

Testing a Eustress-Distress Emotion Regulation Model in British and Spanish Front-line Employees<sup>1</sup>

Cristina Quinones, Raquel Rodríguez-Carvajal, and Mark D. Griffiths

Open University, Autonoma University of Madrid, and Nottingham Trent University

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Cristina Quinones, Department of People and Organisations, Open University Business School, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, United Kingdom.

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### **Abstract**

Studies suggest that suppressing emotions required by occupational roles (i.e. surface acting) can lead to employees' emotional exhaustion. In contrast, trying to experience the emotions required by the role (i.e. deep acting) appears to be a less harmful strategy for the employee. However, problems with one of the mainstream measures of deep acting call for a re-examination of the construct's operationalization and a clarification of its consequences. Furthermore, an integrated model explaining the differential outcomes of the two main emotion regulation strategies (surface and deep acting) is also required. Building on eustress/distress literature, it was hypothesized that cognitive reappraisal (a suggested operationalization of deep acting) would be associated with perception of thriving customer interactions, eliciting the eustress response (i.e., increased efficacy and commitment). It was also expected that suppression would be associated with perception of draining customer interactions, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions. Importantly, in line with the eustress/distress model, no cross-relationships between the eustress and distress route were hypothesized. A cross-national study comprised theme park employees from Spain (N=208) and UK (N=204) and Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used. Hypotheses were supported therefore the eustress/distress model offers a plausible explanation of the work-related emotion regulation outcomes. As an emotion regulation strategy, cognitive reappraisal may promote perceptions of thriving customer interactions that in turn generates opportunities to develop valued personal resources and organizationally desirable attitudes. Organizations should invest in individually-based interventions to assist employees in interpreting customer demands in less harming ways.

*Keywords:* emotion regulation; eustress/distress; exhaustion; professional efficacy; turnover intentions; customer interactions

### **Testing a Eustress-Distress Emotion Regulation Model in British and Spanish Front-line Employees**

Service quality and customer satisfaction can be affected via the emotional displays of an organization's front-line employees (Groth, Henning-Thurau, & Walsh 2009). More specifically, it has been demonstrated that employees' positive emotions during service transactions can improve customers' mood and their satisfaction with the service (Groth et al., 2009). Additionally, the frequent experience of positive emotions is beneficial for employees' psychological and physical wellbeing, and triggers the development of desirable job attitudes such as work commitment (Cho, Rutherford & Park, 2013). Since employees may not naturally align with the emotions they asked to express, they engage in a process of regulating their emotional responses to fulfill display rules of the role. This emotion regulation (ER) process driven by role requirements has been referred to as "Emotional Labor" or "service with a smile" (e.g., Grandey, Fisk & Steiner, 2005).

The way in which employees regulate their emotions has relevant well-being and organizational consequences (e.g., Chu, Baker & Murrmann, 2012; Hyung, O'Rourke, & O'Brien, 2014; Schraub, Turgut, Clavairoly, & Sonntag, 2013). Suppression or Surface Acting (SA) is a widely studied strategy to regulate emotions in customer service interactions. It consists on suppressing own emotions in order to display role appropriate emotions. This strategy has been consistently associated with the chronic stress syndrome of burnout (e.g., Martínez-Iñigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007; Kenworthy, Fay, Frame, & Petree, 2014; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Employees' emotion suppression is also associated with low customer satisfaction, as customers disapprove the lack of authenticity of their emotional displays (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman 2004).

Another way in which employees regulate their emotions is through the Deep Acting (DA) strategy. Deep acting describes the strategy whereby employees try to feel in a similar way to the emotions they need to express. Because of the effort of aligning felt and expressed emotion, it results in more authentic displays that in turn benefit both employees and the organization (Chu et al., 2012). Using this construct, studies have reported positive associations between DA and professional efficacy (e.g., Cho et al., 2013). With regards to organizational outcomes, studies have reported that customers are able to detect and value the authenticity of employees' emotional expressions, which results in higher satisfaction with the service (e.g. Grandey et al., 2004). Nonetheless, some scholars have argued that the energy required to experience role-consistent emotions is much greater than that associated with faking them (Liu, Prati, Perrewé, & Ferris, 2008). In line with this data, DA is also positively associated with psychosomatic complaints in some studies (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011) that reflect its potential hidden cost (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). These results, and the positive consequences described earlier, suggest that there could be a compensating mechanism to recover the effort spent in the interaction.

Importantly, the excessive emphasis on the distress aspects associated with SA has limited the understanding concerning the potential gains for employees' psychological and physical wellbeing. Côté's (2005) interpersonal emotion regulation model attempted to address this gap. The model predicts that individual differences in ER result in opposite reactions from customers (i.e., employee suppression results in negative customer reactions and employee reappraisal results in positive customer reactions). In turn, negative customer reactions increase employee strain whereas positive customer interactions decrease employee strain. Although the emotional depletion or draining part of the model has been empirically validated (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002), studies have failed to explain if the mixed

findings attributed to deep acting/reappraisal are based on energy-recharging and/or resource development route via positive customer interactions (Côté, 2005).

Given this background, the main aim of the present paper was to explain this possible resource development or recharging route triggered by the reappraisal strategy, and to integrate both the draining and resource development routes associated with individual differences in ER during customer transactions using a eustress/distress framework. Since emotions are key components of front-line employees' roles, and their impact on service quality has been demonstrated (Groth et al., 2009), such findings would have important practical relevance. More specifically, it would lead to an understanding of how a more positive ER strategy works in order to select, train, and reward the employees who utilize the strategies that bring about organizational gains. Finally, the use of two national groups (i.e., UK and Spain) with different tolerance levels for rule-governed behavior and emotional expression allows for the identification of different variable scores in addition to the cross-cultural validation of the hypothesized processes.

