ABSTRACT

AHMAD, UNBER SAEED. A Mediated Model of Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit and Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies. (Under the direction of Dr. Samuel Pond, III)

This study explored emotional demands-abilities (EDA) fit and its relation to emotional labor strategies, performance, and well-being. Data was collected from 160 hospitality workers and was analyzed using both numerical and categorical data analysis techniques. Data show that EDA fit correlates with natural expression, deep acting, job satisfaction, and customer-oriented behaviors. Analyses revealed that natural expression partially mediated the effect of EDA fit on job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors. Deep acting also partially mediated the link between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors. Emotional labor strategies likewise differentially related to these outcomes such that natural expression had an impact on both job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors, deep acting only influenced customer-oriented behaviors, and surface acting only correlated with job satisfaction. The results of this study suggest that EDA fit is a promising construct for emotional labor researchers to examine as it has an influence on well-being and performance and relates significantly to emotional labor strategies. This research has implications for selection because EDA fit can assist in identifying the emotional labor strategy used by employees. Organizations can then develop specific types of training to maximize the benefits of natural expression and deep acting, and minimize the costs of emotional labor.
A Mediated Model of Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit and Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies

by
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables ........................................................................................................................................ iv
List of Figures .......................................................................................................................................... v
A Mediated Model of Emotional-Demands Abilities Fit and Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies ......................................................................................................................... 1
  Person-Environment Fit ..................................................................................................................... 2
  Emotions and the Work Context ......................................................................................................... 3
  Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit ......................................................................................................... 4
  Potential Outcomes of Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit ................................................................ 6
  Emotional Labor ................................................................................................................................. 8
  An Integrated Framework .................................................................................................................. 12
  The Nuance of Natural Expression ................................................................................................... 13
  Summary ............................................................................................................................................ 16
Method .................................................................................................................................................. 16
  Participants and Procedure .................................................................................................................. 16
  Measures ........................................................................................................................................... 18
Results .................................................................................................................................................. 20
  Measurement Model Fit ..................................................................................................................... 22
  Descriptive Statistics and Correlations .............................................................................................. 24
  Mediated Models ............................................................................................................................... 25
  Commitment to Display Rules as a Moderator ................................................................................ 27
  Categorical Analyses .......................................................................................................................... 27
  Relative Use of Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies .................................................................... 31
Discussion ............................................................................................................................................ 31
  Exploring EDA fit in Relation to Outcome Variables ........................................................................ 32
  The Relationship of EDA fit with Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies ........................................ 33
  The Role of Emotional Labor Strategies in Predicting Work Outcomes ........................................... 37
  The Role of Emotional Labor Strategies Mediators .......................................................................... 39
  The Role of Commitment to Display Rules as a Moderator ............................................................. 40
  Summary of Findings .......................................................................................................................... 41
  Limitations, Future Directions, and Implications ............................................................................. 43
  Conclusions ....................................................................................................................................... 45
References ............................................................................................................................................ 47
Appendix ............................................................................................................................................... 66
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Power Analysis for Structural Equation Models</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Goodness of Fit Statistics for the Emotional Labor Measurement Models</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlation Coefficients</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Polychoric and Spearman Correlation Coefficients</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model.................................................................63
Figure 2. Structural equation modeling results for the mediated relationships of EDA
          fit on job satisfaction via all emotional regulation strategies.....................64
Figure 3. Structural equation modeling results for the mediated relationships of EDA fit
          on customer-oriented behaviors satisfaction via all emotional regulation
          strategies ...............................................................65
A Mediated Model of Emotional-Demands Abilities Fit and Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies

Having the right person in the right job enhances job performance in the workplace. Person-environment (P-E) fit reflects the suitability for a specific individual to function in a certain situation (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). High P-E fit results in favorable outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A mismatch between person and environment yields a lack of fit and undesirable consequences like stress and withdrawal behaviors (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

The value of a match between person and environment has led to increased research efforts from which researchers have identified over 40 different types of P-E fit (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). One subtype of P-E fit is demands-abilities (D-A) fit, which assesses the match between the requirements of the job and the employee’s knowledge, skills, and abilities (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Research in D-A fit can focus on the entire scope of the job or one particular demand such as the need to be creative (Choi, 2004). In this study, I focused specifically on emotional demands-abilities (EDA) fit. Researchers developed EDA fit, a facet-level variety of D-A fit, to assess the congruency between a person’s emotional capabilities and the emotional demands of the person’s job (Diefendorff, Greguras, & Fleenor, 2016).

The identification of EDA fit is part of the “affective revolution” - a movement seeking to incorporate affective components into efforts to understand the workplace (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Only limited research exists on EDA fit. The scholarship that does exist states that EDA fit has incremental validity beyond other P-E fit measures (Diefendorff et al., 2016). Further, EDA fit relates to important attitudinal and performance outcomes. Given the value of EDA fit and the recent recognition of the importance of affect in the workplace, it is important to build on this introductory work and further explore...
this construct. As such, the purpose of this study was to attempt to replicate the EDA fit research started by Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) and further integrate EDA fit into existing research on emotions in the workplace.

