as between-level variables. Age, gender and job tenure are often examined as a control variable since it has been suggested that women engage in more emotional labor and tenure can influence how employee process emotions at work (Hochschild, 1983).

The within-subject experimental design will include two, one-week phases: one week of baseline measurements and one week of intervention measurements. Socio-demographic information will be acquired prior to the baseline phase. Daily measurements of study variables allow the hypotheses to be tested at the within-person level, taking into account daily fluctuations in emotion processing (Zhan et al., 2016). During the baseline phase, daily surveys will be collected, measuring negative affect, empathy, emotional labor, and helping behavior. For the second phase, the same variable information will be collected from the daily surveys at the end of each day, after receiving a perspective taking reminder in the morning. All participants will read the following instructions and perspective taking reminder:

“Today when you work or interact with customers please do the following and answer the questions on the next page at the end of your shift: Think about a difficult or rude customer you dealt with today. We do not often think about how customers can have a bad day and then take it out on us. For example, maybe his/her flight was delayed, or he/she is having marital problems, and this was his/her vacation to patch things up. Imagine yourself in the position of the customer and please think about why a reasonable, nice person reacted difficultly or rudely.”

Measures

The demographic, negative affect, and empathy scales from Study 1 will also be used to measure these variables for Study 2.

Negative affect. Negative affect will be measured using six items from the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) scale (Watson & Clark, 1999). A 5-point scale ranging from “very slightly or not at all” (1) to “extremely” (5) will be used to indicate to what extent participants experienced negative affect today. An example of negative affect is “angry,” “hostile,” and “irritable”.

Empathy. Empathy toward the customer will be measured using the five items by Oswald (1996). Participants will respond to a 5-point scale ranging from “does not at all describe how I feel” (1) to “describes how I feel extremely well” (5) by indicating the extent to which they felt “concern,” “warm,” “empathy,” “compassion,” “softhearted,” and “sympathy” toward the customer.

Deep acting. Deep acting will be rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = always) and measured by three items developed by Grandey (2003) (e.g., In order to do my job effectively, I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display toward others).

Helping behavior. Helping behavior will be measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = not at all characteristic of me, 7 = extremely characteristic of me) developed by Bettencourt and Brown (2003). The measure includes three items measuring helping behaviors towards customers such as “I followed up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems”.

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Chapter 4. Perspective Taking as an Intervention Training Technique for Difficult Customer Interactions

Abstract

While demands from customers and the hospitality and service industry to provide high quality service and customer satisfaction increases, employees are not properly equipped for navigating difficult and demanding customers. There is limited research and training focused on how to help employees improve the human interaction aspect of service delivery, particularly during difficult customer interactions. Based on the affective event theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), this study examines how perspective taking can be an intervention for service managers during difficult customer interactions. Deep acting and customer compensation were examined as outcomes of customer perspective taking. In addition, negative affect and empathy were examined as mediators of the effect of customer perspective on the outcomes. A 2-group (customer perspective taking: yes or no) experimental design was used to examine the between-subjects relationship among 139 frontline managers. The results indicate a mediation relationship between perspective taking and the outcome variables of deep acting and customer compensation, supporting perspective taking as a viable intervention tool to help employees maximize service delivery with difficult and demanding customers.

Introduction

The hospitality and service industry are known for going above and beyond to keep customers satisfied and happy, and service encounters inevitably result in employee and customer interactions (Huang & Miao, 2016). In fact, many of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry's (1988) dimensions of service quality and satisfaction inherently measure human interactions, supporting the notion that service encounters fundamentally rely on a human exchange element. For customers, hospitality service entails time spent interacting with a service employee and these interactions often define the service encounter. Training and equipping service organization employees to effectively relate to customers during these encounters can be the differentiating factor between good and great customer service (Hocutt, Chakraborty, & Mowen, 1997), answering the call to enhance the human element of the service industry (Hu, Zhan, Garden, Wang, & Shi, 2018; Huang, Greenbaum, Bonner, & Wang, 2018).

However, since service encounters and service delivery vary from situation to situation, customer to customer, and employee to employee, service failures may still occur and employee responses and reactions to failures can drive a customer's overall experience and satisfaction. Consequently, employees' responses and resolution can have potentially detrimental outcomes for service delivery. Additionally, most hospitality and service organizations do not focus on training employees to handle service failures or difficult customers. While human resource management research concentrates on how organizations can support employees deal with customer complaints, most service employees have not been trained on managing disgruntled customers during service interactions (Hocutt, Chakraborty, & Mowen, 1997; Van Vaerenbergh & Orsingher, 2016).

Hospitality and service employees often encounter demanding, aggressive, and verbally abusive customers on a daily basis (Huang et al., 2018) and research suggests negative treatment from customers results in negative effects for employee such as decreased service performance (e.g., Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014; Groth & Grandey, 2012) and increased customer sabotage (e.g., Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, Shao, Song, & Wang, 2016; Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011). Additionally, several studies support the notion that negative treatment from customers result in negative affect among employees (e.g., Song, Liu, Wang, Lanaj, Johnson, & Shi, 2018; Wang et al., 2011; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Therefore, it is imperative to bridge the gap between training and employee responses and reactions to demanding and disgruntled customers through perspective taking. Using a training intervention like perspective taking can be especially effective since perspective taking and empathy have been found to be trainable and changeable and have been shown to help improve social interactions (Longmire & Harrison, 2018).

Service exchanges are dyadic in nature between the employee and customer, and literature highlights how both parties can have affective and cognitive impacts on each other. And although there is significant literature examining rude or difficult customers (e.g., customer mistreatment, service recovery) or customer complaints (e.g., complaint behavior, post-complaint satisfaction), there is little empirical research examining how organizations and management can support employees during negative exchanges with customers (Groth & Grandey, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how perspective taking can be used as a tool to change how employees can react toward difficult customers and understand how perspective taking operates through negative affect and empathy.

According to the affective event theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), events at work result in affective reactions (e.g., emotions and moods) that influence work attitudes and

behaviors. In the hospitality and service context, interactions with demanding, aggressive, and verbally abusive customers would result in employees experiencing negative affect such as frustration, anger, or irritation, and these emotions and moods can influence work attitudes and behaviors such as indifference, apathy, or sabotage as well as withdrawal behaviors (Wang et al., 2011). The theoretical framework of the AET suggests perspective taking can impact service performance by shifting employee's negative affect during difficult service interactions. Therefore, the AET suggests an intervention aimed at changing the direct affective reactions of negative work events (e.g., customer mistreatment) could help shape employee attitudes, behaviors, and subsequent performance during difficult service interactions.

This study focused on two affective reactions to customer mistreatment: negative affect and empathy. First, experiencing negative affect is a natural emotional response to being yelled at, insulted, or disrespected, all of which are characteristic of customer mistreatment (Wang et al., 2011; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Olson-Buchanan, & Boswell, 2008). Second, empathy is a crucial affective-driver of service performance. Literature suggests expressing empathy toward customers can impact post-failure satisfaction (for a review, see Orsingher, Valentini, & de Angelis, 2010; Gelbrich, & Roschk, 2011). However, empathy is not always a natural reaction, especially in response to negative customer treatment. Perspective taking has also been shown to influence empathy among subjects who engaged in perspective taking of a target when compared to those that did not take the perspective of a target (Batson, Change, Orr, & Rowland, 2002; Longmire, & Harrison, 2018; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011). Therefore, this study seeks to examine how perspective taking can influence two affective reactions to a difficult customer (i.e., reduce negative affect and increase empathy) in order to positively influence employee responses to a difficult customer.

This study also examined deep acting and customer compensation as the outcomes of the affective reactions to a difficult customer (i.e., reduced negative affect and increased empathy). Existing literature distinctly states service employees use emotional labor to navigate difficult customer interactions (Grandey, 2000). Additionally, customer compensation is frequently used by service employees as an effective service recovery strategy (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011), and are often electively used by employees at their discretion (Blancero & Johnson, 2001; Leischnig, Kasper-Brauer, & Thornton, 2018). Thus, using the AET as a theoretical framework, this study examined perspective taking as an intervention to influence employees' direct affective reactions to customer mistreatment (i.e., a negative work event) by reducing negative affect and increasing empathy so that customer service performance can be positively influenced through deep acting and customer compensation. As shown in Figure 1, negative affect and empathy are studied as mediators of the effect of customer perspective taking on customer compensation and deep acting. As stated by the AET, affective reactions can influence affect-driven behaviors, such as attitudes and judgment, and how an employee responds to customer mistreatment through studying deep acting and customer compensation as distal outcomes of customer perspective taking.

Literature Review

Affective Events Theory

The AET also suggests there are two cognitive appraisal check points where the first appraisal assigns enough meaning and significance to an event or stimuli to elicit an immediate affective response, either good or bad, negative or positive. The second appraisal assigns a more meaningful label to the event, such as anger or happiness, eliciting discrete emotions that influence behavior. For example, if an employee is yelled and disrespected by their boss (i.e.,

stimuli), the first appraisal would elicit negative emotions such as anger (i.e., response) which could result in a behavioral response of quitting. During the secondary appraisal, the individual could assess the event with additional positive information such as job attitudes or congruent goals and decide to confront the boss and address the disrespect. On the other hand, if the event is assessed with negative information such as additional instances of disrespect, the event could still lead to quitting as a behavioral response. In sum, the AET suggests an event at work, elicits an immediate and almost instantaneous affective reaction, which influences behavior and in the case of a negative work event such as customer mistreatment, the negative affect experienced by employees influences their behavior. In order to change employee behavioral output and service performance, individuals must change how negative work events are processed and perspective taking can impact this mechanism by reducing immediate negative affect and increasing empathy, and ultimately service performance (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

Perspective Taking

Perspective taking is the active, cognitive process of imagining the world from another person's point of view or imagining oneself in someone else's shoes (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015). By "seeing their side," perspective taking helps individuals understand the thoughts, needs, and motives of a target, helping individuals navigate social situations (e.g., hospitality and service encounters). Perspective taking has been used as a training tool and mechanism of reducing negative attitudes and increasing positive behaviors towards stigmatized groups, target individuals, or out-group members (e.g., a homeless person, an addict, a person with HIV/AIDS; Batson et al., 2002; Madera, 2018). Manipulations generally prompt individuals to consider "what the target is experiencing," or "write about the target in the first person" which are compared against a neutral subject or conditions where participants were not given explicit

directions (Ku et al., 2015). Following the perspective taking manipulation, attitudes and beliefs about the target or target group are measured and results from the literature demonstrate decreased negative emotions and attitudes as well as more positive attitudes and beliefs toward the target group, from those that engaged in perspective taking when compared to those who did not take the perspective of the target (Todd & Galinsky, 2014; Madera, 2018). By increasing liking and psychological closeness (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996), helping intentions (Batson et al., 1991), positive emotions (Ku et al., 2015) and decreasing prejudice, stereotyping, and discriminatory views (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; Galinsky, & Moskowitz, 2000), perspective taking helps individuals build and preserve social bonds.

The psychological mechanism that allows individuals to process negative emotions, without experiencing additional negative affect through perspective taking is known as the hot/cool processing of emotions (Kross, Ayduk, & Mischel, 2005). The hot/cool emotional processing of perspective taking enables “cool,” reflective emotional processing, focusing on the experience without activating or increasing “hot,” negative affect. According to the hot/cool systems model proposed by Metcalfe and Mischel, (1999), stimuli (e.g., customer mistreatment) processed as “hot” and reflexive, is linked to automatic defensive or approach and avoidance behaviors such as blaming and avoidance. On the other hand, “cool” and reflective processing enables contemplative emotional processing, counteracting and inhibiting the negative, reflexive responses of “hot” processing. Therefore, engaging in “cool” and reflective emotional processing could prevent negative rumination-like processing of work events, and in turn positively influence service performance.

One unexplored perspective taking manipulation is imagining oneself as a customer within a service work context rather than a stigmatized group or target member. By imaging

oneself as a customer within a service work context, affective responses and reactions (i.e., negative affect) could lead towards positive outcomes (i.e., improved customer service) during an actual service interaction. Perspective taking operates by reducing negative experiences and increase positive outcomes (Wang, Kenneth, Ku, & Galinsky, 2014). The positive findings of perspective taking literature are therefore hypothesized to mirror onto a service setting to influence negative outcomes of difficult customer encounters. The proposed mechanism of imaging oneself as a customer rather than target are similar to traditional perspective taking manipulations – refocusing attention away from the negative treatment from customers and increasing empathy for the customer.

Negative Affect

Customer mistreatment literature suggests the immediate response of experiencing negative customer treatment is negative affect (Song et al., 2018) and according to the AET, negative affect can influence emotion-driven behaviors such as deep acting and withholding service, such as customer compensation (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Olson-Buchanan and Boswell (2008) suggest perceived mistreatment spirals into negative responses. In the case of customer mistreatment (e.g., verbal abuse, insults, yelling), employees often experience negative affect and emotions as a response to negative customer stimuli. Furthermore, negative exchange spiral theory (Groth & Grandey, 2012) assumes the underlying cause for the negative spiral is a lack of understanding for the other parties' situation and an unwillingness to change behaviors. Perspective taking can stop negative spiraling by not only helping employees understand the situation or point of view of customers but has also been shown to help change attitudes and behaviors, by providing a way to understand a customer situation and tapping into helping behaviors (Todd & Galinsky, 2014).

For this study, perspective taking is hypothesized to help employees tap into “cool,” reflective emotion processing rather than “hot,” reflexive processing, in order to deescalate negative emotion and affect experienced during negative, difficult customer encounters. From a hospitality or service provider point of view, negative treatment from a customer can result in a negative emotional and affective experience that can result in a “hot,” reflexive response (e.g., anger, avoidance, retaliation) or as a “cool,” reflective response. Perspective taking can help avoid the hot responses and allow service providers to process emotions in a cool manner. Therefore, processing negative emotions by engaging in a “cool,” reflective response through perspective taking would prompt subjects to cognitively engage in cool, reflective processing of emotions, and also prevent rumination and perpetuation of negative emotions and affect in response to negative treatment from customers.