### **Theoretical background and hypotheses development**

#### ***Operationalization of deep acting as cognitive reappraisal***

The deep acting (DA) ER strategy appears to be associated with a more positive nomological network than suppressing emotions in customer interactions (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Hyung et al., 2014). Nevertheless, these findings are somewhat inconsistent. For instance, authors also report negative correlations between DA and job satisfaction as well as null correlations (Bono & Vey, 2005). Similarly, in a diary study, Judge et al. (2009) confirmed a lack of significant associations with satisfaction and a significant association with lower positive affect. In view of the (i) relatively poor psychometric properties of the mainstream scale (alpha reliabilities commonly below .70) (e.g., Kruml & Geddes, 2000) and (ii) mixed evidence about the impact of this strategy, conclusions from a meta-analysis

suggest the need for a better operationalization of the DA construct (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). The present authors argue that a key limitation in the mainstream operationalization of DA that could explain the mixed findings is the inconsistency between the definition of the construct and the actual measure. Whereas the definition of DA often highlights the re-evaluation of the situation to elicit appropriate emotions, items in the DA scale enquire about intention to experience the required emotions (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). For example: “I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show” or “Really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job”. Importantly, the existing gap between an individual’s intentions to execute an action and actual behavior implementation has been extensively documented in the goal-setting literature (e.g., Webb & Gollwitzer, 2006). According to the model of action phases, the intention to achieve a goal is just the initial step (Gollwitzer, 1990). In order to attain goals, individuals need to regulate themselves effectively to implement this intention, and overcome potential obstacles (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). Crucially, the theory states that, in high-demand situations, intentions may be poor predictors of goal attainment. (e.g., when a customer is demanding and aggressive making the employee feel overwhelmed, the intentions to re-evaluate the situation are unlikely to be predictors of effective reappraisal).

In order to address the problems of operationalization, the present authors build upon the strong body of empirical evidence of the Emotion Regulation (ER) theory in social psychology research (e.g., Gross & John, 2003; Gross, 2013; John & Gross, 2007). Stemming from a temporal generation of the emotional response, ER is the process whereby individuals influence the characteristics of this emotional response (Gross & John, 2003). This regulation can be done through antecedent-focused ER (i.e., modification of the response before the emotion has been fully activated) or through response-focused ER (i.e., suppression of the behavioral signs once the emotional response is fully under way). Antecedent-focused ER

and DA have been viewed as synonymous in previous studies (e.g., Grandey, 2000; Grandey et al., 2005; Gross, 2013). However, not all antecedent-focused strategies are equally relevant to DA. Two of the four strategies are situation selection and situation modification. The former refers to choosing to avoid or approach an emotionally-loaded event, whereas situation modification refers to altering the context of social interaction to modify its emotional impact (Gross & John, 2003). Neither strategy applies to customer services, as employees cannot choose not to have an impolite customer or transfer the impolite customer to their colleagues every time. The third strategy, attention deployment, describes the situation where individuals steer their attention away from the emotionally charged event. The fourth strategy, cognitive reappraisal, refers to changing the way individuals perceive a situation in order to alter the emotional load attached to it. Attention deployment was found to be unrelated to DA in a diary study with customer service employees whereas cognitive reappraisal was the only strategy that significantly associated with DA (Totterdel & Holman, 2003). Therefore, cognitive reappraisal and DA appear to be both conceptually and empirically related constructs (i.e. both stress individuals' efforts to re-evaluate situations in order to elicit appropriate emotions) (Gross, 2013).

Importantly, as opposed to DA, the operationalization of cognitive reappraisal and the associated experimental and field-related findings support the theory that this strategy can effectively modify the trajectory of the emotional response. In this sense, individuals that reappraise emotions, experience more positive emotions and lower negative emotions than suppressors, as well as better cardiovascular response under negative emotion conditions, including disgust and anger-eliciting situations (e.g., John & Gross, 2007). Furthermore, individuals that use reappraisal report fewer depressive symptoms, higher self-esteem, and greater life satisfaction compared to suppressors (Gross & John, 2003). In customer-interaction scenarios, this means reappraisers might influence subsequent physiological

processes (e.g., increased arousal when faced with irate customers), experiential elements (e.g., individual perception and appraisal of the experience) and cognitive schemas (e.g., adopting scripts for customer complaints).

Of particular relevance to the customer interaction context are the effects of ER style on different indicators of interpersonal effectiveness (Schraub et al., 2013). These include the ability to generate more empathy in others, closeness, and lowered blood pressure in partners (John & Gross, 2007). Consequently, measuring DA via cognitive reappraisal offers two key advantages. First, it provides a sound operationalization of a construct that captures actual change in the emotion trajectory with the cognitive reappraisal sub-scale of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), an extensively validated instrument (Gross & John, 2003). Second, by building on established relationships between cognitive reappraisal and a wide range of wellbeing indicators, more consistent explanations can be offered concerning positive aspects of regulating emotions in customer interactions. Consequently, even though most empirical research comes from using cognitive reappraisal in generic social interactions, this ER style is conceptualized as a stable skill likely to be generalized to different social contexts where individuals interact, including workplaces (e.g., John & Gross, 2007).

In this study, and in line with Grandey (2000), SA is operationalized through ER emotion suppression. Whilst most EL studies have demonstrated an association between SA and burnout (Kenworthy et al., 2014), the key advantage of ER operationalization is to legitimately build on the sound body of evidence that explains the mechanisms underlying this association. Thus, emotion regulation theory builds on both experimental and field studies to demonstrate that whilst suppressing emotions changes emotional expression, it does not effectively modify the internal arousal nor self-reported experiences of the emotion

felt, which in turn weakens the immune system and is associated with serious ill-health conditions (e.g., John & Gross, 2007; Grandey, 2000; Gross & John, 2003).

### **The eustress and distress routes of emotion regulation in customer interactions**

The scientific literature has emphasized the energy draining consequences of regulating emotions, leading to the perception that service interactions are invariably distressful (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Nevertheless, some authors present empirical evidence of positive consequences specifically associated with employee perceptions of positive interactions with clients and positive customer evaluations (e.g., Martínez-Iñigo et al., 2007). According to Côté (2005), positive interactions may explain why the experience of stress can be avoided for those who reappraise emotions (opposed to suppressing emotions), as these experiences may help recover energy spent in the interactions. However, studies have failed to confirm the existence of such an energy exchange process (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002).

In order to address this gap and to offer an integrated explanation of the pattern of differentiated ER responses, the present authors build upon traditional stress theory (e.g., Lazarus, 1984), and the distinction between distress and eustress processes (Le Fevre, Matheny & Kolt, 2003; Rodríguez et al., 2013). This theory suggests individual differences determine the interpretation of the environment, which in turn triggers either the eustress or the distress response. Thus, if individuals perceive stressors to be a source of threat, they will experience distress (i.e., negative reaction to highly constrained demands that stops individuals from meeting their desired goals). Alternatively, when individuals appraise stressors as a challenge, this triggers a eustress response. Here, individuals trust their ability overcome the demands using appropriate resources that in turn help them develop valued personal resources (Le Fevre et al., 2003; Kozusznik, Rodriguez, & Peiró, 2015). Considering

reappraisers' ability to extract positive experiences from interpersonal encounters, and the high salience that effective social functioning and growth have for them (e.g., John & Gross, 2007), it is expected that those individuals who engage in reappraisal will perceive customer interactions as a challenge stressor, which, as the theory predicts, will have an associated eustress response. In contrast, those who suppress emotions are likely to experience customer interactions as a hindrance stressor, and therefore experience the distress reaction.