**Person-Environment Fit**

Both person- and environmental-level factors influence an individual’s experience at work. Person-level influences include an individual’s knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs; Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). Ample evidence suggests that variation in these person-specific factors can lead to different performance levels and different experiences in the workplace (e.g. Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011; Mitchell & Daniels, 2003). Environmental factors, such as job demands, reward systems, culture and climate, and physical environment, can also differentially impact employees (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011; Edwards et al., 2006). Given that individual and environmental characteristics can both vary, researchers investigate the interaction between these two broad factors by assessing the match between the abilities of an individual and the commensurate demands of the individual’s environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Edwards, Caplan, & Van Harrison, 1998; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

According to P-E fit theory, a misalignment between a person and environmental demands leads to stress – especially in cases where the demands of the environment outweigh the individual’s KSAOs (Edwards et al., 1998). This stress can lead to both psychological tension (e.g. anxiety or dissatisfaction) and physiological strain (e.g. increased blood pressure or increased smoking habits). Although having greater abilities than demanded may not be as deleterious, this condition still has the potential to be problematic for the individual. For
example, psychological strain is likely to occur even in cases of boredom where abilities outweigh demands.

In contrast, high P-E fit is advantageous for both the organization and the individual as a match between workers’ KSAOs and their situational demands protects them from stress and leads to better performance and well-being (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In a large meta-analysis investigating multiple types of fit (i.e., person-job, person-supervisor, person-organization, and person-group), Kristof-Brown and colleagues (2005) found that greater fit related to better performance, higher job satisfaction, greater organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intentions.

In 2007, Edwards and Shipp presented an integrative framework of person-environment fit by identifying three subcategories of P-E fit (i.e., supplementary fit, demands-abilities fit, and needs-supplies fit). Of particular interest in this study is demands-abilities (D-A) fit, which relates positively to organizationally-desired outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) and negatively to employee well-being (e.g. increases anxiety and depression; Park, Beehr, Han, & Grebner, 2012). As aforementioned, researchers have investigated D-A fit globally (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown, 2000) and on a facet-level that focuses on demands and abilities for specific tasks in the workplace (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). In this study, I focused on the emotional demands and emotional abilities that interact in a workplace and their match: EDA fit. This research serves recent efforts to better understand the role emotions play at work (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Elfenbein, 2007).

**Emotions and the Work Context**

Recognition of the importance of emotions in the workplace is a relatively new phenomenon (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Only in the last three decades have researchers
recognized that emotions play a role in employee experiences at work. Researchers in organizational psychology and organizational behavior have made substantial progress in linking the emotional experiences of employees at work to employee well-being, employee performance, and many organizational-level work outcomes (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; George & Brief, 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). For example, positive affect relates to better decision making (Staw & Barsade, 1993) and creativity (James, Brodersen, & Eisenberg, 2004) whereas negative feelings relate to increased turnover intentions (George & Jones, 1996). By incorporating affective components into theory, researchers have gained a greater understanding of workplace behavior (Barsade, Brief, Spataro, & Greenberg, 2003).

Researchers have also focused greater attention on emotions because jobs are becoming increasingly interdependent and involve greater interpersonal interaction (e.g., group or team work; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). It is vital to understand emotions at work in order to have healthy interpersonal functioning within an organization (Grandey, 2008). Additionally, emotional work is a large component of many different types of jobs including service work (customer service and retail), caring work (nurses and doctors), and social control work (police officers and judges; Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008). Because of its role in workplace behaviors across a wide variety of jobs, greater efforts into studying emotions are worthwhile.

**Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit**

The marriage of the literatures on person-environment fit and emotions in the workplace is emotional demands-abilities fit. EDA fit relies completely on employees’ subjective perceptions of the match between the emotional requirements of their jobs and their ability to meet those demands. Personal characteristics such as personality (Goldberg, 1992), emotional intelligence (Barsade & Gibson, 2007), or disposition (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)
influence an employee’s perception of his/her emotional abilities. For example, employees who believe they are skilled in understanding the emotional needs of others are likely to endorse a high level of EDA fit. However, this is just one of many possible individual traits that a person may consider when assessing his or her ability to meet the emotional demands of a job.

The emotional demands considered in EDA fit reflect perceptions of the job itself. Organizations dictate these demands, which may include interaction characteristics or display rules. Examples of interaction characteristics include frequency, duration, and routineness of interpersonal interactions (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005). Increases in any of these characteristics increase emotional demands. Display rules are the organizationally-dictated guidelines for how employees should display emotions at work (e.g., a doctor must hide grief when delivering sad news to a patient; Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). In evaluating EDA fit, employees compare their perceptions of the emotional demands prescribed by the organization against their perceptions of their own abilities to manage these demands.