Additionally, experiencing and ruminating about negative treatment can create further increased negative emotions and affect. Concentrating, focusing, and recalling negative feelings has been found to perpetuate and prolong negative emotions and affect (Kross et al., 2005). Therefore, rather than reflecting on negative emotions and affect, the hot/cool systems model of self-regulation proposes stimulus can be characterized as “hot” emotional arousing representations, or “cool” abstract representations. These “hot” and “cool” representations are closely tied to self-regulatory systems where hot representations incite reflexive responses such as approach and avoidance behaviors while cool representations incite cognitively reflective responses that restrain reflexive response (Metcalf & Mischel, 1999). Perspective taking can impact negative affect by diverting attention away from the negative affect employees experience as a result of negative customer treatment and can potentially change employee

behavior towards the customer. Thus, we hypothesis that perspective taking of customers will reduce negative affect of participants.

Hypothesis 1: Customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect.

Empathy

Empathy is conceptualized as trait and state empathy (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2018; Madera et al., 2011). Trait empathy is generally a more constant disposition that varies from individual based on personality and temperament. State empathy, on the other hand, is an emotional response and is characterized as “an affective state that is elicited by the observation or imagination of another person’s affective state” (De Vignemont & Singer, 2006, p. 435-436). Consequently, state empathy has been used in perspective taking manipulations to help elicit empathy towards a target. Empathy has been found to increase positive attitudes (Madera et al., 2011) and helping or prosocial behavior (Batson et al., 2002). Subjects were found to experience more empathy when focusing on the troubles and problems of someone else rather than focusing on their own problems (Kamins, Marks, & Skinner, 1991).

Traditional perspective taking manipulations involve asking people to imagine themselves in the shoes or life of a target individual. Results of this manipulation include more positive attitudes towards the target (Madera, 2018). The attentional focus model suggests when perspective taking subjects put themselves in someone else’s shoes, the cognitive process of thinking about the misfortunes of someone else will redirect attention away from the subject and towards the individual they are thinking about (Kamins et al., 1991; Carlson & Miller, 1987), thereby increasing empathy toward the target of perspective taking. Therefore, customer perspective taking is hypothesized to increase empathy toward the customer.

Hypothesis 2: Customer perspective taking will increase empathy.

Deep Acting as an Outcome

Figure 1 demonstrates that negative affect and empathy are studied as mediators of customer perspective taking and customer compensation and deep acting are the distal outcomes of customer perspective taking, since the AET states work events (e.g., customer mistreatment) cause immediate affective responses (negative affect and low empathy) that influence work attitudes and behaviors (e.g., engaging in deep acting and customer compensation), it is important to change the initial affective reaction in order to positively influence service performance (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). The mediation relationship of empathy and deep acting were studied since empathy is correlated with deep acting and post-failure satisfaction in previous studies (Shani, Uriely, Reichel, & Ginsburg, 2014; Roschk & Kaiser, 2013).

The hot/cool emotional processing of perspective taking allows for individuals to assess a situation in cool, reflective manner (Kross, Ayduk, & Mischel, 2005). Consequently, individuals engaging in perspective taking can experience reduced negative affect through attributing a target's behavior to external factors (i.e., a customer has been traveling for a long time, flights were delayed, luggage was lost, or work deadlines and stress). Since deep acting is associated with modifying and changing emotions, reducing negative affect through perspective taking minimizes the emotional regulation individuals need to engage in, in order to display appropriate emotions and expressions. The hospitality and service industry require employees to express positive emotions and expressions to welcome and greet guests, and sympathetic and apologetic emotions and expressions during service failures. In situations where customers are difficult, demanding, and rude, employees can experience negative affect and emotions as a result of these interactions and taking the perspective of the customer can decrease the immediate negative feelings from the interaction, minimizing the emotional distance between felt negative affect and

mandated positive, or sympathetic and apologetic expressions. Therefore, decreased negative affect from engaging in perspective taking is hypothesized to be a mediating mechanism resulting in increased deep acting.

The emotional labor literature suggests that employees can respond to customer mistreatment by engaging in deep acting or surface acting (Hur, Moon, & Han, 2015; Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004; Zhan, Wang, & Shi, 2016). Deep acting is defined as cognitive effort to change one's mood or expression by matching felt emotions with observable expressions required by display rules. Surface acting on the other hand, is defined as modifying and controlling expressions through suppressing negative and exaggerating positive expressions (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey & Melloy, 2017). Both of these strategies are forms of emotion regulation employees can use during customer interactions.

Gross (1998) describes emotion regulation as the process of influencing the emotions we have, when we have them, and how we experience and express these emotions whereas emotional labor is defined as emotion regulation strategies (e.g., antecedent-focused or deep acting, and response-focused and surface acting) exercised in the workplace, with an interpersonal goal in mind (Grandey & Melloy, 2017). In other words, whereas surface acting is an avenue to respond to an event, deep acting requires an antecedent that stimulates one to change their current emotion. Existing literature supports these strategies by describing antecedent-focused emotion regulation as situation reappraisal and response-focused emotion regulation as expressive suppression. Situation reappraisal requires individuals to change felt moods and emotions and is less taxing to employees than suppression. On the other hand, expressive suppression only changes surface expressions and requires constant monitoring and effort to avoid micro-expressions and fake expressions. Although antecedent-focused and

response-focused emotion regulation echo Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional labor strategies as deep acting and surface acting (Grandey, 2000), the implications of antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation in the hospitality and service literature is limited.

Not only do the emotional labor strategies of deep and surface acting overlap antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation but deep and surface acting also correspond with situation reappraisal and expressive suppression emotion regulation strategies, such that deep acting involves antecedent-focused situational reappraisal of stimuli and surface acting entails response-focused expressive suppression (Grandey & Melloy, 2017). Findings in the emotion regulation literature also suggest the negative and positive individual and organizational outcomes of deep and surface acting are also found with antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation. Therefore, this study seeks to examine deep acting as an antecedent-focused emotion regulation technique of emotional labor through increased empathy.

The relationship between perspective taking and empathy have been studied in existing literature (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). Additionally, previous literature has examined eliciting deep acting through engaging in and increasing empathy among participants (Grandey, 2003). Previous studies suggest individuals often try to conjure feelings of empathy in order to demonstrate more genuine emotions and employ deep acting as an emotion regulation strategy instead of surface acting. By trying to feel and experience empathy towards customers, hospitality and service employees have been encouraged to engage in deep acting and it is hypothesized that since perspective taking increased empathy, this will also influence how individuals exercise deep acting during difficult customer interactions.

Therefore, since perspective taking influences felt emotions (i.e., decrease negative affect and increase empathy) to a negative event, such as customer mistreatment, and deep acting

targets modifying or changing felt emotions, this study will concentrate on the antecedent-focused emotion regulation tool of deep acting. Perspective taking has been linked with increasing empathy or empathic concern among subjects (for a review, see Longmire & Harrison, 2018) and empathy is an emotion related to deep acting (Grandey, 2003). In addition, research shows that deep acting is related to expressing positive emotions among hospitality service employees (Lee & Madera, 2019), therefore, it is hypothesized that participants will engage in more deep acting through the mediating mechanism of decreased negative affect and increased empathy via perspective taking.

Hypothesis 3: Negative affect (H3a) and empathy (H3b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting.

Customer Compensation as an Outcome

Customer compensation encompasses monetary reparations to decrease dissatisfaction, and negative emotions for a service failure. Common forms of compensation include substitutions, discounts, or replacements in lieu of service or service delivery failures (Fu, Wu, Huang, Song, & Gong, 2015). Customer compensation is a discretionary tool for employees to use during difficult customer interactions, and the negative treatment from customers during the interaction could influence employee's use and subsequent withholding of compensation and sabotage of the service encounter. Previous research suggests the negative treatment employees experience with difficult, rude, or condescending customers evokes negative emotions within employees and that seeking revenge and retaliating against customers is a coping mechanism service employee use to right the injustice of being mistreated and overcome negative emotions (Yeh, 2015; Groth & Grandey, 2012). Previous literature suggests further investigation into the relationship and mechanism of customer mistreatment and subsequent negative employee

behavior (Wang et al., 2011). Therefore, one of the aims of this study is to examine a potential intervention for reducing the likelihood of employees withholding services as a response to negative customer treatment.

Service sabotage is a form of employee revenge or retaliation where employees willingly disrupts service encounter to negatively affect the service provided to customers. Sabotage can be relatively benign such as intentionally ignoring or taking longer to complete a service, or as severe as deliberately overcharging customers, stealing from customers, or engaging in verbal altercations with customers (e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2006; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Engaging in service sabotage can magnify the negative consequences of service failures, as well as influence a customer's perception of service quality and satisfaction (e.g., Wu, Qomariyah, Sa, & Liao, 2018; Orsingher et al., 2010). However, a relatively unexplored form of sabotage is how employees retaliate against customers by withholding compensation.

The attentional focus model (Carlson & Miller, 1987) supports a mediating relationship between perspective taking and helping behaviors. By engaging in perspective taking, the attentional focus model suggests that when individuals experience negative emotions and engage in perspective taking, their attention is focused on another person's negative experience rather than their own (Carlson & Miller, 1987). Individuals engaging in perspective taking refocus their attention on someone else rather than their own troubles and redirecting attention helps to mediate the relationship of negative mood and helping behavior by decreasing negative mood (Kamin et al., 1991). Additionally, Groth and Grandey (2012) suggest the negative affect linked to negative customer encounters often hastens retaliation efforts and an intervention designed to reduce negative affect could decelerate retaliatory attempts. Therefore, it is hypothesized that through the mediating effect of reduced negative affect, rather than withholding and refusing to

offer compensation, perspective taking will increase the use of customer compensation as a service recovery tool.

Additionally, focusing attention on someone else's misfortune taps into the empathy-altruistic motivational mediation process (Dunkel-Schetter & Skokan, 1990). Carlson and Miller (1987) suggests perspective taking allows subjects to think about someone else, and merely the time spent thinking about someone else elicits empathy and helping behaviors towards that person. Focusing attention on someone else facilitated through perspective taking, increases feelings of empathy and subsequent helping behaviors (Batson et al., 1983) through the mediating effect of increased empathy. Imagining oneself as a target experiencing misfortune rather than focusing on their own problems, could prompt subjects to experience increased empathy towards the target. Subsequently, the empathic response should increase helping intentions and behaviors compared to those who do not engage in perspective taking (Kamins et al., 1991). Therefore, it is hypothesized that perspective taking will reduce negative affect, increasing the likelihood that employees will not engage in sabotage behavior and withhold customer compensation, increasing the use of compensation during difficult customer interactions. Additionally, it is hypothesized that perspective taking will increase empathy, subsequently increasing the likelihood an employee will extend customer compensation as a service recovery tool.

Hypothesis 4: Negative affect (H4a) and empathy (H4b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on customer compensation.

Methodology

Sample

Surveys were distributed to 139 frontline managers attending a training program for a regional professional hotel association; 128 surveys were collected from the managers (response rate = 93%; males = 34.9%; females = 61.1%). The reported average age of participants was 31.30 years old (SD = 9.11) and a majority of managers reported working in full-service properties (49.3%), with 19.0% reporting working in luxury hotels/resort and 22.2% in limited-service hotels for an average of 6.13 years (SD = 5.57 years). Managers from 15 departments participated in the study and identified themselves as 34.9% Caucasian, 17.5% African American, 37.3% Latino(a), 3.2% Asian American, 1.6% Native American, and 1.6% as “other”.

Design and Procedure

A 2-group (customer perspective taking: yes or no) between-subjects experimental design was used to examine the relationship of perspective taking on negative affect, empathy, deep acting, and customer compensation. The researchers approached managers prior to a management session to complete the experiment, described as a “role-playing training exercise”. The description was included to prevent participants from being primed on the purpose of the experiment. They were informed that the “role-playing training exercise” would be used in a discussion in the next management session to encourage the completion of the experiment. After consenting to the study, participants were asked to read a “role-playing scenario,” describing a service encounter between a front desk employee and customer where the scenario included a service failure where the customer was given the incorrect room. The scenario describes how the customer insults and yells at the front desk employee.

The independent variable (customer perspective taking: yes or no) was manipulated by having the participants randomly assigned to write a statement taking the perspective of the customer (“yes” condition) or their own perspective (“no” condition). Participants in the “yes” condition were asked to “think about how you would feel if you were in the shoes of the customer” and “why a reasonable, nice person can react the way the customer did”. This manipulation required participants to take the perspective of the customer and forces participants to think and write reasons for the customer’s reaction. On the other hand, participants in the “no” condition were asked to “write how you would feel as the front desk employee”. This required participants to take their own perspective as the employee. The manipulation of the independent variable is based on Ku et al., (2015) perspective taking manipulations. After the perspective taking manipulation, participants completed a survey containing demographic questions and dependent variable measures.

Manipulation Check

A pilot study was conducted to verify the scenario as well as customer perspective taking manipulation. A sample of 101 frontline hospitality managers (average age = 31.17 years, SD = 8.25; 62.2% female, 36.3% male) were recruited and randomly assigned to taking the customer’s perspective or their own. Participants reported the scenario was both easy to imagine ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.83$) and realistic ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 0.66$), a high mean indicating participants agreed the scenario was easy to imagine and the situation was realistic. Participants were asked to write how they would feel and respond to the scenario, and LIWC was used to analyze these statements for negative emotions according to the Positive Affect and Negative Affect words and word stems (Pennebaker, Booth, & Francis, 2007). The results indicate participants in the experimental condition of taking the customer’s perspective, used less negative affect words in their

description (5.43%, SD = 11.89) than participants in the control condition (25%; SD = 27.92%). Participants in the experimental condition of taking the customer's perspective, also reported more empathy (M = 3.76; SD = 0.93), more deep acting (M = 4.12; SD = 0.86), and more customer compensation (M = 0.21; SD = 0.63) than those in the control condition (M = 2.95, SD = 1.02; M = 3.38, SD = 1.07; M = -0.21, SD = 0.84).