Since current interpretations of stress theory state eustress and distress routes may occur independently or even coexist (Rodríguez et al., 2013), potential cross-relationships between the ER strategies and eustress and distress responses in this study are considered by examining the evidence accumulated in the emotional labor and burnout literature. First, as argued earlier, surface acting but not deep acting is consistently associated with (lack of) perceived reciprocity in customer interactions (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Martinez-Ingio et al., 2007). Second, strong associations between surface acting and energy depletion variables such as emotional exhaustion have been consistently found (e.g., Kenworthy et al., 2014), whereas the association between DA and exhaustion has been rarely supported (e.g., Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Likewise, DA is often associated with job efficacy indicators yet the association between SA and professional efficacy rarely reaches statistical significance (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). When significant, relationships between suppression and DA with job commitment have been of negative and positive sign respectively (e.g. Nguyenm Groth & Johnson, 2013; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). However, owing to the lack of conclusive evidence, a direct path between these variables cannot be justified. Third, lack of reciprocity in customer interactions has been found associated to energy depletion (i.e., burnout) but unrelated to commitment (Schaufeli et al., 1996b). This finding was attributed to employees' acceptance of this lack of reciprocity as part of the job that drained resources but did not affect commitment (Bechtoldt, Zapf, & Hartig, 2007).

Hence it would seem that the cognitive and emotional load associated with suppressing emotions leaves limited energy to engage in evaluating one's relationship with work. In short, these findings suggest there could be two largely independent paths depending upon the emotion regulation strategy, one leading to energy depletion and the other leading to valued resource development.

The two potential routes model is consistent with current conceptualizations of chronic stress which support that specific job demands may trigger an energy-depleting process that could be relatively independent from the motivational and resourceful process, as opposed to merely being a negative consequence of the former (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Therefore, being able to positively influence perceptions of customer interactions may not be restricted to lower depletion, but can be associated with the development of valued personal resources. This possibility also reflects the lack of evidence linking DA with emotional exhaustion and stress (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2002).

Hypothesis 1. Emotion suppression is positively associated with perception of draining interactions with customers (but not thriving interactions).

Hypothesis 2. Cognitive reappraisal is positively related to perception of thriving interactions with customers (but not draining interactions).

Podsakoff's (2007) model of eustress suggests that challenge stressors generate positive affective states regarding individuals' role performance. Similarly, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997) states that experiences of mastery and positive emotional states at work enhance individuals' confidence in ability to execute their job. Since it is hypothesized that reappraisal is associated with thriving perceptions of customer interactions, professional growth experience is likely to be associated with increased feelings of professional efficacy.

Prior studies have found correlations between DA and professional efficacy (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2002), yet some have failed to report significant associations. These data could be

attributed to problems discussed earlier about DA operationalization, but also because there could be an indirect relationship between these variables via positive customer interactions.

Hypothesis 3a. Perception of thriving interactions (i.e., challenge stressor) is associated with job efficacy (but not with exhaustion).

Hypothesis 3b. The impact of reappraisal on job efficacy is indirect, via perception of thriving interactions.

The association between the “draining interactions” stressor and the strain of “emotional exhaustion” has been empirically demonstrated in a previous study (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Thus, lack of rewarding interactions mediated the association between SA and exhaustion. Hence, the present study expects to offer further support to these relationships. However, in line with the hypothesized independence of the eustress and distress response, and reflecting burnout studies where antecedents of exhaustion are different to those of efficacy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), a significant association between thriving interactions and emotional exhaustion is not expected. Similarly, it is expected there will be no significant association between draining interactions and professional efficacy. Although the lack of significant association between draining interactions and the motivational and resourceful process has not been tested, indirect support could be inferred owing to the lack of consistent relationships between reappraisal and exhaustion on one hand, and suppression and efficacy on the other (Bono & Vey, 2005).

Hypothesis 4a. Perception of draining interactions with customers (i.e., hindrance stressor) is positively associated with emotional exhaustion (but it is not significantly related to efficacy).

Hypothesis 4b. The impact of suppression on exhaustion is indirect, via perception of

draining interactions.

Traditional job design and current burnout studies suggest perceptions of challenging demands increases positive job attitudes associated with high performance and retention (Podsakoff et al., 2007). In particular, perception of challenge stressors and work resources increases employee commitment and involvement with their job (e.g., Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Indirect associations between elements of the resource development route and job commitment have been found. In this sense, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) argued that aligning feelings with those required by the role encourages long-term employee identification with the job. Similarly, Liu et al. (2008) argue that such a strategy urges employees to harmonize the role with self-identity. Since it is hypothesized that cognitive reappraisal is associated with perception of challenge stressors, and stressors appear to evoke commitment attitudes in eustress studies (Podsakoff et al., 2007), there could be indirect influences of reappraisal on job commitment via customer perceptions as growth-related opportunities.

Hypothesis 5a. Perception of thriving interactions is positively associated with job commitment.

Hypothesis 5b. The impact of reappraisal on job commitment is indirect, via perception of thriving interactions.

Voluntary turnover has been largely studied as an outcome of employee distress and burnout. Podsakoff et al. (2007) reviewed these studies and incorporated the impact of eustress response on voluntary turnover, stating the relationship between both challenge and threat stressors was indirect via strain and commitment. With regard to ER in customer interactions, indirect evidence supports an existing relationship between suppression and

turnover intentions (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2011). Nevertheless, and in line with the indirect hypothesis, extensive evidence reports strong associations between the indicator of strain in the model (i.e., emotional exhaustion) and turnover intentions, both in specific ER context and in more general work demands context (Moreno-Jiménez et al., 2012). Consequently, and building on threat/challenge stress models, it is expected that the association between perceptions of draining interactions and turnover intentions is indirect. In contrast, perception of thriving interactions cannot affect turnover via exhaustion, as a significant association is not expected. Thus, following Podsakoff et al.'s (2007) model, the mechanism linking challenge stressors and turnover intentions outcome should be the positive impact that the thriving customer interactions have on commitment.

Hypothesis 6. The effects of perception of draining interactions on turnover intentions are indirect, through emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 7. The impact of thriving interactions and turnover intentions is

indirect, through commitment.