In their seminal work, Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) found that EDA fit was empirically distinct from other types of P-E fit. In two studies of full-time, adult employees, the researchers found that after controlling for overall demands-abilities fit, needs-supplies fit, person-organization fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-group fit, EDA fit maintained a significant relationship with performance and well-being variables. Specifically, EDA fit related positively to self- and supervisor-ratings of job performance, job satisfaction and psychological need satisfaction. Furthermore, with the same controls, they found that EDA fit associated negatively with work tension, inauthenticity, and burnout.

To date, only one other study has investigated EDA fit. Using a person-centered approach, researchers determined that when EDA fit is high, employees are much less likely to
engage in any emotional faking behaviors to meet the organization’s display rules (Gabriel, Daniels, Diefendorff & Greguras, 2015). The absence of the need to fake emotions, as discussed below, is beneficial to the individual. Given that researchers have demonstrated the value of P-E fit, and EDA fit more specifically, it is worthwhile to further examine this construct to understand better its antecedents and outcomes.

**Potential Outcomes of Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit**

Because research on EDA fit is so young, researchers have not explored its full nomological network. The limited existing scholarship has linked EDA fit to outcome variables such as job satisfaction and job performance; however, EDA fit is most relevant for service jobs, so it follows that EDA fit should be considered in relation to service-oriented outcomes. Customer-oriented behaviors are one example of a positive outcome specific to service organizations, which I will define in more detail below. In the current study I sought to better understand EDA fit by investigating its potential outcomes.

**Job satisfaction.** Job satisfaction is “…a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). It relates to many favorable outcomes for employees and organizations such as increased organizational commitment, increased job performance, reduced anxiety, and decreased workplace turnover (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001; Organ, 1990; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Yang, 2010). Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) predicted that high EDA fit would relate to positive feelings and consequently increase job satisfaction. The research team found support for this hypothesis. Because EDA fit reflects a beneficial match between employee and organization that has been supported by previous research, I hypothesized the following (see Figure 1):
**Hypothesis 1**: EDA fit will positively relate to job satisfaction.

**Customer-oriented behaviors.** Customer-oriented behavior (COB) is a specific type of work performance that is of interest to service-based organizations (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997). COB is a type of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCBs are discretionary, informal behaviors that reflect employees’ inclinations and efforts to go beyond their prescribed job descriptions to help their organization and coworkers (Organ & Paine, 1999). These behaviors improve the work environment and facilitate interpersonal relationships (Organ, 1997). COB is a form of OCB that employees direct towards the customer and indicates employees’ interest in exerting extra effort to provide superior customer service to customers (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997; Bettencourt, Gwinner, & Meuter, 2001; Wu & Liao, 2016). COB is important because it enhances customer service quality and customer experiences.

To understand factors that may influence the exhibition of OCB (and COB), it is helpful to describe them in the context of conservation of resources (COR) theory. COR theory posits that individuals have resources (e.g. objects, conditions, personal characteristics, or energies) that they seek to protect and increase (Hobfoll, 2001). Employees use resources when meeting job demands; the loss of resources yields decreased effort by employees, burnout, or strain. Employees, therefore, seek to protect and recover resources to lower strain. Employees can replenish their resources in different ways including receiving rewards for superior performance or engaging in positive social interactions (Hobfoll, 1989).

P-E fit is related to having an adequate store of resources (Wheeler, Halbesleben, & Shanine, 2013) and increases the extent to which employees will engage in OCBs (Astakhova, 2015; Chiu & Tsai, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). OCBs, and desirable job performance in general, replenish resources because positive feedback and positive interactions are restorative.
Therefore, it follows that when EDA fit is high, and performance improves (Diefendorff et al., 2016), individuals are more likely to have more resources that they can allocate towards discretionary work behaviors such as COBs. Thus, I hypothesized (see Figure 1):

_Hypothesis 2_: EDA fit will positively relate to customer-oriented behaviors.

**Emotional Labor**

A dominant topic in emotion research is emotional labor (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Emotional labor is a by-product of job design, and it has consequences for both employees and the organization (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labor refers to the way employees manage organizational expectations of emotional expressions at work (i.e. display rules; Hochschild, 1983). The three different strategies for expressing and regulating emotions include surface acting, deep acting, and natural acting (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

Surface acting reflects an employee’s choice to alter superficially the external display of emotion while making no effort to change true feelings. Deep acting is a purposeful attempt to change one’s internal feelings in order to display the organizationally-desired emotion externally. Finally, natural acting involves the exhibition of unaltered, spontaneous, and genuine feelings. This third strategy acknowledges that employees may display emotions that require no effortful adjustments (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Henceforth, I will call this final form of acting natural expression. The literature shows that natural expression is the most frequently utilized but least studied emotion regulation method (Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff, 2015; Diefendorff et al., 2005). The need for continued study is, therefore, apparent.

The different strategies for managing the emotional requirements of the job suggest that individuals may have different preferences or emotional abilities that lead them to select a
particular approach to meeting job demands. One possible predictor of these different preferences is EDA fit. By definition, natural expression occurs when employees are acting naturally such that there is no discrepancy between the internally-felt emotions and the displayed emotions. When EDA fit is high, individuals are less likely to need to fake emotions and are more likely to display their natural emotions.