Measures

Negative affect. Negative affect was measured using six items from the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scales (PANAS) (Watson & Clark, 1999). Participants responded on a 5-point scale ranging from "very slightly or not at all" to "extremely" to indicate how they would feel dealing with the customer in the role-play scenario. Example items include "angry," "irritable," "upset," and "nervous". The scale reliability was 0.87.

Empathy. Empathy was measured using a six-item scale (Oswald, 1996). Participants responded on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to indicate how they would feel toward the customer in the role-play scenario. Example items include "I would feel concern for the customer," and "I would feel sympathy for the customer". The scale reliability was 0.91.

Deep acting. Deep acting was measured using a three-item scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Participants responded on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to indicate the extent they would react toward the customer in the role-play scenario. Example items include "I would make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display" and "I would try to actually experience the emotions that I must show". The scale reliability was 0.77.

Customer compensation. Customer compensation was measured using a six-item scale. Participants responded on a five-point scale ranging from “not at all likely” to “very likely” to indicate if they would extend complimentary gifts to the guest in response to the service failure. Example items include “I would give this customer free wifi during the entire stay,” “I would give this customer free breakfast at the hotel restaurant”. Since there is no known measure of customer compensation, these measures were developed based on the most commonly used forms of compensation according to existing literature (Hoffmann, Kelley, & Rotalsky, 1995; Lee, Singh, & Chan, 2011). Participants were also asked to indicate the amount of discount they would extend to the customer: 0%, 5%, 15%, 20%, or 25%. The responses were standardized and averaged since the response scales were different. The scale reliability was 0.85.

Manipulation and realism checks. The perspective taking manipulation was checked by visually examining the written responses as well as asking participants to answer how the customer reacted and if they wrote about being in the shoes of the employee or customer. This ensured participants followed directions and wrote statements from the perspective of the customer (“yes” condition) or from the perspective of the employee (“no” condition). Realism was measured using on a five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” where participants answered, “it was easy imagining myself in the scenario situation” and “the scenario situation was realistic” (Dabholkar & Spaid, 2012).

Results

Psychometric Analyses

As shown in Table 2, a confirmatory factory analysis (CFA) with all six variables, the average variance extraction (AVE), and the reliabilities were examined for model fit. Construct validity was demonstrated using the composite construct reliabilities (CCR) values that were

greater than 0.60, and although the conventional AVE threshold is 0.50, the AVE for the measures were greater than the 0.40 threshold when the CCR values are greater than 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)¹. Table 1 shows the squared correlations of all the variables were lower than the AVEs, demonstrating adequate discriminant validity. The CFA demonstrated adequate fit: $\chi^2 = 372.55$ $df = 242$, $p < 0.05$; CFI = 0.91; IFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.066 (e.g., see Byrne, 2001). All factor loadings were greater than 0.50 (all loaded at $p < 0.01$). This model was compared to a single-factor model CFA, which showed poor fit: $\chi^2 = 372.56$ $df = 242$, $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.91; IFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.07.

In regard to the manipulation check, the visual inspection of the perspective taking written statements showed all of the participants wrote the appropriate perspective. The two items developed by Dabholkar and Spain (2012) were used to capture the level of realism of the scenarios and both showed high means: “It was easy imagining myself in the role play scenario” ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.89$) and “The role play scenario was realistic” ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 0.47$). Both means (out of a 5-point scale) indicated “strongly agree” for these statements.

Test of Hypotheses

Hayes’ (2017) PROCESS macro for SPSS was used to test the hypotheses, which provides evidence of significant indirect effects when the bootstrapping confidence intervals (CI) do not include zero. Four mediation models using deep acting and customer compensation as outcome variables were analyzed and shown in Table 3. Customer perspective taking led to less negative affect, compared to not taking the customer’s perspective ($\beta = -0.77$; $SE = 0.15$; $CI_{95} = -1.07, -0.46$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Customer perspective taking led to more empathy,

¹ I ran the reported analyses with the items with low AVEs removed from their respective measures. The pattern of results was the same with and without the items affecting the AVEs. Therefore, I ran and report the data analysis with all the items included in their respective measures.

compared to not taking the customer's perspective ($\beta = 0.56$; $SE = 0.17$; $CI_{.95} = 0.22, 0.90$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

The direct effect of customer perspective taking on deep was not significant ($p > 0.05$), however, the direct effect was significant for customer compensation ($p < 0.05$). For customer perspective taking and deep acting, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\beta = 0.29$; $SE = 0.11$; $CI_{.95} = 0.10, 0.53$) and empathy ($\beta = 0.15$; $SE = 0.08$; $CI_{.95} = 0.02, 0.33$) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 3a and 3b, respectively. For customer perspective taking and customer compensation, the indirect effect through decreased negative affect ($\beta = 0.21$; $SE = 0.09$; $CI_{.95} = 0.06, 0.39$) and empathy ($\beta = 0.21$; $SE = 0.08$; $CI_{.95} = 0.08, 0.39$) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 4a and 4b, respectively.

Additional Analysis

Two alternative parallel mediation models, using deep acting and customer compensation as outcome variables, were also analyzed as shown in Table 4. The first mediation model examined the path from customer perspective taking to deep acting, with negative affect and empathy as parallel mediators. Negative affect was a significant mediator ($\beta = 0.23$; $SE = 0.12$; $CI_{.95} = 0.02, 0.49$), however, empathy was not a significant mediator ($p > 0.05$). The second mediation model examined the path from customer perspective taking, to customer compensation, with negative affect and empathy as parallel mediators. Negative affect was not a significant mediator ($p > 0.05$), however, empathy was a significant mediator ($\beta = 0.21$; $SE = 0.08$; $CI_{.95} = 0.08, 0.39$).

Additional alternative models examining customer compensation as an outcome variable and deep acting as a preceding mediator were examined. The first mediation model examined negative affect, empathy, and deep acting as parallel mediators; empathy was the only significant

mediator ($\beta = 0.27$; $SE = 0.09$; $CI_{.95} = 0.11, 0.44$), while negative affect and deep acting were not significant mediators ($p > 0.05$). A serial mediation model, from negative affect to empathy, empathy to deep acting, and deep acting to customer compensation was tested. However, the paths including deep acting as a mediator were not significant ($p > 0.05$), the path excluding deep acting as a mediator was significant ($\beta = 0.05$; $SE = 0.03$; $CI_{.95} = 0.00, 0.13$). These results suggest that deep acting was an outcome and not a preceding variable to customer compensation.

Discussion

Extant literature suggests providing high levels of customer service takes more than just hiring the right people – employees must be trained to deal with customer mistreatment and successfully remedy the service encounter. Previous research found nearly 43% of unsatisfactory service encounters were attributed to frontline employees failing to handle the encounter properly and not the service failure itself (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990), suggesting that empowering employees with interpersonal skills to navigate negative customer encounters can improve service performance. Hospitality and service employee reactions to dissatisfied customers or negative service encounters can impact and improve the effectiveness of service recovery for organizations and employees should be trained beyond the technical skills necessary to provide exceptional service. Additionally, training employees in this manner could be the factor differentiating a hospitality and service organization from its competition (Boshoff & Allen, 2000).

Investing in training focused on interpersonal problem-solving such as perspective taking, can help hospitality and service organizations enhance employee's ability to meet the complex service demands of today's customer (Ro & Chen, 2011). Perspective taking, and "seeing their side," has been shown to help individuals understand the motives, thoughts, and

needs of someone else and has been used as a successful training tool in management settings (e.g., Longmire & Harrison, 2018). The findings of this study support existing literature suggesting perspective taking helps employees navigate social situations (e.g., negative service encounters), yielding positive changes in attitudes and behaviors.

Theoretical Implications

Perspective taking is an effective training intervention, influencing affective reactions, as well as their behavior by changing the negative reactions employees may feel during negative service encounters. The findings of this study are consistent with the AET, which suggests emotions influence employee behavior (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Accordingly, negative events or treatment at work often results negative emotions (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015) and in this case, engaging in customer perspective taking after negative treatment from the customer in the scenario decreased negative affect and increased empathy for participants. The AET also suggests the emotional response from an event influences attitudes and behaviors. For this study, behaviors were measured as service performance tools – deep acting and customer compensation. Participants reported engaging in more deep acting and did not withhold customer compensation after perspective taking compared to participants that did not imagine themselves in the shoes of the customer, supporting training goals of influencing service performance behaviors through customer perspective taking.

This study also examined deep acting and customer compensation as service tools that employees withhold in order to punish and sabotage difficult and rude customers. Deep acting and customer compensation are voluntary and discretionary – employees can choose to use deep acting and compensation as well as the extent they are willing to engage in deep acting or the amount of compensation they are willing to offer. Therefore, the mediating effect of decreased

negative affect and increased empathy on deep acting and customer compensation highlights the importance of emotions, mood, and affect influencing work attitudes and behaviors, further supporting the AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

The findings of this study add to existing perspective taking literature by extending applications of perspective taking to work contexts. More specifically, participants were asked to imagine themselves in the shoes of the customer, rather than a stigmatized out-group member. Perspective taking manipulations conventionally involved asking subjects to imagine themselves as a target of a stigmatized group (e.g., a homeless person, racial or ethnic minority; Batson et al., 2002; Madera, 2018) but this study asked participants to imagine themselves as a customer, traveling for a long period of time, experiencing other service failures, or work and life circumstances influencing their negative behavior during a service encounter. This study also measured novel service context outcomes (deep acting and customer compensation), adding new outcomes to the perspective taking framework (Ku et al., 2015). This manipulation helped decrease negative emotional reactions of participants, as well as increase empathy, outcomes that echo perspective taking literature outcomes. Consequently, this is one of the few studies that examined perspective taking in a work context, examining the customer's perspective as well as the work outcome variables of deep acting and customer compensation.

This study also adds to the emotional labor literature since perspective taking was examined as a distal antecedent to deep acting. Deep acting is proposed to be an antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategy (Grandey & Melloy, 2017; Gross, 1998). In order to change the emotions an individual is currently experiencing as deep acting requires, an antecedent is necessary and perspective taking was found to change the negative affect and empathy participants experienced after a negative service encounter. Additionally, antecedent-focused

emotion regulation is related to situation reappraisal in order to change emotions and affect, and perspective taking promotes reappraisal by helping to change emotions and affect. The findings of this study support the antecedent-focused and situation reappraisal framework of emotion regulation, thereby supporting the notion that deep acting is an emotional labor strategy that requires antecedent-focused and situation reappraisal emotion regulation strategies, extending both emotional labor and emotion regulation literature (Grandey & Melloy, 2017).

Lastly, an alternative, parallel mediation relationship between perspective taking and the outcome variables through negative affect and empathy was also examined. With deep acting as an outcome, negative affect was a significant mediator, while empathy was not significant. This finding suggests that negative affect is a stronger preceding mediator than empathy for deep acting. This finding supports the hot/cool processing of emotions (Kross et al., 2005) from the perspective taking literature. Instead of reacting with immediate negative affect and emotions from negative customer mistreatment, perspective taking allowed participants to think about the customer, inhibiting “hot” reflexive responses and decreasing negative affect. By decreasing negative affect, the participants were more likely to indicate deep acting as a reaction to the difficult customer interaction. Therefore, perspective taking not only reduced immediate negative affective, but perspective taking also redirected participants attention away from their own negative affect as a result of the hot/cool emotion processing, and participants were then able engage in deep acting.

The alternative, parallel mediation relationship between perspective taking and customer compensation was also examined and while negative affect was not a significant mediator, empathy was a significant mediator. In other words, empathy was a stronger mediator than negative affect for the effect of perspective taking on customer compensation. Perspective taking

literature suggests a strong relationship between perspective taking and empathy (Longmire & Harrison, 2018) and perspective taking has a strong influence on behavioral and attitudinal outcomes (Todd & Galinsky, 2014). The underlying mediation relationship for customer compensation suggests perspective taking increases empathy, ultimately impacting how participants used customer compensation. Empathy and altruistic behaviors are frequently examined in tandem and are linked to perspective taking (Oswald, 1996). Additionally, the attentional focus model (Carlson & Miller, 1987) of perspective taking allowed for participants to experience more empathy towards the customers while putting themselves in the customer's shoes, prompting helping behaviors (e.g., compensation). These alternative findings support the AET and provides additional insight to the cognitive mechanism of perspective taking changing affect and emotions, and ultimately attitudes and behaviors.

Practical Implications

In order for hospitality and service organizations to combat the increasingly complex demand from customers, the industry and organizations need a training intervention to help employees navigate the human and social interaction aspect of customer service. In order to increase service performance, hospitality and service organizations should provide training to help employees provide enhanced responses and reactions to negative service encounters through customer perspective taking. Based on the findings of this study, perspective taking is a viable and effective training tool for helping employees manage their affective, attitudinal, and behavioral reactions to negative customer treatment. Therefore, perspective taking should be introduced during general orientation and employee development trainings. Orientation trainings can help provide general training on customer perspective taking, and perspective taking as an intervention tool can be further honed during department or employee development trainings.

Organizations can therefore provide new and rising employees with tools to manage negative service encounters and difficult customers (Choi et al., 2014).

Additionally, perspective taking trainings can be used for high-volume shifts as a pre-shift training intervention. Reinforcing and reminding employees of customer perspective taking during shifts that are anticipated to be busy or with guest demographics known to be difficult and demanding, could be an effective way to empower employees with the tools and skills to deal with difficult guests or negative service encounters, while maximizing employee service performance (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011; Blancero & Johnson, 2000). Diversity and management training studies suggest the effectiveness of training interventions like perspective taking depends on the strategic incorporation and application of perspective taking as a training tool (Madera, 2017). Therefore, it is critical for managers to integrate and implement perspective taking as a tool for frontline employees.