The Anglo-Saxon model of economic liberalism has been increasingly adopted by the Latin-European cluster (e.g., Spain, Portugal, France). However, there is still a gap between these clusters regarding adoption of the customer service excellence model (Correia Jesuino, 2002). In particular, the “service with a smile” model is not as widespread in Latin-American countries. Consequently, emotional display rules in workplaces may vary across countries (Grandey et al., 2005). For instance, French employees at *Disneyland Paris* refused to exaggerate positive emotional displays towards visitors (Morris & Feldman, 1996), probably due to the impulsive emotional culture of France, which appears to reject fake displays and encourages free regulation of emotion (Grandey et al., 2005).

Most studies comprise Anglo-Saxon samples, although there are increasing numbers of studies from Asia (e.g., Chu et al., 2012). However, little research has been carried out in the Latin-European cluster. One exception is that conducted by Grandey et al. (2005), who compared the impact of surface acting in two countries (i.e., France, USA). The authors built on Gordon’s (1989) classification of emotional cultures into impulsive-oriented cultures (i.e., those that encourage free regulation of emotions and reject fake displays) and institutionally-oriented cultures (i.e., those with strong norms about regulating emotions to fulfill social expectations). France was chosen as an example of an impulsive-oriented country and USA as an institutionally-oriented country. Based on the need for higher control over individuals’ own emotional expressions in the impulsive-oriented country (i.e., France), the authors expected that emotional culture moderated the strong association between SA and exhaustion. American employees engaged in significantly higher SA levels and experienced higher levels of emotional exhaustion. However, culture did not moderate this relationship. In line with these results, even though significantly lower levels of suppression in countries that

encourage free regulation of emotions are anticipated, it is expected that the hypothesized resource development and resources depletion route are likely to be the same across the two representatives of impulsive-oriented and institutionally-oriented countries chosen for the present study (i.e., Spain, UK).

Spain was chosen in order to overcome the issue regarding the limited number of studies with the Latin-European cluster. Following Gordon's (1989) classification, Spain was conceptualized as an impulsive-oriented country regarding emotional expression. Spain values social interdependence and encourages behaviors that make social interactions meaningful. Within a country where "service with a smile" is only in its infancy, and the culture of "honor" and respect for tradition has long historical roots (Rodríguez-Mosquera et al., 2002), meaningful interactions with customers may have little adherence to externally imposed rules of emotional display. The country chosen to represent an institutionally-oriented culture was the UK. Mann (2006) found that both British and American samples had similarly high expectations about the positive emotions displayed by customer service employees. Further support for conceptualizing the UK as a more institutionally-oriented (compared to Spain) can be found in their different uncertainty avoidance attitudes. Uncertainty avoidance refers to a country's intolerance of unclear structure and lack of rule-regulated behavior in social interactions (Ashkanasy et al., 2002). Thus, institutionally-oriented countries typically have higher levels of uncertainty avoidance than impulsive-oriented countries. In the GLOBE study, the UK scored much higher levels on uncertainty

avoidance than Latin-European countries such as Spain and France (Ashkanasy et al., 2002).

## **Method**

### ***Participants and procedure***

Employees working in theme parks were selected owing to the salience of rules for positive emotions this occupation requires. Since the present authors wanted to cross-validate the model across countries with different emotional cultures, homogeneity in all other aspects was sought. Theme park clusters belonged to equivalent chains in each country and had a similar organizational structure, employing the majority of the workers in three main areas: customer service, hospitality, and “rides and entertainment.” On both chain websites, there was constant reference to the ability of prospective employees to “inspire and put a smile on customers’ faces.” The research team contacted the participating organization’s HR teams to request collaboration on a project studying work-related emotion skills and employee wellbeing. The companies were offered free consultation services upon completing the research project. The researchers were granted access to the organizations and administered the questionnaires on-site for a week.

The British sample comprised 204 employees of a UK theme park chain. Ages ranged from 18 to 72 years (mean average 29 years). One-third of participants were male (36%) and two-thirds female (64%). Employees had spent an average of 8.38 years working in customer services (SD=7.57), an average of 4 years (SD=5.20) in the current organization with 72% working full-time. The Spanish sample comprised 208 employees working in a theme park chain in Spain. Ages ranged from 17 to 61 years (mean average 30 years). The sample comprised slightly more males (52%) than females (48%). Employees had spent an average of 8.40 years working in customer services (SD=8.01), an average of 6 years (SD=7.21) in the current organization with 90% working full-time. Employees did not clarify whether their full-

time status was seasonal but seasonal employment status was expected to be high in both countries.

### ***Instruments***

*Emotion regulation strategies.* The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) developed by Gross and John (2003) was used for the British sample, and the adaptation of this scale to Spanish by Rodriguez-Carvajal et al. (2006) was used for the Spanish sample. The scale utilizes a 7-point Likert response scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The Reappraisal subscale has 6 items, a sample item being: “When I want to feel more positive emotion, I change the way I’m thinking about the situation”. The Suppression scale has 4 items, a sample item being “When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them”. All items of study can be viewed in Table 2a. Cronbach’s alpha for Reappraisal was .79 in Spain and .88 in the UK. For Suppression, it was .70 in both Spain and the UK.

*Commitment.* The Commitment scale from Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2012) was used. This Spanish developed scale was adapted into English in this study. As is recommended for back-translation (Beaton et al., 2000), two bilingual researchers translated all items into English. Then, another bilingual expert translated the English version back into Spanish. Finally, the latter version was compared it to the original. There were few differences between the English and Spanish version and they were easily resolved through discussion so that a final Spanish version was agreed upon. The scale comprises four items utilizing a 4-point Likert scale (1 = totally disagree to 4 = totally agree), a sample item being “I really care about my job and I identify with it”. Cronbach’s alpha was .87 for the UK sample and .85 for the Spanish sample.

*Perception of customer interactions.* Perception of Draining Interactions was assessed with Brotheridge and Lee’s subscale (2002). The scale utilizes a 5-point Likert scale (1 = true

to 5 = false), and comprises four items that tap into the exchange of reward for effort (e.g., “In my job interactions, I ‘give’ a lot but don’t ‘get much’ in return”). The Perception of Thriving Interactions scale was generated for this study. Items reflected the concept of customer interaction as a challenge stressor (e.g., “The interactions I have with my customers help me to grow as a professional”). Prior to the model testing stage, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted with the Draining and the Thriving Interaction items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .86, and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity achieved statistical significance ( $\chi^2=828.80$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Two factors were extracted that explained 72% of the variance and reflected the theoretical dimensions. Item loadings were high (above .6), and loaded only in their theoretical dimension. Furthermore, bivariate correlation showed that cognitive reappraisal was not associated with Draining Interactions ( $r=.07$ ;  $p=.33$ ), but that Thriving Interactions were ( $r=.33$ ;  $p<.001$ ), providing initial support for the construct validity of the scale. The Cronbach’s alpha for the Draining Interactions subscale was .85 and for the Thriving Interactions was .88. The two subscales were then adapted to the Spanish sample following the recommended procedure (e.g., Beaton et al., 2000), and Cronbach’s alpha was .88 in both cases.