The emotions that employees feel and express, however, do not always correspond with the emotions an organization would prefer them to express. When employees display these disingenuous emotions, they experience emotional dissonance (Grandey, Diefendorff, & Rupp, 2013). Under these conditions, employees either surface act or deep act in order to meet the display rules. As surface acting and deep acting reflect forced modifications individuals make to fit their environment, the use of either strategy indicates that the match between the employees and their environment is suboptimal (i.e., low EDA fit).

In the only study to consider EDA fit and emotional labor, Gabriel and colleagues (2015) identified five separate profiles of actors based on unique combinations of surface acting and deep acting. These profiles differentiated between deep actors, surface actors, regulators, low actors, and non-actors. Deep actors and surface actors were high on deep acting (low on surface) and high on surface acting (low on deep), respectively. Regulators were high on both strategies, low actors used both strategies moderately, and non-actors used extremely low levels of either type of emotional regulation strategy. Among these five acting types, EDA fit distinguished non-actors from all other profiles. Although this study did not use a direct measure of natural expression, the authors deemed “non-actors” to be those who engaged in extremely low levels of faking behaviors. Therefore, these employees were likely displaying genuine feelings.

Based on theory and previous research, I hypothesized (see Figure 1):
Hypothesis 3: EDA fit will positively relate to natural expression.

Hypothesis 4: EDA fit will negatively relate to deep acting

Hypothesis 5: EDA fit will negatively relate to surface acting

**Emotional labor and job satisfaction.** Natural expression relates positively to personal accomplishment and job satisfaction (Cheung & Lun, 2015a) as well as work engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors (Cheung & Lun, 2015b). These findings are not surprising given that those who naturally express themselves should not experience emotional dissonance or stress. Researchers often study emotional labor through a COR lens and find that the theory is well-supported by emotional labor research (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Cheung & Lun, 2015; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Huang, Chiaburu, Zhang, Li, & Grandey, 2015). In the context of COR theory, natural expression requires the fewest resources of all the emotional regulation strategies because the employee is not using resources to force external displays, and so the employee is less likely to feel strain.

On the other hand, the experience of emotional dissonance requires greater resources to meet demands and is linked to undesirable outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, work withdrawal, low commitment, and high turnover (Abraham, 1999; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Though emotional dissonance is certain with surface acting and deep acting (Humphrey et al., 2015), there is ample research indicating that surface acting is a more pernicious strategy than deep acting (Humphrey et al., 2015; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011).

Deep acting requires fewer resources and is less damaging to an individual because the internal effort to modify feelings to match required emotions is less taxing than displaying emotions that are incongruent with internal cognitions. For example, thinking of an unhappy time in one’s life in order to display sympathy more sincerely to a customer reduces emotional
dissonance more so than feeling internally happy and having to muster up artificial feelings to appear sympathetic. Moreover, once the employee establishes the alignment between felt and displayed emotions, the emotional dissonance vanishes. In contrast, surface acting uses the most resources because generating and maintaining false outward emotional expressions requires continued psychological effort (Humphrey et al., 2015). The literature on emotional labor supports the personal benefits of deep acting over surface acting. Deep acting relates to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction (Bhave & Glomb, 2016), personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), and improved job performance (Humphrey et al., 2015), whereas surface acting correlates with emotional exhaustion (Chau, Dahling, Levy, & Diefendorff, 2009), job dissatisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller, et al., 2013), and burnout (Diefendorff, Erickson, Grandey, & Dahling, 2011).

Given the empirical and theoretical support for positive relationships between natural expression and deep acting with job satisfaction and a negative relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction, I proposed:

*Hypothesis 6:* Natural expression will relate positively to job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 7:* Deep acting will relate positively to job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 8:* Surface acting will relate negatively to job satisfaction.

**Emotional labor and customer-oriented behaviors.** Researchers have found positive relationships between both deep acting and natural expression with OCB (Cheung & Lun, 2015). They have also found that surface acting, on the other hand, negatively relates to OCB (Yue, Wang, & Groth, 2016). These findings follow from a conservation of resources perspective because natural expression preserves resources that employees can invest in OCB because relatively no resources are being allocated to align external expression with the organizationally-
required emotional display. Deep acting is not as costly as surface acting because it uses relatively fewer resources; nevertheless, some resources are necessary to change the inwardly felt emotion to elicit an outward display that complies with display rules. In contrast, the depletion of resources and consequential strain from faking during surface acting consumes resources that employees might otherwise use to engage in extra-role positive behaviors. One study that has previously investigated emotional labor and “extra-role customer service performance” (an analog of customer-oriented behaviors) found a positive and a negative link between customer-oriented behaviors and deep acting and surface acting, respectively (Liu, Liu, & Geng, 2013). Natural expression has never been investigated with COBs. Given this, I proposed the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 9:* Natural expression will relate positively to customer-oriented behaviors.

*Hypothesis 10:* Deep acting will relate positively to customer-oriented behaviors.