Limitations and Future Studies

Although this study has theoretical and practical contributes to literature, there are potential limitations that could guide future studies. Firstly, the study sampled frontline managers from the southern region of the United States. Future studies should sample a broader range of managers, from multiple regions of the United States or from different countries to examine potential cultural differences to extend the implications and generalizability of this study.

Secondly, the cross-sectional nature of the experiment limits the findings of this study since it was conducted at one time point and the variables were also measured at one time. Future studies could study perspective taking using a longitudinal design to capture potential mediators and moderators (Hur, Won Moon, & Jun, 2013; Lee & Ok, 2014; Lee & Hwang, 2016). Doing so would extend the findings of this study and the AET especially since work events can change

from day to day. Additionally, a longitudinal design will allow for within-person analyses of emotional processing of work events. Since individuals process emotions differently, measuring and comparing the daily fluctuations an individual experience can strengthen the potency of perspective taking as a training intervention.

Thirdly, a multilevel examination of perspective taking as a training intervention for emotional labor and service performance could broaden the implications of this study. By examining the individual and organization level impacts of perspective taking, the effectiveness and value of perspective taking can be measured. Therefore, future studies should include longitudinal and multilevel designs and analyses to examine any underlying mechanisms to provide a more comprehensive conceptualization of perspective taking as a training tool for employees during negative service encounters.

Conclusion

The current study demonstrates that deep acting and withholding customer compensation can be influenced as service performance tools during negative service encounters. The hospitality and service industry increasingly require employees to provide appropriate affective and behavioral reactions and responses, despite an increase in demanding and challenging customers (Harris & Reynolds, 2004). A growing need to equip employees with the interpersonal tools to navigate negative customer treatment and service encounters calls for trainings and interventions to help support employees in maximizing their service performance. Therefore, this study examined perspective taking as a training tool to help employees manage their affective reactions and behaviors when dealing with negative treatment from customers. These results not only support perspective taking as an effective training tool, but also provide an understanding of

the underlying mechanisms behind changing employee affect and behaviors during negative service encounters.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Correlations and squared correlations

	M	SD	Alpha	AVE	1	2	3	4
1. Negative Affect	1.99	0.91	0.87	0.48	-	0.32	0.10	0.17
2. Empathy	3.28	.99	0.91	0.65	-0.57*	-	0.07	0.32
3. Deep Acting	3.51	1.03	0.77	0.54	-0.31*	0.27*	-	0.10
4. Customer Compensation	--	--	0.85	0.49	-0.41	0.57	0.31	-

Note. Customer compensation is z-scored. Correlations are shown in the bottom, left side. Squared correlations are shown in the top, right side. * $p < 0.01$

Table 2. Factor loadings, CCR, AVE

	Factor Loadings	CCR	AVE
	Negative Affect	0.84	0.48
1	0.73		
2	0.58		
3	0.77		
4	0.57		
5	0.77		
6	0.70		
	Empathy	0.91	0.64
1	0.74		
2	0.76		
3	0.81		
4	0.88		
5	0.84		
6	0.74		
	Deep Acting	0.78	0.54
1	0.67		
2	0.81		
3	0.72		
	Customer Compensation	0.85	0.49
1	0.78		
2	0.70		
3	0.73		
4	0.72		
5	0.60		
6	0.64		

Note. CCR = composite construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

Table 3. Mediation Models.

Direct effects	Coefficient	SE	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	Model R²
Negative affect as outcome					
Customer perspective taking	-0.77	0.15	-4.95	0.00	-0.17**
Empathy as outcome					
Customer perspective taking	0.56	0.17	3.25	0.002	0.08**
Deep acting as outcome					
Customer perspective taking	0.19	0.09	0.99	0.33	0.01*
Customer compensation as outcome					
Customer perspective taking	0.13	0.33	-3.61	0.00	0.11*

Indirect effects	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
CPT → NA → Deep acting	0.29	0.11	0.10	0.53
CPT → Empathy → Deep acting	0.15	0.08	0.02	0.33
CPT → NA → Customer compensation	0.21	0.09	0.06	0.39
CPT → Empathy → Customer compensation	0.21	0.08	0.08	0.39

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.005$; CPT = customer perspective taking (coded as 1 = no, 2 = yes); NA = negative affect

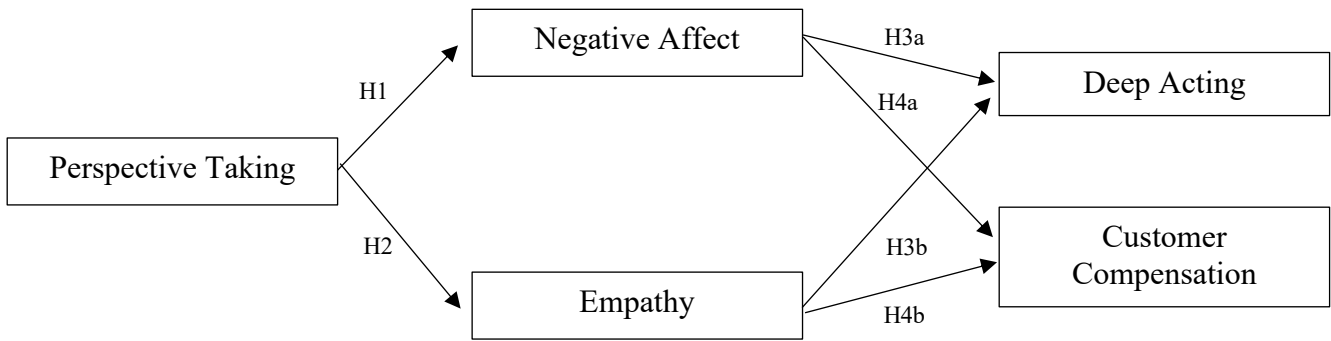
Table 4. Alternative Mediation Models.

DEEP ACTING MEDIATION MODEL					
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Model R²
Negative affect as outcome					0.18**
CPT	-0.78	0.16	-5.02	0.00	
Empathy as outcome					0.08**
CPT	0.56	0.18	3.16	0.002	
DA as outcome					0.11*
NA	-0.30	0.13	-2.26	0.02	
Empathy	0.15	0.12	1.31	0.19	
CPT	-0.13	0.21	-0.64	0.52	
Indirect effects		Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
CPT → NA → DA		0.23	0.12	0.02	0.49
CPT → Empathy → DA		0.08	0.08	-0.05	0.26
CUSTOMER COMPENSATION MEDIATION MODEL					
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Model R²
Negative affect as outcome					0.18**
CPT	-0.78	0.16	-1.10	-0.47	
Empathy as outcome					0.09*
CPT	0.58	0.18	3.24	0.00	
CC as outcome					0.35**
NA	-0.06	0.08	-0.70	0.49	
Empathy	0.37	0.07	5.10	0.00	
CPT	0.26	0.13	1.95	0.05	
Indirect effects		Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
CPT → NA → CC		0.05	0.07	-0.08	0.18
CPT → Empathy → CC		0.21	0.09	0.08	0.38
CUSTOMER COMPENSATION PARALLEL MEDIATION MODEL					
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Model R²
Negative affect as outcome					0.33**
CPT	-0.58	0.15	-3.87	0.00	
Empathy as outcome					0.30*
CPT	0.60	0.17	3.45	0.00	
DA as outcome					0.59
CPT	0.14	0.18	0.75	0.46	
CC as outcome					0.59**
NA	-0.01	0.07	-0.15	0.88	
Empathy	0.35	0.06	5.74	0.00	
DA	0.11	0.06	1.98	0.05	
CPT	0.23	0.12	1.94	0.05	
Indirect effects		Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
CPT → NA → CC		0.01	0.05	-0.09	0.10
CPT → NA → Empathy → CC		0.20	0.07	0.08	0.35
CPT → NA → Empathy → DA → CC		0.02	0.03	-0.03	0.08

CUSTOMER COMPENSATION SERIAL MEDIATION MODEL					
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Model R²
Negative affect as outcome					0.33**
CPT	-0.58	0.15	-3.87	0.00	
Empathy as outcome					0.35**
CPT	0.45	0.18	2.54	0.01	
NA	-0.24	0.10	-2.32	0.02	
DA as outcome					0.35*
CPT	-0.16	0.19	-0.84	0.40	
NA	-0.34	-.11	-3.17	0.00	
Empathy	0.17	0.09	1.82	0.07	
CC as outcome					0.59**
NA	-0.01	0.07	-0.15	0.88	
Empathy	0.35	0.06	5.74	0.00	
DA	0.11	0.06	1.98	0.05	
CPT	0.23	0.12	1.94	0.05	
Indirect effect		Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
CPT → NA → Empathy → CC		0.05	0.03	0.00	0.13
CPT → NA → DA → CC		0.02	0.02	-0.001	0.06
CPT → Empathy → DA → CC		0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.03
CPT → NA → Empathy → DA → CC		0.002	0.003	-0.0005	0.01

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.005$ CPT = customer perspective taking; NA = negative affect; DA = deep acting; CC = customer compensation

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Chapter 5. Longitudinal Analysis of Perspective Taking

Abstract

Service interactions and work events are dynamic and vary in occurrences and how employees appraise the interaction. According to the AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), employees' daily appraisal of work events cause affective reactions, influencing working attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, Study 2 implements an experience sampling method (ESM) to examine customer perspective taking through a longitudinal design consisting of five days of baseline measurements, followed by five days of intervention measurements. The ESM approach accounts for the within-person level variance of daily fluctuations in affective reactions to determine the potency of perspective taking as a training intervention. Frontline service employees completed daily measures of affective reactions (i.e., negative affect and empathy) and employee performance (i.e., deep acting and customer helping behaviors). The results replicate Study 1 in that perspective taking led to lower levels of negative affect and higher felt empathy toward customers. In addition, feeling less negative affect and more empathy led to more deep acting and customer helping behaviors. Study 2 also shows that regardless of fluctuations in daily difficult customer interactions, the positive effect of perspective taking on the outcomes remained consistent at the within-person level.

Introduction

Often times in the hospitality and service industry, a single service interaction can determine a customer's satisfaction with and loyalty to an organization; however, hospitality and service interactions are heterogenous in nature, varying in customers, employees, and circumstances (Hocutt, Chakraborty, & Mowen, 1997). Consequently, these interactions can also vary in terms of positive and negative treatment of employees. Hospitality and service employees can interact with verbally abusive and aggressive customers on a daily basis (Huang, Greenbaum, Bonner, & Wang, 2018) and negative interactions with customers has been shown to negatively influence employee emotions (e.g., Wang, Liu, Liao, Gong, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Shi, 2013). The negative treatment employees receive from customers frequently lead to negative outcomes for employees and impacts employee affective and behavioral responses at work. Literature suggests negative treatment from customer can lead to negative attitudes and behaviors towards customers (Song Liu, Wang, Lanaj, Johnson, & Shi, 2018; Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011), and ultimately decreased service performance (Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014; Groth & Grandey, 2012).

Emotional labor is a commonly used service performance tool among hospitality and service employees (e.g., Grandey & Melloy, 2017; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Emotional labor strategies include surface acting, or masking of expressions, and deep acting, or masking of emotions, in order to meet organization standards for emotional displays during service interactions (for a review, see Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Mesmer-Magnus, DeChurch, & Wax, 2012). For instance, service employees are expected to welcome guests with a smile or apologize with sincerity, and employees often engage in emotional labor to deliver expected emotional expressions to guests as a form of service

performance. Likewise, employees are expected to exercise the use of helping behaviors when interacting with a difficult customer. Helping behaviors ensure employees are delivering on service promises and expectations, regardless of the circumstances and how the customer is treating the employee (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997; Bettencourt, Gwinner, & Meuter, 2001). However, both of these emotional and behavioral service performance tools are discretionary and voluntary, and dealing with difficult customers can influence how employees delivery satisfactory service performance.

The affective event theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) states discrete events at work result in affective reactions, which influence attitudes and behaviors at work. In the hospitality and service context, employees can experience daily negative interactions with customers (e.g., verbally abusive or aggressive customers, unreasonable demands) that result in employees experiencing negative affect (e.g., anger, frustration) which in turn influence employee attitudes and behaviors at work (e.g., apathy, service sabotage, delayed service), ultimately affecting organization performance (Wang et al., 2011). Using the AET as a theoretical framework, this study suggests implementing customer perspective taking as a training intervention could influence employees' affective reactions, as well as work attitudes and behaviors to influence how employees engage in emotional labor and helping behaviors.

Additionally, literature suggests the daily experience of negative treatment from customers may additively affect employee negative emotions and prolong the negative outcomes of experiencing negative service interactions, contributing to lasting negative service performance (Wang et al., 2013). Although perspective taking can be a successful training intervention for supporting employees' service performance, work events can vary from day to day, impacting daily service performance in the face of negative service interactions (Song et al.,

2018). For instance, while literature supports the notion that employees encounter negative customers on a daily basis (Huang et al., 2018), an employee can experience an exceptionally challenging and difficult customer one day, resulting in a markedly negative affective and behavioral reaction. Thus, the literature demonstrates that service employees often deal with guest complaints and difficult customers who can be rude and aggressive, and while it is clear that these interactions can have negative impacts on service employees (Choi et al., 2014), there is a glaring gap related to understanding how employees can successfully handle difficult customer interactions. Therefore, taking into account the daily fluctuations in work events, the purpose of this study is to examine perspective taking as a training intervention at a within-person level to answer the call for a training intervention and examine emotional labor in a longitudinal setting (e.g., Geng, Liu, Liu, & Feng, 2014; Hur, Won Moon, & Jun, 2013; Lee & Ok, 2014; Lee & Hwang, 2016).

