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Creators	Simillidou, Aspasia, Christofi, Michael, Glyptis, Loukas, Papatheodorou, Andreas and Vrontis, Demetris

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Figure 1: Engaging in EL to handle customer mistreatment of service employees: A conceptual framework

Conditioning loop

Conditions instigating SA

- Rules of display Professional response is to pretend understanding customer's negative emotions to 'close' their case until the next one arises
- Management's dispositions on aggressive customers: 'Wrap-up' customers who complain, regardless, in order to benefit
- Lack of management leadership support, engagement and feedback
- Lack of teamwork
- Occasional and 'across the board' employee training
- Lack of job autonomy and drive/workplace alienation
- Lack of family support

Reinforcement loop

Emotional Labour to handle customer mistreatment of service employees in Hospitality:

Resorting to SA EL to handle customer mistreatment of service employees

Employees reflexively resort to **SA** as a prompt and less emotionally demanding EL strategy deployed as a customer service tool to appease tensions caused by feelings of discomfort, stress and anger infected dealing with aggressive customers

Resorting to DA EL to handle customer mistreatment of service employees

Employees consciously resort to **DA** as an emotionally demanding, i.e. empathetic, and empowering EL strategy deployed as an anticontagion and effective customer service tool to shield against feelings of discomfort, stress and anger infected when dealing with aggressive customers

Vs

DA effects:

- Employees demonstrating positive thinking/caring attitude towards aggressive customers
- Sense of belonging to the organisation and the team
- Management empowerment to employees getting 'under the skin' of their customers' feelings and underlying motives
- Managers demonstrating conscious care of aggressive customers' needs

Reinforcement loop

Changing the conditions instigating EL

strategies

Critical affective events spurring change: Poor employee performance & Poor customer satisfaction

Conditioning loop

Conditions instigating DA

- Rules of display Professional response is to genuinely care for customers' negative emotions and to negate them through dedicated customer service
- Management's disposition is that customers are aggressive for a reason/knowing the reason is the solution to overcome customer negativity
- Management leadership, positive feedback, engagement and empowerment
- Teamwork
- Tailored training to reinforce use of DA
- Job autonomy and drive/workplace identification
- Family support

SA effects:

- Stress, reduced sense of well-being and symptoms of burnout
- Smoking and alcohol consumption
- SA at home / Negative effects in family life
- Negative perception of colleagues, managers and the workplace
- Absenteeism/sick leave
- Making more mistakes and decrease in job performance
- Negative attitude towards customers

Critical affective events spurring change: Poor employee performance & Poor customer satisfaction