*Hypothesis 11:* Surface acting will relate negatively to customer-oriented behaviors.

**An Integrated Framework**

Efforts to investigate the relationships between EDA fit, emotional regulation strategies, and both personal and organizational outcomes are worthwhile because EDA fit is a new construct with established predictive validity but a lack of construct validity. To understand better the predictive role of EDA fit, researchers should investigate possible mechanisms through which it influences important work outcomes. The emotional labor strategies discussed above are possible routes through which EDA fit may influence outcomes indirectly. Scholars believe that the way employees perceive the emotional demands of their workplace will influence which emotional regulation strategy they will use to meet the emotional requirements of the job (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Kim, 2008; Mesmer-Magnus,
DeChurch, & Wax, 2011). These regulation strategies, in turn, lead to different work outcomes for the organization and the individual (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Grandey, 2000; Grandey, 2003; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Kim, 2008; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). For example, Goldberg and Grandey (2007) found that surface acting mediates the relationship between display rules and outcomes related to resource depletion (i.e., exhaustion and task performance).

The variables in the present study represent constructs that are conceptually similar to those examined in previous investigations of mediation, and thus a mediation model linking EDA fit to outcomes through emotional labor strategies may be well-suited here as well. The amount of resources demanded while engaging in emotional regulation will impact the resources available for performance or personal well-being. This resource demand would depend on the match of the individual to the work environment. Thus, I proposed a mediated model of emotional labor (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007) such that:

**Hypothesis 12:** (a) Natural expression (b) deep acting and (c) surface acting will mediate the relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 13:** (a) Natural expression (b) deep acting and (c) surface acting will mediate the relationship between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors.

**The Nuance of Natural Expression**

As stated by researchers, knowledge of display rules does not necessitate conformity to them (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Employees may know how the organization would like them to behave, but may choose to disregard those display rules and express emotions that are authentic yet undesired by the organization. The disagreement between required and felt emotions is known as “emotion-rule dissonance” (Holman, Martínez-Inigo, & Totterdell, 2008;
Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). This type of dissonance is a precursor to both surface acting and deep acting but may also exist with naturally expressed emotions. With surface acting and deep acting, the emotion-rule dissonance induces faking to yield an appropriate (i.e., organizationally-desired) display. In cases of natural expression, emotion-rule dissonance may exist even if emotion-display dissonance (i.e. difference between felt and displayed emotions) does not. This would manifest as a genuine expression of organizationally-inappropriate emotions, such as yelling at a customer who annoys you. Although this is inconsistent with organizational display rules, it would not feel disingenuous to the individual.

Current tools to measure natural expression do not differentiate between whether the emotion expressed is in alignment with display rules or not (Diefendorff et al., 2005), but the difference is meaningful as emotion-rule dissonance is linked to negative consequences (e.g., emotional exhaustion, psychological strain, and reduced organizational attachment; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011), and naturally expressed emotions that are dissonant with the display rules of the organization may lead to negative consequences rather than the positive outcomes generally associated with natural expression. For example, an employee who yells at a customer is likely to experience rebuke from supervisors leading to resource depletion, strain, poor performance ratings and possibly hindered well-being. The distinction between display rule-congruence and display rule-deviance may be important to contextualize the effects of natural expression and should be explored further.

**Commitment to display rules.** An employee’s commitment to displaying the organizationally-desired emotions has been assessed previously by measuring the employee’s “commitment to display rules” (Diefendorff & Croyle, 2008; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Commitment to display rules is a construct in which displaying organizationally-desired
emotions at work is a goal for which an employee exerts energy, expends effort, and persists to complete. However, very limited research exists that investigates the role of commitment to display rules within the emotional labor literature. In the only pertinent study investigating commitment to display rules, it correlated differently with surface acting and deep acting such that the relationships were negative and positive respectively (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005).

Commitment to display rules may be useful in differentiating organizationally-desired and organizationally-incongruent natural expression. For example, at high levels of commitment, natural expression would likely be organizationally concordant. At low levels of commitment, natural expression may be of the undesired variety. Because research has explored the role of commitment to display rules in only a very limited capacity and dimensionality of natural expression has not yet been considered, I examined the interaction between these variables only within research questions.

*Research Question 1:* Does commitment to display rules influence relationships between natural expression and (a) job satisfaction or (b) customer-oriented behaviors?

*Research Question 2:* If commitment to display rules does influence relationships between natural expression and job satisfaction or customer-oriented behaviors, what is the nature of its influence?

Logic and rationale suggest that the influence of commitment to display rules, if present, would appear in predictable ways. The relationship between natural expression and job satisfaction is likely to be stronger with high commitment to display rules than low. Employees expressing low commitment to display rules are more likely to behave in opposition to display rules and experience negative organizational consequences leading to reduced job satisfaction. Likewise, employees who naturally express themselves in line with display rules are more likely
to engage in customer-oriented behaviors than employees who do not adhere to display rules.

Thus, I presented the following working hypothesis to explore the aforementioned research questions.