Literature Review

Service interactions and work events are dynamic and vary in occurrences and how employees appraise the interaction. Additionally, individual differences are strong antecedents of emotional labor (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Kim, 2008; Gursoy, Boylu, & Avci, 2011; Sohn & Lee, 2012), which can bias how effective customer perspective taking is using cross-sectional methods. For example, someone high in negative affect might feel less negative affect after customer perspective taking relative to themselves, but not to an employee who is low in negative affect. Therefore, focusing on the within-person appraisal of negative service interactions over time is important. The AET suggests work events cause affective reactions, influencing working attitudes and behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). More specifically, individuals vary in their appraisal of work events, and these appraisals can vary from day to day

(e.g., Bediou, & Scherer, 2014; Oreg, Bartunek, Lee, & Do, 2018). A majority of the emotional labor literature focuses on a single instance or service encounter, oversimplifying how employees appraise work events and utilize emotional labor. In order to account for the within-person difference to determine the potency of perspective taking as a training intervention, this study uses an experience sampling method (ESM) to examine how daily fluctuations in work event appraisal influence emotional labor and helping behaviors. Examining perspective taking using ESM highlights how negative service interactions and appraisal differ from event-by-event, from person to person (Madera, 2018^b).

Affective Events Theory

AET states individuals have immediate affective reactions to work events, and these affective reactions impact employee attitudes and behavior (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). For instance, a guest compliment could result in immediate positive affect, such as happiness, optimism, or pride for an employee, impacting the employee's job satisfaction and performance. The AET operates through two cognitive appraisals: the first appraisal resulting in the immediate affective reaction and the second resulting in the attitude and behavior. Therefore, while work events cause affective reactions, an intervention targeted at changing cognitive appraisals of negative service interactions will help protect employee emotions and moods, as well as positively influence their attitudes and behaviors (Song et al., 2018).

The AET also suggests there are individual characteristics that impact emotional and cognitive appraisals, varying from individual to individual (Cropanzano, & Dasborough, 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Furthermore, literature suggests an individual's cognitive appraisal of the event influences the emotional response (Braukmann, Schmitt, Ďuranová, & Ohly, 2017). Therefore, although one employee may have a positive level of emotional appraisal in terms of

work events and their affective reactions, their coworker may have a negative level of emotional appraisal to the same work event. For instance, a verbally disrespectful customer may not arouse any negative emotions and moods for the first employee in the example, whereas the same verbally disrespectful customer may elicit negative emotions for the coworker. Therefore, cognitive appraisal of the work event can oscillate across employees and from individual to individual. Likewise, this would suggest the immediate affective reaction and subsequent attitudinal and behavioral response would also vary across individuals and over time, these oscillations can tend to have a rhythm that is unique to an individual.

Perspective Taking

Perspective taking is the cognitive process of seeing the world from another person's point of view or in someone else's shoes, allowing individuals to "see their side" during social interactions (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015). Perspective taking helps individuals understand a target's motivation, thoughts, or needs in order to navigate social situations and has been used as a training tool towards target individuals, stigmatized groups, or out-group members (e.g., a racial or ethnic minority; Madera, Neal, & Dawson, 2011; Batson, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002; Madera, 2018^a). By asking perspective taking subjects to consider what a target individual is experiencing, or how they would feel if they were a stigmatized group member, perspective taking has been linked to decreased prejudice and stereotyping (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000) and increase positive emotions (Ku et al., 2015) and helping intentions (Batson et al., 1991).

Perspective taking operates through the psychological mechanism of "hot/cool emotional processing" (Kross, Ayduk, & Mischel, 2005; Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999). According to hot/cool emotional processing, emotion can be processed as either "hot" and reflexive, or "cool" and

reflective. The former, activating and arousing affect and the latter inhibiting further heightening of affect. For example, a negative experience can be emotionally processed as “hot” and reflexive, engaging automatic defense behaviors such as averting or accusing, or as “cool” and reflective, allowing individuals to think about and thoughtfully process emotions without experiencing negative affect. In terms of perspective taking and a service interaction, employees can appraise or process emotions from a negative service interaction (e.g., a customer accusing the employee of a mistake and making unreasonable demands) as “cool” and reflective by imagining themselves in the customer’s shoes and appraising their attitudes and behaviors without activating negative affect rather than as “hot” and reflexive, arousing negative affect. In this way, this study will extend perspective taking literature to work contexts, examining the customer’s perspective instead of a target individual or stigmatized group.

Negative Affect

Empirical evidence from the hospitality and service literature, along with management literature, support the understanding that customer mistreatment is positively correlated with employee negative affect. Negative affect as a result of negative customer encounters include feelings of anger, disrespect, or irritation (Diefendorff, Gabriel, Nolan, & Yang, 2019). According to the AET and existing literature on customer mistreatment, negative customer treatment results in immediate negative affect (Song et al., 2018) and negative affect can influence attitudes and behaviors such as emotional labor and helping behaviors (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015). Negative exchange spiral theory (Groth & Grandey, 2012) also suggests the negative treatment from customers spirals into negative responses for employees, perpetuated by not understanding the customer’s situation. Hospitality and service employees often deal with customer complaints and service failures, and these interactions can turn into negative work

events (e.g., the customer verbally abuses and disrespects the employee). The AET states this negative work event would lead to an immediate negative affective response for employees and perspective taking can help change negative responses by helping individuals and employees understand the customer's situation, decreasing negative affect. However, since the AET proposes cognitive appraisal differs among individuals and work events may be appraised as more severe or intense, it is hypothesized that customer perspective taking will decrease the negative appraisal of the interaction and decrease negative affect at an individual level.

Hypothesis 1: Within individuals, customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect.

Empathy

Empathy is a key factor in increasing post-complaint customer satisfaction and service recovery efforts (Miller, Craighead, & Karwan, 2000). Empathy refers to the general concern employees experience or express (Hocutt, Bowers, & Todd Donavan, 2006) and has been found to bolster the effects of an apology during service recovery attempts (Fan & Niu, 2016).

Empathy has also been described as “feeling their pain” and an affective mechanism associated with perspective taking. More specifically, increasing empathy and working with individuals higher in empathy has been shown to almost always benefit the targets of empathy because of its’ positive impact on social relationships (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). Therefore, increasing and enhancing empathy among employees during negative service interactions could help employees maximize service performance.

The attentional focus model (Carlson & Miller, 1987; Kamins, Marks, & Skinner, 1991) states when subjects engage in perspective taking, the psychological process of putting oneself in someone else's shoes focuses attention on the misfortunes of someone else, rather than focusing

on the subject's own emotions, eliciting empathy towards that person (Song et al., 2018). Perspective taking and empathy has been linked to positive attitudes (Madera et al., 2011) and prosocial behaviors (Batson et al., 2002) when subjects were asked to imagine themselves as a stigmatized group member. By imagining themselves in the shoes of the customers, employees may focus on the unfortunate circumstances of the customer, rather than focusing on how the customer was rude or disrespectful (Song et al., 2018), impacting cognitive appraisal of the negative service interaction, thereby increasing empathy towards the customer. Additionally, perspective taking can buffer the acceleration of negative exchange spiraling by increasing empathy towards the customer (Groth & Grandey, 2012). Therefore, perspective taking is hypothesized to increase empathy among individuals.

Hypothesis 2: Within individuals, customer perspective taking will increase empathy.

Deep Acting as an Outcome

Emotion regulation is the process of influencing emotions – when we have them, how we experience them, and how we express them (Gross, 1998) whereas emotional labor has been defined as an emotion regulation strategy, restricted to work contexts (Grandey & Melloy, 2017). The emotional labor literature has grown to define emotional labor as emotion regulation, suggesting the traditional emotional labor strategies of deep acting and surface acting and emotion regulation theories can complement each other. Deep acting is described as the effortful changing of feelings, emotions, and moods to be congruent with work demands; surface acting is described as suppressing and faking expressions to be in line with work demands (for a review, see Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Deep acting is generally associated with positive customer outcomes like service quality (Lam & Chen, 2012) and word of mouth (Van Dijk, Smith, & Cooper, 2011), as well as employee outcomes such as increased employee creativity (Geng et al.,

2014) and job satisfaction (Lee & Hwang, 2016; Chu, Baker, & Murrmann, 2012), decreased turnover intention (Jung & Yoon, 2014; Lv, Xu, & Ji, 2012) and emotional exhaustion (Hur et al., 2013). Additionally, deep acting is a voluntary and discretionary service recovery tool for employees that can be influenced by the moods and attitudes an employee is experiencing. According to the AET, since negative treatment from customers would result in immediate negative affect, and negative affect would influence work attitudes and behaviors, considering deep acting as a behavior, an intervention to reduce the immediate negative affect would subsequently influence employees use of deep acting during negative service interactions. Therefore, perspective taking could influence how employees choose to use deep acting when interacting with a customer and experiencing negative treatment.

Gross (1998) proposed that stimuli elicit two types of emotion regulation strategies: antecedent-focused and response-focused emotion regulation. The former signifying a change in felt emotions, and the latter indicating suppression or modification of expressions. Additionally, research suggested antecedent-focused emotion regulation and changing felt emotions emphasizes situational reappraisal, and response-focused emotion regulation as expressive suppression. Situation reappraisal requires individuals to change felt moods and emotions and is less taxing to employees than suppression, which only changes surface expressions and requires constant monitoring and effort to avoid micro-expressions and fake expressions. Situational reappraisal supports antecedent-focused emotion regulation since it requires effort and attention to change felt moods, while expressive suppression only changes expressions and is used as a response to situations. Emotional labor literature mirrors onto these emotion regulation strategies since deep acting refers to managing emotions and requires more effort while surface acting refers to managing expressions. Therefore, deep acting is considered as reappraisal and antecedent-

focused emotion regulation since employees change their emotions and moods while surface acting is considered to be suppression and response-focused emotion regulation since employees manage their expressions according to customer expectations (Grandey & Melloy, 2017). Although antecedent-focused and response-focused emotion regulation echo Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional labor strategies as deep acting and surface acting, the implications of antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation in the hospitality and service literature is limited.

This new model placed these emotion regulation strategies at the center of the emotional labor framework, is supported by existing literature (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Morris & Feldman, 1996) as well as provides a new road map for future emotional labor studies. The new model also supports the notion that perspective taking as an antecedent of deep acting, will help subjects engage in situation reappraisal and change their emotions and moods. Since perspective taking also influences felt emotions (e.g., decreasing negative affect and increasing empathy), perspective taking could help activate situational reappraisal as an antecedent-focused strategy of emotion regulation to decrease negative emotions, triggered by negative treatment from customers. Findings in the emotion regulation literature also suggests the negative and positive individual and organizational outcomes of deep and surface acting are also found with antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation and this study seeks to examine deep acting as an antecedent-focused emotion regulation technique of emotional labor.

Additionally, perspective taking is also associated with increasing empathy (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). Emotional labor is an affect-driven behavior (Rupp, Silke McCance, Spencer, & Sonntag, 2008), and since negative service interactions represent an affective event and deep acting is an affect-driven behavior, emotions such as negative affect and empathy, are important

mediating variables. Based on previous research, negative affect and empathy are relevant to deep acting, especially during negative service interactions. Therefore, negative service interaction act as a stimulus for subjects, and engaging in perspective taking and imagining what other circumstances could be influencing a customer's negative treatment, would help employees reappraise their negative emotions and moods, consequently change their negative emotions.

Hypothesis 3: Within individuals, negative affect (H3a) and empathy (H3b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting.

Helping Behavior as an Outcome

Helping behaviors are defined as discretionary behaviors that employees use during service interactions, that go above and beyond job descriptions and requirements and help uphold high levels of customer service and satisfaction (Bharadwaja, Lee, & Madera, 2018; Wu & Liao, 2016). Helping behaviors include being attentive, courteous, responsive, and keeping promises (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003). Since these behaviors are not prescribed or mandated in job descriptions, these helping behaviors are extra-role and discretionary in nature and susceptible to internal and external influences. Keeping with the AET, negative treatment from a difficult, rude, or demanding customer could result in negative affect such as anger, frustration, and irritation, prompting negative employee attitudes and behaviors such as retaliation or service sabotage. Behaviors such as intentionally taking longer to deliver services or checking with a manager, and not following up are violations of service "rules" that can hinder service performance (Wang et al., 2011). During negative service interactions, employees can deliberately make customers wait or intentionally delay services as a result of experiencing negative affect. However, by influencing the immediate negative affect that employees experience from negative customer treatment, perhaps negative attitudes and behaviors can be thwarted. Engaging in perspective

taking and having employees put themselves in the shoes of the customers could decrease negative affect, mediating the relationship between perspective taking and helping behaviors.

Perspective taking has also been linked to enhancing service performance. By taking the perspective of the customer, employees have been shown to experience more empathy towards the customer and could consequently anticipate and meet customer needs on a more personal and meaningful level during instances of customer mistreatment. Through experiencing more empathy and considering the customers' needs and circumstances, employees may be prompted to feel more connected to the customer and attach more significance to their service performance (Song et al., 2018). Thus, perspective taking enhances service performance such as helping behaviors, by enabling employees to feel more empathy for the customer in lieu of negative service interactions.

Hypothesis 4: Within individuals, negative affect (H4a) and empathy (H4b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on helping behavior.

Methodology

Design and Procedure

To test the hypothesized within-person effects, the current study used experience sampling method (ESM). ESM provides multilevel data (Level 1: repeated measures) nested within Level 2 variables (participants). Data was collected using an ESM design with an event-contingent protocol, in which participants are required to complete measures on multiple occasions. The description was included to prevent priming the participants on the purpose of the experiment. Participants were given a \$10 gift card as an appreciation for completing all 10 Service Diaries.

To examine the variance within participants, participants completed a survey measuring the mediators and dependent variables at the end of each shift for ten shifts. Participants did not receive the perspective taking intervention for the first five work days. Measuring the variables for five days captures a baseline measurement for each participant, accounting for day-to-day fluctuations and work events variability. For the next five work days, participants were given the perspective taking intervention. The design of collecting baseline measurements for five days to compare against five intervention days is based on previous research using longitudinal designs to measure emotional labor (Hülshager, Lang, Schewe, & Zijlstra, 2015; Sonnentag, & Grant, 2012; Song et al., 2018). During the five intervention days, participants were reminded to “imagine yourself in the position of the customer – we do not often think about how customers can have a bad day and then take it out on us” before their shift, and then completed the survey with the dependent variable measures at the end of each shift (Song et al., 2018). This manipulation is based on successful perspective taking manipulations from Study 1 and previous perspective taking research (Ku et al., 2015).