*Emotional Exhaustion.* The Emotional Exhaustion subscale of Schaufeli et al.’s (1996a) Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Spanish version adapted by Moreno-Jimenez et al. (2012) were used. This scale comprises five items and utilizes a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 = never to 5 = always; a sample item being “I feel used up at the end of the work day”. Cronbach’s alpha was .88 for the UK and .92 for Spain.

*Professional efficacy.* The Professional Efficacy subscale from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Schaufeli et al., 1996a) (e.g., “At my work, I feel confident that I am effective in getting things done”) and the Spanish adapted version by Moreno-Jimenez et al.

(2012) were used. The scale comprises 6 items, and utilizes a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 = never to 5 = always. The alpha coefficient for the UK was .82 and .88 for Spain.

*Turnover intentions.* Turnover Intentions were assessed using a 4-item and 4-point Likert scale (totally disagree; totally agree) along with the Spanish version developed by Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2012). The same back-translation procedure described earlier was used to adapt this instrument to English. A sample item being “If I had job security and were economically stable, I would quit my job”. The alpha coefficient for the Spanish sample was .80 and .82 for the UK.

## Results

### *Homogeneity of the samples and differences in variable levels*

Participants in each country did not significantly differ in age ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=29.32$ ,  $\bar{X}_{Spain}=29.70$ ;  $F=.14$ ,  $p=.70$ ) or job tenure ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=8.38$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Spain}=8.40$ ;  $F=.006$ ;  $p=.94$ ). There were significant differences in gender with 64% of female in the UK vs. 48% in Spain ( $\chi^2=10.22$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and the percentage of time spent with customers per day. Results also showed that Spanish participants spent significantly more time with customers ( $\bar{X}=90\%$ ) than the British participants ( $\bar{X}=80\%$ ) ( $F=19.97$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was performed with country as independent variable, the demographic variables that were significant as covariates (i.e., gender, and time spent with customers), and the variables of study as dependent variables. The model was significant only for country (Wilk's  $\lambda=7.07$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Post-hoc analyses were then conducted with t-tests to examine differences in variable levels. The British sample displayed higher levels of suppression ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=3.11$ ,  $p<.001$ ), perception of draining interactions ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=2.67$ ,  $p<.001$ ), exhaustion ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=2.70$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and higher turnover intentions ( $\bar{X}_{UK}=2.32$ ,  $p<.001$ ). In contrast, the Spanish sample

displayed significantly higher levels of commitment ( $\bar{X}_{\text{Spain}}=3.16, p<.001$ ) and professional efficacy ( $\bar{X}_{\text{Spain}}=4.06, p<.001$ ). No significant differences were found with regards to cognitive reappraisal and perception of thriving interactions.

Please insert table 1

### ***Measure validity, reliability, invariance tests and hypotheses testing***

Kim and Lee's (1997) procedure of inter-group item purification was adapted. This method is used to identify a reliable set of indicators common to two or more potentially different groups under study (e.g., Laroche, Frank, & Richard, 2009). The original method comprises: (1) examining inter-item correlations and selecting the items that behave best across the two groups; (2) Confirmatory Factor Analyses of the common sets of items from each sample; and (3) Multi-group CFA to confirm the equality of factor structures for the two sub-samples (which in this case are also the first two steps of measurement invariance described later in the paper). Since the variables of study have been widely validated, Step 1 was not necessary. Hence, CFAs (Step 2) were conducted for each sample with all items and all items that loaded below .5 across one or both samples were excluded (Bowen & Guo, 2011). Importantly, and considering the nature of the CFA technique, the research team confirmed that the theoretical meaning of the construct was still represented by the remaining items.

The remaining items and their loadings onto their corresponding latent variables are presented in Table 2a. Separate and two-group confirmatory factor analyses were then run to confirm the factor structure, estimate construct reliability and validity, and confirm measurement invariance. Maximum likelihood was used to estimate the parameters, and the analyses were run with AMOS 20 software. Various goodness-of-fit indices were used to assess the fit of the models: chi-square statistic divided by the degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/\text{df}$ ), the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and the root

mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The  $\chi^2/df$  ratio must be below 3, the value of CFI above .90 and the values of SRMR and RMSEA below .08 (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996).

The two-group model comprised eight latent variables and the corresponding indicators (three or more in each latent variable). The model showed good fit ( $\chi^2/df=1.74$ ; CFI=.92; RMSEA=.05; SRMR=.06). Composite reliability for each construct was above .70 and AVE above .50, which indicated good construct reliability. Suppression had a slightly lower AVE=.45, however it is still an acceptable value (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996). Discriminant validity was confirmed following Fornell and Larcker's (1981) recommendation, as AVE within each construct was higher than the shared variance between constructs. The risk of common method bias computed using Harman's single factor test (e.g., Salanova et al., 2012) was then evaluated. The one-factor model showed poor fit to the data (CFI=.16; RMSEA=.13). Consequently, common method variance is unlikely to have occurred.

Please insert Table 2a

Measurement invariance was tested using Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1998) procedures (i.e., configural, metric and scalar invariance). Configural invariance was supported with the adequate fit achieved by the two-group CFA model. The fit of the model was then compared to one where all factor loadings in the model were constrained to be equal across groups (i.e., metric invariance model). Results suggested that the full metric invariance model was not significantly worse than the configural model ( $\Delta\chi^2 (17) = 15.83, (p=.54)$ ). Then, full scalar invariance was tested and not supported, but this is usually the case in cross-national studies (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998). The invariance constraints were then freed in some intercepts and found that the fit of the partial model was not significantly worse

than either the configural invariance model ( $\Delta\chi^2(28)=34.54$ ;  $p=.19$ ) or the full metric invariance model ( $\Delta\chi^2(11)=18.75$ ;  $p=.07$ ). Therefore, partial scalar invariance was supported.