**Working Hypothesis**: Commitment to display rules will moderate the relationship between natural expression and (a) job satisfaction and (b) customer-oriented behaviors such that these relationships are positive when commitment to display rules is high and negative when commitment to display rules is low.

**Summary**
Overall, I expected that EDA fit would relate to job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors both directly and indirectly. Indirectly, EDA fit will influence job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors via emotional regulation strategy, such that greater EDA fit will relate positively to natural expression and negatively to surface acting and deep acting, and these strategies will impact outcomes. I predicted that faking emotions superficially (i.e. surface acting) will lead to lower job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors in employees. Moreover, I predicted that engaging in sincere efforts to modify feelings so that they match the job requirements better (i.e., deep acting) or displaying natural emotions demanded by the work (i.e., organizationally-concordant natural expression) will enhance job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors. Finally, I will explore the role of commitment to display in differentiating between forms of natural expression.

**Method**

**Participants and Procedure**
I collected data from a sample of customer service workers employed at different hotels all owned by one Southeastern hotel management company. Emotional labor research often involves customer service employees because of the high interpersonal demands associated with
customer service work (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Researchers visited each hotel on multiple days at different times to present employees on different shifts with the opportunity to participate in the survey. Employees completed surveys, hosted on Qualtrics, in private locations on non-work computers at the employees’ workplace. Employees completed appropriate consent forms and received a compensatory $5 gift card upon completion of the survey.

The final sample consisted of 160 hotel employees representing 64% of all employees in the company. Seventy percent of those included in the final sample were females. The mean age of the participants was 38.1 years ($SD = 12.2$). Eighty percent of the sample were full-time employees (i.e., working at least 30 hours per week). Employees were members of different hotel departments with job tasks that required varying amounts of customer interaction. For example, 33% of the employees spent less than half of their 8-hour shifts interacting with customers; the remainder spent more than half of their shifts interacting with customers.

The sample was 26% White, 30% Black/African American, 33% Hispanic or Latino, and 11% were from other racial backgrounds. A native speaker with no affiliation to the company translated the survey into Spanish for the Spanish-speaking employees. I used back translation to ensure proper translation. Five subject-matter experts compared the original survey in English with the back-translated survey to ensure that the meaning of the items, not literal translation, was the same for the original and back translated version. I reconciled the items that did not appear to be equivalent in both versions before finalizing the Spanish version of the survey. A facilitator, who was fluent in English and Spanish, was also available during the survey administration to help participants who could not read the survey or use a computer to complete the survey.
Measures

The online survey included demographic questions to assess the participants’ age, gender, educational background, tenure with the company, and employment status (full-time or part-time). In addition, participants completed the measures described below.

**Emotional demands-abilities fit.** I assessed perceived emotional demands-abilities fit using the three-item scale developed by Diefendorff et al. (2016). The items, based on earlier work conducted by Cable and DeRue (2002), included “The match is very good between the emotional demands of my job and my personal skills,” “My ability to manage my emotions is a good fit with the requirements of my job,” and “My personal abilities and background provide a good match with the emotional demands that my job places on me.” Participants evaluated these items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 5 = completely). The scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha of .80.

**Emotional regulation.** I assessed surface acting, deep acting, and natural expression using the same emotional labor items used in Diefendorff et al. (2005). Diefendorff and colleagues (2005) developed subscales to measure each type of emotional labor regulation strategy by selecting relevant items from two other emotional labor measures: Kruml and Geddes (2000) and Brotheridge and Lee (2003). I followed their procedures because it led to distinct measures of each of the three strategies unlike previous scales that only assessed surface acting and deep acting. Participants responded to all items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

**Surface acting.** I used seven items to measure the amount of surface acting employees believe they engage in. The subscale included five questions from the Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and 2 items that were adapted from the emotive dissonance-emotive effort scale from Kruml and Geddes (2000). These are the same items previously used by
Diefendorff and colleagues (2005). One example item is “I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way.” Internal consistency reliability was acceptable at .94.

**Deep acting.** As done in prior research (Diefendorff et al., 2005), I used four items to measure employee deep acting. The subscale included three items from the Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and a single item from the Kruml and Geddes (2000) scale. A sample item is “I try to actually experience the emotions I must show to customers.” Cronbach alpha for the deep acting scale was .91.

**Natural expression.** The scale of natural expression was comprised of three items: two items that Diefendorff and colleagues (2005) developed previously and one item from Kruml and Geddes (2000). The natural expression scale included questions such as “The emotions I express to customers are genuine.” Internal consistency reliability was .81.

**Job satisfaction.** I chose to evaluate job satisfaction with a three-item subscale on the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins & Klesh, 1979). Items include “All in all, I am satisfied with my job”, “In general, I don’t like my job” (reverse-coded), and “In general, I like working here.” Participants rated all items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha estimate was .65 using all three items. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis, discussed below, indicated that the reverse-coded item had a low factor loading, so I removed the item. Removal of this item improved Cronbach’s alpha to an acceptable level of .76.