Sample

The current study started with a sample of 74 frontline employees. The final sample consisted of 52 Service Diaries (response rate = 72.22%; males = 28.8%; females = 65.4%) after accounting for missing and incomplete surveys, meeting the minimum recommended samples of 50, for Level 2 variables (Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013; Heck, Thomas, & Tabata, 2013; Madera, 2018^b). Since participants completed a total of 10 surveys, the total number of responses collected from the participants was 519, The reported average age of participants was 25.35 years old (SD = 8.96) and eleven departments (i.e., lodging, food and beverage, front desk, housekeeping, catering and events) were represented in the sample. On average, the participants

worked 26.12 (SD = 11.77) hours a week, with an average of 24.66 months (SD = 71.28) tenured in their position and reported interacting with customers quite a bit to all of the time (M = 4.55, SD = 0.78; 1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = all of the time) on a daily basis. Participants also reported working as servers, hosts, front desk agents, and housekeepers, interacting with difficult customers moderately to quite a bit (M = 3.17, SD = 1.23; 1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = all of the time) and identified themselves as 15.2% Caucasian, 5.8% as African American, 32.8% as Latino(a), 38.5% as Asian American, and 1.9% other.

Manipulation Check

A manipulation check pilot study was conducted to verify the effectiveness of the perspective taking intervention. A sample of 82 frontline hospitality employees were recruited (average age = 23.70 years, SD = 3.50; 61% female, 39% male) who were full or part-time students in a hospitality management program. Participants were randomly assigned to taking the customer's perspective or their own perspective. Following the manipulation, participants completed a survey including manipulation check items and measures for negative affect and empathy. The results indicate participants in the experimental condition, taking the perspective of the customers, reported less negative affect (M = 1.94, SD = 0.99) than participants in the control condition (M = 3.28, SD = 1.19). Participants taking the perspective of customers also reported higher empathy (M = 5.29, SD = 1.15) than participants in the control condition (M = 3.63, SD = 1.56).

Measures

Negative affect. The six-item measure by Watson and Clark (1999) was used to measure negative affect. Participants were asked to indicate the extent they felt while dealing with difficult or rude customers today using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *very slightly or not at*

all to 5 = *extremely*). Example items include “angry,” “irritable,” and “upset”. The reliability for this measure was 0.93.

Empathy. The six-item measure for empathy by Oswald (1996) was used to measure empathy. Participants were asked to indicate the extent they felt while dealing with difficult or rude customers today using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Example items include “I felt concern for the customer,” and “I felt compassion toward the customer”. The reliability for this measure was 0.82.

Deep acting. The three-item measure for deep acting by Brotheridge and Lee (2003) was used to measure deep acting. Participants were asked to indicate their reaction to dealing with a difficult or rude customer at work today using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Example items include “I made an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others,” and “I really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job”. The reliability for this measure was 0.92.

Helping behavior. The three-item measure by Bettencourt and Brown (2003) was used to measure helping behavior. Participants were asked to indicate how the statements described them while dealing with a difficult or rude customer at work today using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Example items include “I followed up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems,” and “regardless of circumstances, I was exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers”. The reliability for this measure was 0.90.

Control variables. The age, gender, ethnicity, and tenure of participants were used as control variables. Previous literature suggests age (Dahling & Perez, 2010), gender (Cheung & Tang, 2010), and tenure (Wolfe & Kim, 2013) influence how individuals engage in emotional

labor. Gender was dummy coded as 1 = male and 2 = female. Participants provided their age and tenure in months, which were treated as continuous variables.

The effects of time were also controlled for in this study. The effect of time was controlled for a potential linear influence over the 10 surveyed days on the endogenous variables in the model (Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013; Song et al., 2018). Controlling for time accounts for any fatigue or other potential linear effects that could occur with repeated measures design.

Results

ESM data collected include variables for two levels of analysis. Within-person variables (Level 1) include the repeated measures for negative affect, empathy, emotional labor, and helping behavior and were people-centered to capture the within-level variance. The between-person variables (Level 2) include age, gender, and tenure. Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the variables.

Test of Hypotheses

Rockwood and Hayes' (2017) MLmed macro for SPSS was used to compute multilevel mediation analysis to test the hypotheses. MLmed takes into account both the Level 1 and Level 2 variability and estimates the model parameters simultaneously (Rockwood & Hayes, 2017). For the indirect effects, Monte Carlo confidence intervals around these effects are provided. In order to properly analyze the within-person relationships, the Level 1 variables were centered on the individuals' means (i.e., person mean-centered) and the Level 2 variables were grand mean-centered (Heck et al., 2013). In order to validate the use of multilevel modeling to analyze the data, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) for the within-person variance of the measures was examined for significance. Results demonstrate the within-person variance was significant for negative affect (ICC = 0.47, $p < 0.01$), empathy (ICC = 0.79, $p < 0.01$), deep acting (ICC =

0.55, $p < 0.01$), and helping behavior ($ICC = 0.31, p < 0.01$) and indicate considerable between- and within-person level variance in the mediator and outcomes variables, necessitating the use of multilevel modeling.

The multilevel model results are shown in Table 2. The results are based on the within-person level 1-1-1 mediation models and these results also take into consider the effect of time by controlling for day or time effects, gender, age, and position tenure. As shown in Table 2, on days when participants engaged in customer perspective taking, the participants felt less negative affect when compared to the days when participants did not perspective take ($\gamma = -0.30$; $SE = 0.12$; $CI_{.95} = -0.55, -0.06$), supporting Hypothesis 1². On days when participants engaged in customer perspective taking, the participants felt more empathy when compared to the days when participants did not perspective take ($\gamma = 0.76$; $SE = 0.15$; $CI_{.95} = 0.47, 1.05$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

The direct effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting and helping behavior was not significant ($p > 0.05$). However, for deep acting, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = -0.46$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = -0.56, -0.36$) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.34$; $SE = 0.04$; $CI_{.95} = 0.26, 0.42$) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 3a and 3b, respectively. Additionally, for helping behavior, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = -0.31$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = -0.40, -0.22$) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.33$; $SE = 0.04$; $CI_{.95} = 0.26, 0.40$) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 4a and 4b, respectively.

² In supplementary analyses, negative affect was square-root transformed to correct the skewness of this measure. However, the results replicated the results using the non square-root transformed variable. For the sake of clarity, the results are reported using the non-transformed negative affect variable.

Additional Analysis

Alternative parallel mediation models with deep acting and helping behavior as outcome variables were also analyzed as shown in Table 3. The first mediation model examined the direct effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting, which was found to be not significant ($p > 0.05$). However, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = 0.11$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = 0.02, 0.20$) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.17$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = 0.09, 0.27$) was significant. The second mediation model examined the direct effect for helping behavior, which was also not significant ($p > 0.05$). However, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = 0.05$; $SE = 0.03$; $CI_{.95} = 0.01, 0.11$) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.21$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = 0.12, 0.32$) were significant.

An additional alternative model examining helping behavior as an outcome variable, with deep acting as a parallel mediator alongside negative affect and empathy was tested. However, empathy was the only significant mediator ($\gamma = 0.18$; $SE = 0.05$; $CI_{.95} = 0.10, 0.28$), while negative affect and deep acting were not significant mediators ($p > 0.05$). These results suggest that rather than a preceding variable to helping behavior, deep acting is an outcome.

Discussion

Front line employees are frequently the primary and only contacts for customers and are often responsible for creating positive outcomes and experiences for customers (Huang & Miao, 2016) and while management research focuses on employee training for customer complaints, organizations lack training for dealing with difficult customer interactions (e.g., Van Vaerenbergh & Orsingher, 2016; Groth & Grandey, 2012). Therefore, this study examines how perspective taking can be implemented as a training intervention tool to influence employee affective reactions during negative service interactions, focusing on the within-person processing of emotions. By using ESM (experience sampling method) to account for the daily fluctuations

in work events and emotion processing, the perspective taking intervention can be examined at a within-person level while considering how negative service interactions and appraisals vary from individual to individual. The results demonstrate participants experience less negative affect and more empathy towards customers on days they engaged in the perspective taking intervention than days without the intervention. The results also support a mediating relationship of decreased negative affect and increased empathy on participant deep acting and helping behaviors on days they engaged in the perspective taking intervention than days without the intervention. The within-person results also suggests although work occurrences and events change on a daily basis, and emotion processing varies among individuals, and participants reported decreased negative affect and increased empathy, deep acting, and helping behaviors on days they engaged in the perspective taking intervention than days without the intervention.

Theoretical Implications

The current study provides four theoretical implications. The most significant implication is the multilevel, longitudinal design of the study. This allowed for emotional labor and the perspective taking intervention to be examined at a within-person level, taking into account the daily fluctuations of work events and emotional processing, as well as individual differences in appraisal of work events. This design also addresses and answers the call to examine emotional labor using a longitudinal design (e.g., Geng et al., 2014; Hur et al., 2013; Lee & Ok, 2014; Lee & Hwang, 2016). Previous literature studied emotional labor at one time point, potentially overlooking how different or multiple work events can influence affective and behavioral responses such as emotional labor. Using the AET as a theoretical framework, the results of the current study demonstrate how although the immediate affective reactions and following attitudinal and behavioral responses can vary over time, the oscillations produce a trend and

cadence unique to every individual. Therefore, although individuals' affect can fluctuate every day, work events can fluctuate every day, and emotional processing and appraisal can fluctuate every day, the results of this study indicate these fluctuations were more stable or were reported at lower levels on days participants engaged in the perspective taking intervention than on days without the intervention. Additionally, the within-person design removes organization specific variations, allowing the results to capture the effects of the intervention rather than individual or organizational characteristics and contexts (Song et al., 2018).

The finding of this study also contributes to the emotional labor literature by supporting an antecedent-focused and situation reappraisal viewpoint of deep acting. Emotional labor is defined as emotion regulation strategies (e.g., antecedent-focused or deep acting, and response-focused or surface acting) exercised in the workplace, with an interpersonal goal in mind (Grandey & Melloy, 2017). In other words, whereas surface acting is an avenue to respond to an event, deep acting requires an antecedent that stimulates one to change their current emotion. Existing literature supports these strategies by describing antecedent-focused emotion regulation as situation reappraisal and response-focused emotion regulation as expressive suppression. Not only do the emotional labor strategies of deep and surface acting overlap with antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation but also situation reappraisal and expressive suppression emotion regulation strategies, such that deep acting involves antecedent-focused situational reappraisal of stimuli and surface acting entails response-focused expressive suppression (Grandey, 2017). Since perspective taking influences felt emotions (i.e., decrease negative affect and increase empathy) to a negative event, such as customer mistreatment, and deep acting targets modifying or changing felt emotions, by concentrating on the antecedent-focused emotion regulation tool of deep acting, the findings suggest perspective taking can help employees use

deep acting as an antecedent-focused emotion regulation tool during negative service interactions. Additionally, this finding indicates perspective taking can be added to the nomological network of emotional labor as a distal antecedent.

Thirdly, the results of this study support a mediation mechanism of negative service interactions and affect. Previous literature demonstrates a positive relationship between customer incivility and employee negative affect (Gabriel & Diefendorff, 2015), as well as a positive relationship with customer incivility, negative affect, and emotional labor (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Diefendorff et al., 2019). Similar positive relationships were found in this study such that participants reported less negative affect and more deep acting on days engaging in the perspective taking intervention. These findings support mediation relationships in existing literature and also supports the AET in terms of an intervention influencing the immediate affective reactions and subsequent attitudinal and behavioral reactions to work events. Not only does this finding support existing literature on a mediation mechanism, but it also suggests the mechanism can be influenced to support emotional labor and employees during negative service interactions (Diefendorff et al., 2019).

Fourth, the findings of this study address how organizations and managers can help support employees during negative service interactions and help employees boost service performance. Not only was the perspective taking intervention found to increase participant deep acting and helping behavior, but the field experimental design also allows the findings of this study to generalize to hospitality and service employees since the sample is representative of the target context and employees of the intervention (Song et al., 2018). Likewise, this study implements a relatively unexplored perspective taking manipulation within a hospitality and service work context. While previous perspective taking manipulations ask subjects to imagine

themselves as a stigmatized out-group member (Baston et al., 2002; Madera, 2018^a), this study asked participants to imagine themselves in the shoes of a customer. After engaging in the customer perspective taking intervention, service context outcomes of deep acting and helping behavior were asked, extending the perspective taking framework to include new outcome variables.

Lastly, alternative, parallel mediation relationship of perspective taking and the outcome variables were examined. Negative affect and empathy were found to be significant parallel mediators for both deep acting and helping behavior. Despite the relatively low correlations between the variables, this finding is not surprising, since literature suggests affect and empathy contribute to emotional labor and helping behaviors. Affect is a strong driver of attitudes and behaviors (Montano & Kasprzyk, 2015) and while empathy is not strictly defined as a positive or negative, empathy can play a role in overall affect and subsequent attitudinal and behavioral reactions (Morelli, Lieberman, & Zaki, 2015). Additionally, since perspective taking operates through decreasing negative experiences and increase positive experiences, juxtaposed to decreased negative affect and increased empathy, the significant parallel mediation relationship is not surprising to result in increased deep acting and helping behavior among participants.