Please insert Tables 2b and 3a about here

The hypothesized model was then tested through Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFA). Table 2a shows the results of the correlation matrix, where relationships appear to confirm initial support for the hypothesized relationships. The hypothesized model as depicted in Figure 1 was then tested with MGCFA. The model fitted the data relatively well (see Table 2b, Model A). Direct paths to test the validity of the indirect hypothesis (Models B, C, D) were subsequently fitted and cross-route paths were added to test validity of the independence hypothesis (Model E). Each model was gradually compared to the hypothesized model, and the chi-square differences were estimated to select the best-fitting model for the subsequent hypothesis-testing process. Model B (adding direct paths between ER and eustress/distress outcomes) did not significantly improve the fit of the hypothesized model ( $\Delta\chi(7)=5.51$ ;  $p>.05$ ). However, adding direct paths between perceptions of draining interactions and turnover intentions (Model C) significantly improved the model fit ( $\Delta\chi(5)=12.96$ ;  $p<.05$ ). Hence, Model C was used as reference for the subsequent model testing. Subsequently, Model E added cross-route paths in order to test the independence of the eustress/distress routes. Since differences between the chi-square values were not significant ( $\Delta\chi(5)=8.82$ ;  $p>.05$ ), the cross-route paths were dropped.

Next, the hypothesized paths in the best-fitting model (Model C) were examined. The path between suppression and draining interactions was significant. Furthermore, the relationship between suppression and thriving interactions was not significant, since there was a lack of fit improvement of Model D and the non-significant correlation between these variables in both countries (see Table 2a). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. Equally,

Hypothesis 2 was confirmed in both countries. Similarly, perception of thriving interactions was significantly associated with efficacy but not with emotional exhaustion, supporting Hypothesis 3a, whereas perception of draining interactions was significantly related to exhaustion but not to efficacy, supporting Hypothesis 4a. Finally, perception of thriving interactions was significantly related to job commitment, supporting Hypothesis 5a.

Please insert Table 3b and Figure 1 about here

The model also hypothesized indirect relationships between ER and eustress/distress (i.e., Hypotheses 3b, 4b, 5b) and between perception of draining vs. thriving interactions and turnover intentions (Hypotheses 6, 7). Since Model B showed no significant improvement when direct paths were added, it was decided to further evaluate all the hypothesized indirect effects through the Bias-Corrected Bootstrap Method (N=1000). This resampling method provides an estimate of the magnitude of the indirect effect along with the significance and the bias-corrected confidence interval (correcting for bias in the central tendency of the estimate). Importantly, it offers greater statistical power than traditional methods based on the normal distribution and other resampling methods such as percentile bootstrap methods (MacKinnon et al., 2004). Results showed that the indirect path between reappraisal and professional efficacy was significant in the UK ( $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.16; p<.05$ ) and Spain ( $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.08; p<.05$ ), giving support for Hypothesis 3b in both countries. Also, the total indirect effect of suppression on exhaustion was significant in the UK ( $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.32; p<.01$ ) and Spain ( $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.26; p<.01$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4b. Similarly, the indirect path of reappraisal and job commitment was significant in both the UK ( $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.30; p<.05$ ) and Spain (although only marginally here;  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.12; p<.10$ ), supporting Hypothesis 5b.

The best-fitting model (Model C) suggested the presence of direct paths between draining interactions and turnover intentions. Thus, although the indirect effect of perception

of draining interactions on turnover intentions was significant (UK:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.14$ ;  $p<.05$  and Spain:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.17$ ;  $p<.05$ ), the direct path was also significant ( $\beta_{\text{UK}}=.14$ ;  $p<.01$   $\beta_{\text{Spain}}=.17$ ;  $p<.05$ ); therefore, Hypothesis 6 is partially supported. However, support for an indirect association between perception of thriving interactions and turnover intentions was found (Hypothesis 7), as the direct path was not significant and the total indirect effect was significant (UK:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=-.29$ ;  $p<.01$  and Spain:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=-.21$ ;  $p<.01$ ); hence, Hypothesis 7 is fully supported. The full indirect effects of the eustress route from reappraisal to turnover intentions (UK:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=-.02$ ;  $p<.05$  and Spain:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=-.01$ ;  $p<.05$ ) and the distress route from suppression to turnover intentions (UK:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.06$ ;  $p<.05$  and Spain:  $\beta_{\text{total indirect}}=.08$ ;  $p<.05$ ) were also significant. Finally, further analysis was run to confirm that the paths were equivalent across countries. In this sense, the paths across the two countries were fixed to run MGCFA and confirm that the chi-square differences between the original and the constrained models were not significant ( $\Delta\chi(27)=32.81$ ;  $p=.20$ ).

### Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the resource development or eustress route associated with using cognitive reappraisal to regulate emotions in customer interactions, and to offer a comprehensive framework to explain how the consequent different individual perceptions (i.e., draining customer interactions vs. thriving customer interactions) were associated with alternative responses (i.e., exhaustion vs. job efficacy and commitment). The findings support the hypothesized relationships in two countries (Spain and UK) with different emotion regulation rules tradition (impulsive vs. institutional). The ER literature has been largely dominated by associations between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion. However, the present study not only acknowledged the depleting effects of ER via emotional suppression, but also tested an alternative growth-related response triggered by a cognitive

reappraisal strategy regarding customer interaction demands.

In exploring the positive consequences of ER, the need for better operationalization of the DA construct were initially addressed to clarify the mixed outcomes of the strategy (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). As opposed to mainstream measures of DA, the cognitive reappraisal scale was used, since this construct assesses individuals' re-evaluation of the emotion-eliciting situations in order to trigger the required emotional response tendencies, as opposed to DA, which assesses intentions. Importantly, the present study was able to draw on a strong body of experimental evidence regarding reappraisers' ability to succeed in social interactions and to be orientated to growth-related experiences of psychological and physical wellbeing in order to offer a stronger conceptualization of the health-related benefits of regulating emotions in customer interactions. Building on both classic stress theory and ER studies, the results show that the positive perceptions of customer interactions as challenges appear to be the key factor explaining the link between reappraisal strategy and positive outcomes. This statement is further supported through the indirect relationships found between reappraisal and both job commitment and professional efficacy.

In line with previous eustress/distress models, relationships between the two route processes with intentions to quit were also explored (Podsakoff et al., 2007). In line with the reviewed studies and the theoretical model of the present authors, support was found for an association between challenge stressors and lower intentions to quit through the effect of job commitment. This result is in line with Cropanzano et al.'s (2004) framework, according to which a continuum of work alienation–commitment mediates the impact of ER at work. In contrast, the association between hindrance stressors and turnover was not just indirect via emotional exhaustion (as initially hypothesized) but also direct. Similarly, previous distress studies confirmed a direct relationship between hindrance stressors and actual turnover

(Podsakoff et al., 2007). Since turnover intentions have been found a powerful predictor of turnover in previous studies (Chu et al., 2012), the relationship between indicator of hindrance stressor and turnover intentions in the present study is congruent with such evidence.