**Customer-oriented behaviors.** I measured employee’s perceptions of their engagement in behaviors that serve the customer beyond organizationally specified job role requirements using the 5-item service delivery subscale of the customer-oriented boundary-spanning behavior scale (Bettencourt, Brown, & MacKenzie, 2005). Example items include “Regardless of
circumstances, I am exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers” and “I follow up in a
 timely manner to customer requests and problems.” Participants rated all items on a five-point
 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The calculated Cronbach’s alpha value
 was .83.

**Commitment to display rules.** I measured behaviors reflecting the employee’s
 commitment to expressing the emotions desired by the organizational display rules using a 4-
 item scale of organizational commitment. I modified the Klein, Cooper, Molloy, and Swanson
 Unidimensional, Target-free commitment scale (2014) by setting the target of each item to the
display of organizationally expected emotions. An example item is “How committed are you to
displaying the emotions expected of you by your organization?” Participants rated all items on a
five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 5 = completely). Cronbach’s alpha was .89.

**Results**

To determine needed sample size for the proposed statistical analyses, I conducted a
priori power analyses before data collection with α = 0.05, power = 0.80, and using G*Power 3.1
(Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The power analysis indicated that there was enough
power to detect medium effect sizes based on Cohen’s criteria (1988). I also conducted a priori
power analysis for structural equation modeling for each of the six hypothesized mediation
models (Soper, 2017; Westland, 2010). Power analysis for structural equation modeling relies on
the number of latent variables and observed variables in a model. The power analyses revealed
that there was enough power to detect large effect sizes in all models and medium effect sizes in
some. Results from these power analyses are in Table 1. I will discuss the implications of the
final sample size on statistical power later.
The variables of interest in this study were all measured on a Likert scale qualifying them as ordinal (ordered-categorical) data. There is debate in the literature about whether investigators can safely treat Likert data as continuous (Rhemtulla, Brosseau-Liard, & Savalei, 2012). Some researchers argue that treating ordinal data as continuous is problematic in that it can lead to biased model fit indices and parameter estimates – especially with smaller sample sizes ($N \leq 250$; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Olsson, Foss, Troye, & Howell, 2000; Yu & Muthen, 2002). Others argue that with at least five categorical response options, Likert data can be treated as continuous without significant consequence (Dolan, 1994; Rhemtulla et al., 2012). Issues of data type (ordinal v. continuous) influence which statistical test (e.g. parametric or nonparametric) and estimation method is appropriate. I chose initially to treat the data as continuous and use parametric statistical tests rather than nonparametric tests for three reasons. Treating Likert-type data as continuous is common practice in social sciences fields, has been shown to be appropriate when items have at least 5 response options, and can better manage cases of slight non-normality ($\pm 2$ for skew, $\pm 5$ for kurtosis; West, Finch, & Curran, 1995) in small samples. Because all items had at least 5 response options and only some items demonstrated non-normality treating responses as continuous seemed appropriate for this data. Therefore, I assessed correlations with the Pearson product-moment correlation.

The most appropriate estimation method for testing mediated models using structural equation modeling (SEM) is also influenced by the data type (i.e. ordinal v. continuous). There are several different estimators available for continuous data. In order to select the most appropriate estimator, I considered their underlying assumptions - specifically whether the estimation method assumed multivariate normality. Estimators that assume multivariate normality are more powerful and efficient when that assumption is met; however, when the data
violate this assumption, other estimators are needed (Kline, 2015). Researchers have recommended assessing the extent of non-normality by evaluating data with maximum likelihood estimator (ML), which assumes multivariate normality, and again with the robust maximum likelihood estimator (i.e. Sartorra-Bentler’s Maximum Likelihood Mean Adjusted estimator; MLM; Byrne, 2013) which is preferred for non-normal data. If chi-square values vary significantly with both estimators, there is evidence that the data are multivariate non-normal, and thus the robust MLM estimator is preferred.

For my data, the results from the ML estimator were $\chi^2 (328, \ N = 160) = 574.22, \ p < .001$ whereas the MLM estimator provided the following: MLM$\chi^2 (329, \ N = 160) = 489.55, \ p < .001$. Differences in test statistics between MLM and the typical ML estimators were significant ($\Delta\chi^2 [1, \ N = 160] = 84.67, \ p < .001$) indicating non-normality of the data and supporting the use of the MLM estimator. Thus, I evaluated all mediation models described below using SEM with the MLM estimator.