Practical Implications

The mediation mechanism proposed in this study suggest perspective taking interventions can help reduce employee negative affect and increase empathy, as well as deep acting and helping behavior. However, employees' service interactions remain heterogenous with negative and positive outcomes for employees. To address how organizations and managers can help employees navigate affective, attitudinal, and behavioral reactions of negative service interactions, the findings suggest three points to help employees manage the immediate affective

reaction and attitudinal and behavioral consequence of interacting with customers. For instance, organizations can implement perspective taking training interventions during orientation, large general new hire trainings, and manager trainings. By incorporating customer perspective taking as a formal training tool, employees and managers will be exposed to the practice of taking the customers perspective. Participants can exercise taking the customer's perspective by either remembering or writing about a negative hospitality or service experience or reading prompts about different customer's reasons for staying at a hotel or dine at restaurant, emphasizing and potential difficulties they could have encountered along the way. Perspective taking has been examined as a diversity training tool, increasing positive attitudes towards out group members (Madera et al., 2011). Diversity training with perspective taking geared towards mandatory trainings for managers has also been a successful training tool (Madera, 2018^a). Therefore, by introducing customer perspective taking as a training tool, and educating new hires with this training tool, employees can begin to integrate perspective taking as an interpersonal technique to providing excellent service to customers. Additionally, introducing perspective taking in the early stages of orientation training can set a tone for new hires for the level of service performance that is expected, as well as communicate that the organization values their employees' experiences during service interactions by providing them with the training and education necessary to deal with demanding and difficult customers.

Secondly, managers can remind service employees to take the perspective of the customer during pre-shift meetings on exceptionally heavy or busy days. Previous literature suggests when similar interventions to help employees manage customer mistreatment were introduced in the morning at the beginning of a shift, employees experienced decreased negative mood in the afternoon. The effects of the intervention continued into the evening with employees

reporting decreased negative mood (Song et al., 2018). For instance, if a hotel is expecting an international convention group to check in, employees can be reminded that the customers are traveling internationally, most likely for an extended period of time, and imagine what it would feel have been traveling for a long time. Reminding employees during pre-shift meetings in this way can help employees reframe their viewpoints on how a customer is treating them and could help employees avoid experiencing negative affect, as well as help employees empathize towards the customer and extend more deep acting and helping behaviors to the customer.

Lastly, the findings of this study suggest participants experienced decreased negative affect for employees on days they engaged in perspective taking, regardless of individual differences in baseline negative affect and emotional processing or appraisal. Therefore, organizations could implement formal programs to encourage daily customer perspective taking to help employees establish daily practices and habits of putting themselves in someone else's shoes. These routines can be exercised at the beginning of work and can help with daily service performance both inside and outside of work. Perspective taking has been shown to help individuals navigate social situations and interactions (Ku et al., 2015) as well as helping managers relate to employees and customers (Longmire & Harrison, 2018).

Limitations and Future Studies

Although the findings provide important theoretical and practical implications, a potential limitation is that the variables were measured as self-reported items. Considering service interactions are dyadic in nature, future studies could extend the multilevel design of this study by also examining emotional labor and helping behaviors from a dyadic context. Having customers, coworkers, or supervisors report on the outcome variables could provide more objective insight into the measures rather than self-reported surveys.

An additional limitation and area for future research is that although the sample matched the target intervention population, data was collected from the southern region of the United States with a large percentage of participants identifying as Asian (40.7%). Although the longitudinal and multilevel design of the study eliminates potential individual-characteristic variance, sampling employees and managers from different regions of the United States or from multiple countries could help extend the implications and generalizability of the findings.

Future studies can also examine how individuals engage in perspective taking and perspective taking in power relationships to fine tune perspective taking as an intervention and training tool. Perspective taking literature suggests boundary conditions like an individual's ability to fantasize (Bernstein & Davis, 1982) or feel empathy (Parker & Axtell, 2001) can influence perspective taking. Additionally, previous literature suggests power plays a role in the relational and performance-related outcomes of perspective taking. Upward or lateral perspective taking has been shown to be more effective and positive for relationships and performance outcomes whereas power can function as an inhibitor of perspective taking with downward perspective taking (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). Therefore, identifying conditions that increase or decrease the effectiveness of perspective taking can help contribute to existing literature.

Lastly, although the findings of this study support a mediation mechanism for perspective taking on deep acting and helping behaviors, future studies should examine how the effects of perspective taking extend beyond work contexts and customers. For instance, previous literature suggests negative affect experienced during negative service interactions spiral and extend beyond the interaction (Groth & Grandey, 2012) and that breaking the negative spiral can prevent negative affect from trickling over into subsequent interactions. Recent studies on work stress and rumination suggest daily experience of negative affect, delayed manifestations of

negative affect, or pro-longed consequences of negative spiraling are consequences of customer mistreatment and negative affect (Wang et al., 2013). Therefore, future studies could examine the long-term effectiveness of perspective taking, as well as negative affect and emotional labor.

Conclusion

Despite these limitations, the findings of this study provide important theoretical and practical implications for the hospitality and service literature, as well as the perspective taking literature. This study demonstrates perspective taking is an effective training and intervention tool for hospitality and service employees to implement during negative service interactions to help maintain and delivery quality service performance. By disrupting the mediation mechanism of negative affect to attitudinal and behavioral reactions, participants that engaged in perspective taking reported decreased negative affect and increased empathy, deep acting, and helping behaviors. These outcomes can help employees manage their affective and behavioral reactions to demanding and difficult customers to improve service performance and enhance the human interaction aspect of customer service.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Correlations and squared correlations.

	M	Within SD	Between SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	25.35	8.96	-	-	0,19	0.57**	-0.02	0.27	0.38**	0.35*
2. Gender	1.68	0.46	-	0.19**	-	-0.08	-0.15	0.13	0.23	0.35*
3. Tenure	24.66	71.28	-	0.57**	-0.08	-	0.07	0.29*	0.18	0.11
4. Negative Affect	1.60	0.87	0.64	-0.05	-0.12	0.05	-	0.03	0.09	-0.15
5. Empathy	3.49	1.08	0.58	0.14**	0.07	0.16**	-0.23**	-	0.43**	0.25
6. Deep Acting	3.54	1.05	0.82	0.28**	0.18**	0.14**	-0.15**	0.39**	-	0.38*
7. Helping Behavior	4.26	0.72	0.47	0.21**	0.19**	0.07	-0.28**	0.34**	0.33**	-

Note. Gender is coded as 1= males, 2=females. Between-person (Level 2) correlations are shown in the bottom, left side. Within-person (Level 1) correlations are shown in the top, right side. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2. Multilevel mediation model

Direct effects	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Negative affect as outcome				
Customer perspective taking	-0.30	0.12	-2.47	0.01
Empathy as outcome				
Customer perspective taking	0.76	0.15	5.15	0.00
Deep acting as outcome				
Customer perspective taking	0.01	0.12	0.11	0.91
Helping Behavior as outcome				
Customer perspective taking	0.13	0.33	-3.61	0.00
Indirect effects	Effect	SE	MCLL	MLUL
CPT → NA → Deep acting	0.14	0.06	0.03	0.26
CPT → Empathy → Deep acting	0.26	0.06	0.15	0.38
CPT → NA → Helping behavior	0.09	0.04	0.02	0.18
CPT → Empathy → Helping behavior	0.25	0.06	0.15	0.37

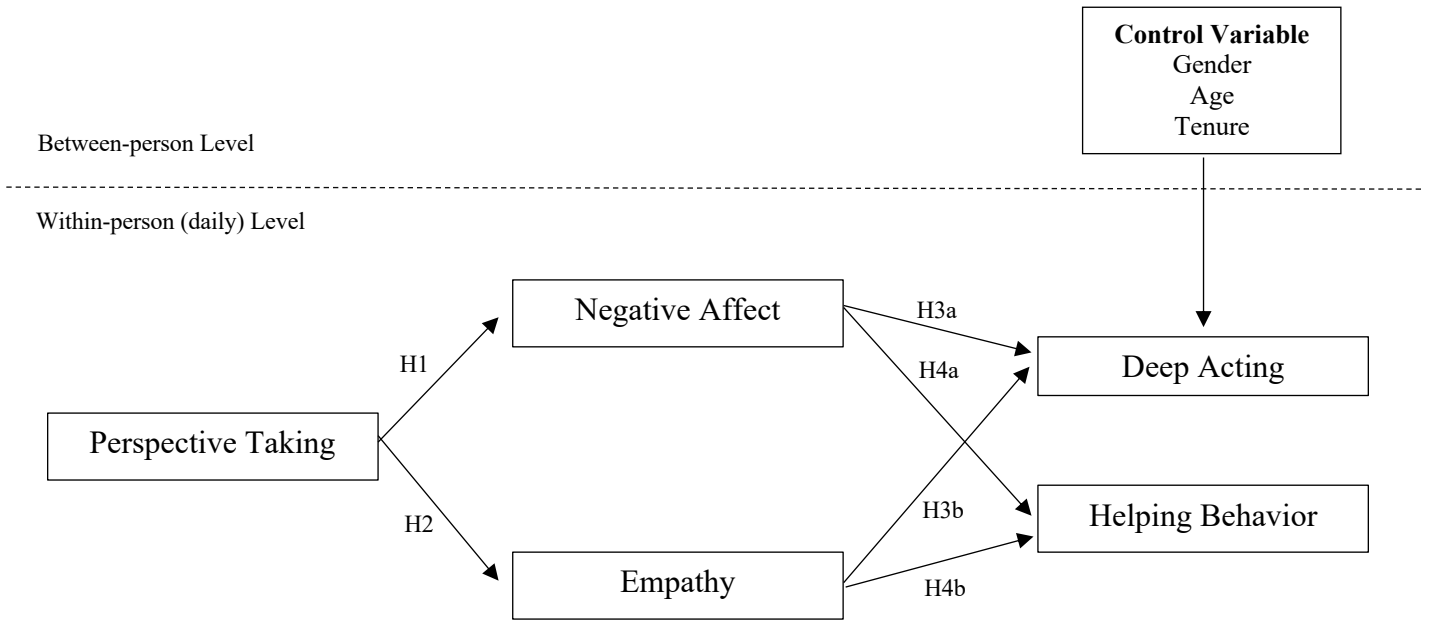
CPT = customer perspective taking (coded as 1 = no, 2 = yes); NA = negative affect

Table 3. Alternative Mediation Models.

DEEP ACTING MEDIATION MODEL				
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Negative affect as outcome				
CPT	-0.30	0.12	-2.47	0.01
Empathy as outcome				
CPT	0.76	0.15	5.15	0.00
DA as outcome				
NA	-0.35	0.05	-6.50	0.00
Empathy	0.22	0.04	5.07	0.00
CPT	0.01	0.12	0.10	0.91
Indirect effects	Effect	Boot SE	MCLL	MCUL
CPT → NA → DA	0.11	0.05	0.02	0.20
CPT → Empathy → DA	0.17	0.05	0.09	0.27
HELPING BEHAVIOR MEDIATION MODEL				
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Negative affect as outcome				
CPT	-0.30	0.12	-2.47	0.01
Empathy as outcome				
CPT	0.76	0.14	5.15	0.00
HB as outcome				
NA	-0.17	0.11	0.07	0.95
Empathy	0.28	0.04	6.83	0.00
CPT	0.01	0.11	0.07	0.95
Indirect effects	Effect	Boot SE	MCLL	MCUL
CPT → NA → HB	0.05	0.03	0.00	0.11
CPT → Empathy → HB	0.21	0.05	0.12	0.32
HELPING BEHAVIOR PARALLEL MEDIATION MODEL				
Direct effect	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Negative affect as outcome				
CPT	-0.78	0.16	-1.10	-0.47
Empathy as outcome				
CPT	0.76	0.14	5.15	0.00
DA as outcome				
CPT	0.30	0.13	2.26	0.02
HB as outcome				
NA	-0.11	0.05	-2.18	0.03
Empathy	0.24	0.04	5.88	0.00
DA	0.16	0.05	3.47	0.00
CPT	0.01	0.11	0.10	0.91
Indirect effects	Effect	Boot SE	MCLL	MCUL
CPT → NA → HB	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.06
CPT → Empathy → HB	0.18	0.05	0.10	0.28
CPT → DA → HB	0.05	0.03	-0.001	0.11

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.005$ CPT = customer perspective taking; NA = negative affect; DA = deep acting; HB = Helping Behavior

Figure 1
Conceptual Model



Note. H3a through H4b are both direct and indirect effects.

Chapter 6. General Discussion

This study examined a potential training intervention to help employees engage in deep acting as well as customer compensation and helping behavior during difficult customer interactions. In the hospitality and service emotional labor literature, the negative consequences of surface acting, and positive benefits of deep acting have been examined extensively, yet there are no viable coping or training tools to help employees engage in emotional labor.

Emotional labor is the process of engaging in emotion regulation strategies, both antecedent-focused and response-focused, in the workplace (Grandey & Melloy, 2017) and literature suggests these are two points of emotion regulation that occur after exposure to a stimulus. Antecedent-focused emotion regulation is the process of changing emotions while response-focused emotion regulation is suppressing expressions. In the case of the hospitality and service industry, employees can manage their emotional reactions to a rude customer as either antecedent-focused, actively trying to change and modify their felt emotions or as response-focused, suppressing and modifying their expressions. Antecedent-focused emotion regulation maps onto deep acting, as situation reappraisal to change mood and expressions while response-focused emotion regulation maps onto surface acting, as expressive suppression to modify and express felt emotions (Grandey & Melloy, 2017).

Additionally, according to the affective event theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) work events elicit affective reactions, which influence attitudes and behaviors at work. For the hospitality industry, customer mistreatment (e.g., unreasonable demands from a customer, rude and disrespectful behavior, or verbal aggression from a customer) is a negative work event that according to the AET result in negative affect and emotions such as anger (Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011). The AET also suggests that an intervention should focus on changing the immediate

affective reactions individuals experience following a work event, in order to influence the subsequent work attitudes and behaviors (e.g., deep acting, customer compensation, and helping behavior). Examining the relationship between perspective taking and the AET in a service context answers the call and need to enhance the human-interaction component of today's service industry (Hu, Zhan, Garden, Wang, & Shi, 2018; Huang, Greenbaum, Bonner, & Wang, 2018). Using the antecedent-focused and situation reappraisal approach of emotion regulation and the AET, this study developed and validated perspective taking as an effective training intervention, as well as empirically examined perspective taking through cross-sectional and longitudinal experimental designs.