With regard to the inter-country differences, the impulsive-oriented country (Spain) reported significantly lower levels of suppression, perception of draining interactions, exhaustion and turnover intentions than the institutionally oriented country (UK). These results are in line with the findings of another study comparing an impulsive-oriented country (France) with an institutionally-oriented country (US) (Grandey et al., 2005). Furthermore, it was found that, compared to the British sample, the Spanish appeared to enjoy higher levels of job commitment and professional efficacy. In accordance with Grandey et al.'s theory (2005) the countries with less tightly regulated emotional displays, employees enjoyed higher autonomy over their emotions and therefore were less harmed by the "service with a smile". Nonetheless, this assumption cannot be concluded because control over emotional displays at the individual level was not assessed. Consequently, further research is therefore needed in this area.

Current interpretations of stress theory highlight how eustress and distress routes can be independent. They also highlight how external demands can be perceived as threats or as challenges depending on individual interpretations, thus subject to the influence of individual differences. The results confirming a lack of cross-relationships between the eustress/distress route elements support the independence of these routes with regard to the specific individual style of ER, thereby contributing to both the emotional labor and stress research fields. The existence of a parallel health and a motivational route has also been endorsed by contemporary reviews of the job demands/resources model of burnout (health impairment)

and engagement (e.g., Schaufeli et al., 2009). More broadly, the results of the present study are in line with contemporary conceptualizations of health and wellbeing, according to which health is something more than the lack of illness. In sum, being able to positively perceive customer interactions is beneficial not only because of the lack of a negative impact, but because of the opportunities it generates for individuals to develop valued resources.

The findings in the study have several implications for organizations. First, since emotional demands are unlikely to disappear, broadening the focus of the stress response to include the growth-related experiences has potentially major implications for stress interventions. Thus, in line with contemporary efforts on stress intervention programs which highlight the key role of individual interventions (e.g., Le Fevre et al., 2006), the study supports the theory that an individual's interpretation is key in influencing the eustress vs. distress response associated with ER at work. It should be noted that the emphasis on the individual experience of stress does not translate into a manager's assumption that it is down to employees to reinterpret this demand as a challenge. Thus, managers should support their employees through coaching or individually-based interventions in order to assist them in interpreting and reacting to the customer demands and the resources they have in more positive ways (Le Fevre et al., 2006).

Engaging in cognitive reappraisal will be something that happens quite naturally for many. However, those who tend to suppress emotions in different social contexts might struggle, since it is a complex process that involves a high level of ER sophistication. Consequently, organizations should not assume that individuals are naturally equipped and instead should provide employees with appropriate training. For instance, employees may benefit from training in strategies to recall memories of emotions similar to the emotions required in the situation with the customer. Or they might need support in finding strategies

to keep calm, such as attentional regulation techniques like mindfulness that enhance ER skills and reduce distress (e.g., Hölzel et al., 2011; Shonin, Van Gordon, Dunn et al., 2014; Van Gordon, Shonin, Zangeneh & Griffiths, 2014). In addition to obtaining long-term resources relevant for organizations, the frequent practice of reappraising may diminish the effort involved over time, by potentially becoming an automatic process. However, before organizations are recommended to train cognitive reappraisal across the board, more research is needed to refine the specific context in which this strategy is more effective. Thus, a recent study found that unlike under uncontrollable stressors, reappraisal was not an adaptive strategy when individuals faced controllable life stressors (Troy, Shallcross, & Mauss, 2013).

The present authors believe that these findings also have implications for employee selection. Thus, those individuals who are naturally more inclined to use cognitive strategies to regulate emotions will also be more likely to do it while in customer interactions. Therefore, through role-play in assessment centers and via self-report measures, a reappraisal style can be evaluated as part of a more comprehensive selection strategy. Finally, the results stress the importance that companies consider employees' own cultural values when training them to display role-appropriate emotions. Considering that impulsive-oriented cultures tend to resist rule-governed emotion regulation, developing a positive work climate might be a more effective strategy to induce authentic positive emotions in customer service staff and customers (Chu et al., 2012).

This study has associated limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, considering that data were collected with self-report instruments, there is a risk of common method bias. This risk can be minimized by using measures with strong construct validity, demonstrated for example through the good fit of the measurement model as in this study. The cross-sectional nature of the data is also a limitation that prevents from concluding any causal

relationships between the variables of study. However, it should be noted that the model was confirmed in two independent samples which provides stronger support for the proposed order of relationships. Future research with time series and/or longitudinal methodology would provide stronger support for the sequential development of the process. Also, the tentative conclusions about the impact of national culture should be taken with caution, as national cultural values are not consistent with those held at the individual level, particularly in an increasingly mobile workforce. Future studies exploring the impact of national culture on emotion regulation at work should include individual reports on their own cultural values.

In conclusion, the present study provides a cross-national and validated theory that support the invigorating consequences of “service with a smile” when this is performed through cognitive reappraisal, and that this eustress route is relatively independent from the energy depletion route associated with suppression. As an emotion regulation strategy, cognitive reappraisal may promote perceptions of thriving customer interactions that in turn generates opportunities to develop valued personal resources and organizationally desirable attitudes.

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Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations of demographic and study variables in UK (N=204) and Spain (N=208)*

	UK		Spain	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	29.32	10.37	29.70	9.59
Years in Customer Service	8.38	7.57	8.40	8.01
Time spent with customers (%)	79.83	25.88	90	19.89
Suppression	3.11	.76	2.76	.74
Reappraisal	4.43	1.19	4.22	1.06
Perception of draining interactions	2.67	1.20	2.23	1.14
Perception of thriving interactions	3.53	.92	3.56	.97
Exhaustion	2.70	.98	2.06	1.02
Professional efficacy	3.81	.72	4.06	.69
Job commitment	2.93	.72	3.16	.62
Turnover intentions	2.32	.87	1.89	.79

Table 2a  
*List of measurement items, average variance extracted and composite reliability for the constructs of study in UK (N=204) and Spain (N=208)*