Major Findings

To examine the proposed relationships and mediating effects, hypotheses 1-4 were examined using Hayes' (2017) PROCESS macro for SPSS and hypotheses 4-8 were examined using Rockwood and Hayes' (2017) MLmed Macro for SPSS. Supported hypotheses are denoted with an "S" and hypotheses that are not supported are denoted with "NS"

Hypothesis 1 (S)

Customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect.

Hypothesis 2 (S)

Customer perspective taking will increase empathy.

Hypothesis 3 (S)

Negative affect (H3a) and empathy (H3b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting.

Hypothesis 4 (S)

Negative affect (H4a) and empathy (H4b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on customer compensation.

Hypothesis 5 (S)

Within individuals, customer perspective taking will decrease negative affect.

Hypothesis 6 (S)

Within individuals, customer perspective taking will increase empathy.

Hypothesis 7 (S)

Within individuals, negative affect (H7a) and empathy (H7b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on deep acting.

Hypothesis 8 (S)

Within individuals, negative affect (H8a) and empathy (H8b) will mediate the effect of customer perspective taking on helping behavior.

Hypotheses 1-4 were examined using for mediation models with deep acting and customer compensation as outcome variables (Hayes, 2017). The analyses supported the direct and indirect effect hypotheses of perspective taking on negative affect, empathy, deep acting, and customer compensation. Participants that engaged in customer perspective taking reported less negative affect, compared to participants that did not take the customer's perspective ($\beta = -0.77$; $SE = 0.15$; $CI_{.95} = -1.07, -0.46$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Participants that engaged in customer perspective taking also reported more empathy, compared to participants that did not take the customer's perspective ($\beta = 0.56$; $SE = 0.17$; $CI_{.95} = 0.22, 0.90$), supporting Hypothesis 2. Participants that engaged in customer perspective taking also reported more deep acting through decreased negative affect ($\beta = 0.29$; $SE = 0.11$; $CI_{.95} = 0.10, 0.53$) and increased empathy ($\beta =$

0.15; SE = 0.08; CI_{.95} = 0.02, 0.33) compared to participants that did not take the customer's perspective, supporting Hypothesis 3a and 3b, respectively. Lastly, participants that engaged in customer perspective taking also reported more customer compensation through decreased negative affect ($\beta = 0.21$; SE = 0.09; CI_{.95} = 0.06, 0.39) and increased empathy ($\beta = 0.21$; SE = 0.08; CI_{.95} = 0.08, 0.39) compared to participants that did not take the customer's perspective, supporting Hypothesis 4a and 4b, respectively.

Hypotheses 5-8 were examined using multilevel mediation models to account for the Level 1 and Level 2 variability. The interclass correlation coefficients for the measures were examined to validate the use of multilevel modeling and the results warrant the use of multilevel modeling (negative affect (ICC = 0.47, $p < 0.01$), empathy (ICC = 0.79, $p < 0.01$), deep acting (ICC = 0.55, $p < 0.01$), and helping behavior (ICC = 0.31, $p < 0.01$)). The multilevel analyses supported the direct and indirect effect hypotheses of perspective taking on negative affect, empathy, deep acting, and helping behavior. On days when participants engaged in customer perspective taking, the participants felt less negative affect when compared to the days when participants did not perspective take ($\gamma = -0.30$; SE = 0.12; CI_{.95} = -0.55, -0.06), supporting Hypothesis 5. On days when participants engaged in customer perspective taking, the participants felt more empathy when compared to the days when participants did not perspective take ($\gamma = 0.76$; SE = 0.15; CI_{.95} = 0.47, 1.05), supporting Hypothesis 6. The direct effect of customer perspective taking on deep was not significant ($p > 0.05$), however, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = 0.11$; SE = 0.05; CI_{.95} = 0.01, 0.20) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.17$; SE = 0.05; CI_{.95} = 0.09, 0.27) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 7a and 7b, respectively. Lastly, the direct effect was significant for helping behavior was also not significant ($p > 0.05$), however, the indirect effect through negative affect ($\gamma = 0.05$; SE = 0.03; CI_{.95} = 0.01, 0.11) and empathy ($\gamma = 0.05$; SE = 0.03; CI_{.95} = 0.01, 0.11) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 8a and 8b, respectively.

= 0.21; SE = 0.05; CI_{.95} = 0.12, 0.32) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 8a and 8b, respectively.

Discussions and Conclusions

The theoretical and practical implications of this study are fourfold. First, this study defined emotional labor as the process of engaging in the emotion regulation strategies of deep and surface acting. By measuring and operationalizing emotional labor as deep acting, this study extends existing literature suggesting deep acting is an antecedent focused, situational reappraisal of emotions. Using the AET as a theoretical framework, in response to a negative work event (e.g., difficult and rude customer), participants are able to change and modify their felt emotions (e.g., upset, frustration, irritation) by imagine themselves in the customer's situation, thereby influencing participants attitudes and behaviors at work (e.g., deep acting, customer compensation, helping behavior). Therefore, the mediating relationships support the AET since the immediate emotional reaction of negative affect was reduced and empathy was increased, and these moods and emotions influenced the attitudes and behaviors of participants and likelihood of engaging in deep acting and customer compensation or helping behavior.

The results of the alternative, parallel models also provide noteworthy insight into the mediation relationship of negative affect and empathy. For Study 1, negative affect was only a significant mediator between perspective taking and deep acting, while empathy was only a significant mediator between perspective taking and customer. For Study 2, negative affect and empathy were significant mediators for perspective taking and both outcome variables of deep acting and helping behavior. The difference in the alternative models could be attributed to the difference in methodology and data collection. Study 1 was essentially conducted in a lab setting, while Study 2 reflects field study data. This difference can contribute to why the results of the

alternative, parallel mediation models differed in Study 1 and Study 2. For example, in Study 1, the participants were responding to a hypothetical difficult customer, whereas in Study 2, the participants were responding to actual difficult customers. Another difference is in the sample itself. Study 1 used frontline manager and Study 2 used frontline employees. Perhaps managers are savvier in how they respond to a difficult customer than frontline employees. Regardless of these differences, both studies showed a consistent pattern in that customer perspective taking had a significant influence on the outcomes.

The findings of Study 1 suggest perspective taking is a viable intervention and training tool that can be used to help employees interact with difficult customers by helping participants engage in deep acting and refrain from withholding customer compensation through decreased negative affect and increased empathy, answering the call for interventions to help employees deal with difficult customers (Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014). Perspective taking interventions can be implemented during general and broad orientation and training sessions. Employers could introduce customer perspective taking as a training exercise and tool, having participants write about a bad travel, hospitality, or service experience. practice taking the perspective of customers. Doing so can help remind employees of an instance when they were a customer and can help employees practice taking a customer's perspective. By providing employees with perspective taking as a tool to navigate not only difficult customer interactions, but customer interactions in general, employees could feel more empowered and knowledgeable during service interactions. Perspective taking can also be used as reminders during pre-shift meetings prior to exceptionally heavy or busy days or during extenuating situations. By reminding, preparing, and explaining how customers could be traveling for long hours, or are visiting for an

important work purpose, employees can be prompted to take the perspective of the customer during negative interactions.

Second, the findings of this study also support perspective taking literature. Perspective taking was found to be an effective intervention tool for difficult customer interactions. This adds perspective taking to the nomological network of emotional labor as well as extends the applications of perspective taking to work contexts. Traditionally, emotional labor antecedents have been examined as personality and individualistic characteristics (Kim, 2008; Gursoy, Boylu, & Avci, 2011; Sohn & lee, 2012), as well as work requirements, interaction frequency and duration (Morris & Feldman, 1996). However, perspective taking can also be considered an antecedent of emotional labor, influencing how individuals engage in and use its strategies during service encounters.

Third, this is also one of the few studies to examine perspective taking from a work and customer service context. Perspective taking has been examined from the perspective of a target individual, stigmatized or out-group member (Madera, 2018). However, the manipulations used in the experimental studies involved participants taking the perspective of a customer, within a work and service context. The findings of this study support existing perspective taking literature in echoing similar positive outcomes for perspective taking participants during social interactions, extending the applications of perspective taking to both a work and customer context.

Lastly, this study examined the within-person variance of emotional labor and perspective taking, using a longitudinal design to measure the daily fluctuations influencing affect and emotion processing. Longitudinal designs allow for generalizability of the findings and also strengthens the internal and external validity of the findings (Song Wang, Lanaj,

Johnson, & Shi, 2018). Hospitality and service literature on emotional labor has been studied from a single time point through cross-section designs. However, implementing a longitudinal design allows for conclusions to be drawn based on days when participants engage in the intervention rather than a single time point. Therefore, individual differences and variations in daily fluctuations are eliminated and the effects of the intervention can be highlighted.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Study

Despite the theoretical and practical implications of this research, there are some limitations. First, both studies were conducted in the southern region of the United States. Future studies should sample a broad range of managers and employees from multiple regions of the United States, or from various counties to extend the implications and generalizability of this study.

Second, additional boundary conditions such as an individual's ability to perspective take could influence the effectiveness of perspective taking as an intervention tool. Previous perspective taking studies suggest the ability to perspective taking is influenced by an individual's capacity to understand and sympathize (Parker & Axtell, 2001) or fantasize and the ability to imagine oneself in someone else's shoes (Bernstein & Davis, 1982). Additionally, literature suggests power can influence outcomes of perspective taking. For instance, engaging in upward or later perspective taking has been found to positively influence relational and performance-related outcomes, while downward perspective has been found to be an inhibitor of perspective taking (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). By measuring and studying these individual, boundary conditions for perspective taking, perspective taking as an intervention tool can be honed and strengthened as a practical training tool for employees.

Thirdly, future studies can examine how moderation effects of organizations can be studied. For instance, organization contexts can be examined as an additional level in the multilevel design and could also include dyadic relationships for objective measures of the outcome variables. Organizational support or employee empowerment are organization contexts that can influence employee behavior (Song et al., 2018) and by examining these contexts within a multi-level design, the findings can help further extend the generalizability of perspective taking as an intervention as well as provide insight into how organizations can help support their employees while maximizing performance.

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Appendix 1. Study 1 survey scenario

Instructions: You are going to play the role of a front desk hotel agent at a full-service hotel located in the city center. Read the following scenario and **imagine yourself as the Front Desk Employee.**

This conversation occurred during the check-in of a customer.

Front Desk Employee: Hello, welcome to our hotel. How can I help you?

Customer: My name is [customer gives name] and I have reservation.

Front Desk Employee: I need one form of ID and a credit card.

[Employee enters information and retrieves the reservation].

Front Desk Employee: I see that you have a room with two full beds. Would you like to...

[Employee is interrupted by the customer].

Customer: What! There must be a mistake, I booked a room with a King size bed.

Front Desk Employee: I am sorry for the mistake. Unfortunately, we are fully booked because of a convention.

Customer: This is ridiculous! I made this reservation three months ago on your website!

Front Desk Employee: I apologize for our mistake.

Customer: I don't want your apology; I want another room!

Front Desk Employee: I am so sorry, but we don't have an available room with a King-sized bed.

Customer: Ok so you want my wife and me to sleep on separate beds on our vacation. I demand another room! I don't understand how you can make such a stupid mistake! You have such an easy job! You can't keep track of a few rooms!!!

Front Desk Employee: I am really sorry, let me see what I can do for you...

[The employee is interrupted by the customer]

Customer: I demand to see your manager!

Front Desk Employee: Yes sir, I will call her now.

Appendix 2. Study 1 Control group

Think about how you would feel if you were in the shoes of the employee. Please write the emotions you would feel if you were the employee:

Appendix 3. Study 1 Experimental group manipulation

Think about how you would feel if you were in the shoes of the customer. As service employees, we do not often think about how a customer can have a bad day and then takes it out on us. For example, maybe their flight was delayed or is having marital problems and this was their vacation to patch things up with their spouse. Please write why a reasonable, nice person can react the way the customer did:

Appendix 4. Study 1 survey instrument

Indicate how you would feel while dealing with the difficult/rude customer in the role-play:

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hostile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irritable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scornful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disgusted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afraid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jittery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instructions: Indicate how you would feel toward the difficult/rude customer in the role-play:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I would feel concern for the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would feel warmth toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would feel empathy toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would feel compassion toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would feel softhearted toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would feel sympathy for the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instructions: Indicate the extent to how you would react toward the difficult/rude customer in the role-play:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I would resist expressing my true feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would pretend to have emotions that I don't really have	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would hide my true feelings about a situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would try to actually experience the emotions that I must show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instruction: At this hotel, front desk employees have the autonomy to reward customer with some complimentary gifts in response to a hotel service failure or mistake.

	Not at all likely	Not likely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
I would give this customer a free breakfast for two at the hotel restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would give this customer free wifi during the entire stay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would give this customer free parking during the entire stay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would give this customer a discount on next hotel booking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would give this customer a discount on a spa service for two	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please pick the amount of discount you believe the customer deserves for his next hotel booking at this hotel:

- 0%
- 5%
- 15%
- 20%
- 25%

Appendix 5. Study 2 survey instrument

Indicate the extent to which you have felt this way today while dealing with difficult or rude customers:

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hostile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irritable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scornful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disgusted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afraid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jittery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the extent to which you felt the emotions **today while dealing with difficult or rude customers:**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I felt concern for the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt warmth toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt empathy toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt compassion toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt softhearted toward the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt sympathy for the customer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the extent to which the following statements describe you **while dealing with a difficult or rude customer at work today:**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I followed up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regardless of circumstances, I was exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I followed through in a conscientious manner on promises to customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the extent to how you reacted **while dealing with a difficult or rude customer at work today:**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I resisted expressing my true feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I pretended to have emotions that I don't really have	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I hid my true feelings about a situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I made an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tried to actually experience the emotions that I must show	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tomorrow when you work or interact with customers, please do the following: Imagine yourself in the position of the customer. We do not often think about how customers can have a bad day and then take it out on us. For example, maybe his/her flight was delayed, or he/she is having marital problems, and this was his/her vacation to patch things up