	UK Estimate	Spain Estimate
<b>Reappraisal</b>		
When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change what I'm thinking about.	.92	.63
When I want to feel more positive emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	.87	.73
I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I am in.	.61	.68
When I want to feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation.	.83	.79
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.63	.50
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.88	.80
<b>Suppression</b>		
When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them	.46	.75
I control my emotions by not expressing them	.65	.62
I keep my emotions to myself	.76	.83
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.67	.55
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.43	.78
<b>Perception of draining interactions</b>		
I get very little thanks or recognition from my customers in return for my efforts.	.76	.76
In my job interactions, I 'give' a lot but don't 'get much' in return.	.85	.89
I feel my customers are sucking the life right out of me.	.79	.73
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.64	.64
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.84	.84
<b>Perception of thriving interactions</b>		
The interactions I have with my customers help me to grow as a professional.	.80	.82
One of the most rewarding aspects of my job is the interaction with my customers.	.84	.92
Any time that I interact with my customers I feel fulfilled.	.83	.81
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.68	.72
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.86	.89
<b>Job commitment</b>		
I consider that the work I am doing is of value for society and I don't mind dedicating all my efforts to it.	.82	.80
I really care about my job and I identify with it.	.92	.89
The work I do today gives me satisfaction and makes me totally dedicated to it.	.70	.72
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.67	.64
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.86	.84
<b>Professional efficacy</b>		
I feel I am making an effective contribution to what this organisation does.	.71	.84
In my opinion, I am good at my job.	.62	.86
At my work, I feel confident that I am effective in getting things done.	.86	.60
<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>	.54	.60
<i>Composite reliability (CR)</i>	.78	.82

Table 2a

List of measurement items, average variance extracted and composite reliability for the constructs of study

<b>Exhaustion</b>		
I feel used up at the end of the work day.	.84	.76
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	.86	.85
Working all day is a strain for me.	.78	.87
I feel burned out from my work.	.79	.73
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	.67	.64
Composite reliability (CR)	.89	.88
<b>Turnover intentions</b>		
I have had thoughts of leaving this profession.	.82	.71
If I had job security and were economically stable, I would quit my job.	.77	.68
These days, I am more attracted to other alternative job opportunities.	.85	.71
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	.66	.50
Composite reliability (CR)	.85	.74

Note: This table includes only the set of indicators that exhibited best loadings across the two countries simultaneously

Table 2b

Fit Measures for the Invariance Models

	$\chi^2(df)$	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\chi^2/df$	Model compared	$\Delta CFI$	$\Delta\chi^2 (p)$
Configural model (M1)	1004.45 (570)	.92	.04	.06	1.76			
Full metric model (M2)	1020.21(587)	.92	.04	.06	1.74	(M2 vs M1)	.000	15.83 (p=.54)
Full scalar model (M3)	1192.23 (611)	.90	.05	.06	1.95	(M3 vs M2)	.02	171.97(p<.001)
Partial scalar model (M4)	1038.86(598)	.92	.04	.06	1.74	(M4 vs M2)	.001	18.75 (p=.07)
Partial scalar model (M4)	1038.86(598)	.92	.04	.06	1.74	(M4 vs M1)	.001	34.54 (p=.19)

Note:  $\chi^2$  \_ Chi Square differences;  $df$  \_ Degrees of freedom; CFI \_ Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA \_ Root Mean Square Error of Approximation;  $\Delta CFI$  \_  $\Delta\chi^2 (p)$  \_ Increment of Chi Square;  $\Delta CFI$  \_ Increment Comparative Fit Index

## EUSTRESS/DISTRESS MODEL OF EMOTION REGULATION

Table 3a-Correlation table for the variables of study in UK (N=204) and Spain (N=208)

	UK							Spain								
	Reap.	Sup.	DrainInt	ThrivInt.	Exh.	Eff.	Com.	Tr	Reap.	Sup.	DrainInt.	ThrivInt.	Exh.	Eff.	Com.	Tr.
Reap.																
Sup.	.30***								.33***							
DrainInt.	-.05	.34**							-.04	.28***						
ThrivInt.	.44***	-.10	-.54***						.15*	-.09	-.72***					
Exh.	.56***	.30***	.56***	-.34***					-.04	.37***	.72***	-.65***				
Eff.	.29**	-.03	-.17*	.33***	-.12				.17*	.08	-.28***	.42***	-.38***			
Jobcom.	.33***	-.13	-.28**	.66***	-.40***	-.12			.15*	-.24**	-.51***	.63***	-.66***	.44***		
Turn.	-.10	.34***	.51***	-.46***	.60***	-.10	-.65***		-.052	.19*	.63***	-.62***	-.74***	-.29**	-.73***	

Notes: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Reap=Reappraisal, Sup=Suppression, DrainInt.=perception of draining interactions, ThrivInt.=Perception of thriving interactions, Ex=Exhaustion; Eff=Efficacy, Com=job commitment; Tr=Turnover intentions

Table 3b- Comparison of Fit of the Alternative Models: Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model	$\chi^2(df)$	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2(\Delta df):p$	ACFI	$\Delta$ RMSEA	$\Delta$ SRMR
A. Hypothesized model	1004.45(570)	.92	.04	.06				
B. Emotion regulation $\rightarrow$ eustress/distress outcomes paths added: <i>Reappraisal <math>\rightarrow</math> professional efficacy ; reappraisal <math>\rightarrow</math> job commitment ; suppression <math>\rightarrow</math> exhaustion</i>	994.88 (563)	.92	.04	.06	5.51(7); $p > .05$	.001	.001	.002
C. Stressor perception $\rightarrow$ Turnover intentions paths added: <i>Thriving int. <math>\rightarrow</math> turnover int. ; draining int. <math>\rightarrow</math> turnover int.</i>	992.51 (567)	.93	.04	.06	12.96(5); $p < .05$	.001	.002	.002
D. Emotion regulation $\rightarrow$ Turnover intentions paths added: <i>Reappraisal <math>\rightarrow</math> turnover int. ; suppression <math>\rightarrow</math> turnover int.</i>	988.01 (559)	.92	.04	.05	3.48(4); $p > .05$	.001	.001	.006
E. Additional cross paths: <i>Reappraisal <math>\rightarrow</math> draining int. ; suppression <math>\rightarrow</math> thriving int. ; thriving int. <math>\rightarrow</math> exhaustion ; draining int. <math>\rightarrow</math> professional efficacy ; draining int. <math>\rightarrow</math> job commitment</i>	983.69(562)	.92	.04	.06	8.82(5); $p > .05$	.001	.000	.000
F. Equality of model paths across countries	1025.32(594)	.92	.04	.06	32.81(27); $p > .05$	.000	.001	.000

Note: The hypothesized model (A) was compared to models B, C, Model C has a significant better fit hence a path between draining interactions and turnover was added. Models E and F are compared to the best fitting model (Model C). Model E includes factor loading and structural paths constraints