**Measurement Model Fit**

I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on each of the seven latent variables (i.e. EDA fit, natural expression, deep acting, surface acting, job satisfaction, customer-oriented behaviors, and commitment to display rules) individually to confirm that the scales functioned as intended in this sample. I conducted all CFAs with Mplus 7 using the MLM estimator described above. All factor loadings were high (greater than or equal to .60) except for the first item from the job satisfaction latent variable (factor loading = .35). This item was reverse-coded, and several participants indicated difficulty understanding the meaning of the item while completing the survey. Thus, I dropped this item, and I did not include it in any further analyses.
In addition to confirming the factor structure for the scales in this sample, I investigated the dimensionality of the emotional labor strategies. Previous research has neglected to assess natural expression (e.g. Chi & Grandey, 2016; Gabriel et al., 2015; Grandey & Melloy, 2017; Huang et al., 2015); however, distinctions between types of emotional labor are integral to the evaluation of the study hypotheses, which necessitates determining whether the three strategies are in fact distinct. I evaluated the dimensionality of emotional labor by comparing the model fit of a series of nested CFAs. This first model had three factors corresponding to the three emotional labor strategies, and I compared it to two alternative models: one with two factors (where natural expression and surface acting are opposite extremes of one factor and thus load onto the same latent variable) and a 1-factor model (where there was no differentiation between the three emotional labor strategies). I evaluated the models on five fit indices including the $\chi^2$ difference test using the Sartorra-Bentler Scale Chi-Square, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), the comparative fit index (CFI) and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI). Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested the following cut-offs as indicators of good model fit: CFI and TLI values greater than .95, SRMR below .08, and RMSEA below .06. As such, fit indices for the three-factor model all indicated the best fit (compared to the other models): MLM$\chi^2$(74, $N = 160$) = 157.14, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05, CFI = .94, and TLI = .93 (see Table 2). The MLM$\chi^2$ value for the model was significant indicating a lack of fit, but this is unremarkable with large sample sizes. However, the full measurement model approached or exceeded recommended cut-offs on the remaining fit indices. In the three-factor model, standardized loadings of the scale items on their respective factors were significant (all $p < .001$), ranging from .61 to .91. Further, $\Delta\chi^2$ tests comparing the 3-factor model against the 2-factor and 1-factor models supported the superiority of the 3-factor
model. Thus, the measures of natural expression, deep acting, and surface acting all appeared to be distinct from one another.

After I evaluated each individual latent variable and I confirmed the dimensionality of the emotional labor strategies, I assessed the full measurement model with all seven latent variables together on the five fit indices: MLM $\chi^2(329, N = 160) = 489.55, p < .001, \text{RMSEA} = .06, \text{SRMR} = .05, \text{CFI} = .93, \text{and TLI} = .92$. Results showed that the hypothesized 7-factor model distinguishing EDA fit, surface acting, deep acting, natural expression, job satisfaction, customer-oriented behaviors, and commitment to display rules fit the data reasonably well. The full measurement model approached or exceeded recommended cut-offs. All factor loadings were significant and above .60 (i.e., high loading).

**Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

I present means, standard deviations, skew, kurtosis, and zero-order Pearson correlations for all study variables in Table 3. Hypothesis 1 stated that a positive correlation would exist between EDA fit and job satisfaction. The results supported this hypothesis ($r = .37, p < .001$). Likewise, Hypothesis 2, predicting a positive correlation between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors, was also supported ($r = .34, p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 predicted that EDA fit would correlate positively with natural expression, but this relationship was not supported ($r = .12, p = .13$). I predicted a negative correlation between EDA fit and deep acting (Hypothesis 4) but a reverse relationship was found ($r = .24, p = .002$). Hypothesis 5 postulated a negative correlation between EDA fit and surface acting, but it was not supported ($r = -.01, p = .87$). Hypothesis 6 was supported by the positive correlation between natural expression and job satisfaction ($r = .25, p = .001$). In Hypothesis 7, I predicted a positive relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction. This correlation did trend in the correct direction but was not significant ($r = .14, p$
Hypothesis 8 was supported as surface acting was significantly and negatively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = -.19, p = .02$). Customer-oriented behavior was positively related to natural expression ($r = .35, p < .001$); Hypothesis 9 was supported. Results revealed a positive correlation between customer-oriented behaviors and deep acting ($r = .24, p = .002$). This provides support for Hypothesis 10. Surface acting did not have a significant relationship with customer-oriented behaviors ($r = -.09, p = .24$), so Hypothesis 11 was not supported.

**Mediated Models**

Hypotheses 12 a-c and 13 a-c were investigated using structural equation modeling (SEM) rather than a regression-based approach to mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The use of SEM is preferred for assessing mediated models because it allows the researcher to test all relevant relationships at once and without assuming the absence of measurement error (Byrne, 2012). All SEM models used MLM estimation, and indirect effects were estimated using the product of coefficients approach. The path coefficient between the predictor and mediator is multiplied by the path coefficient between the mediator and the outcome, and the significance of the estimate was computed in Mplus 7 using delta parametrization. A significant indirect effect indicates support for mediation. Neither Hypotheses 12a-c nor Hypotheses 13a-c were supported.

Hypotheses 12a predicted an indirect relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction through natural expression. The data did not support this mediated model. Although job satisfaction was predicted both by EDA fit ($\beta = .45, SE = .11, p < .001$) and natural expression ($\beta = .19, SE = .09, p = .03$), the indirect effect of EDA fit on job satisfaction through natural expression was not significant ($\beta = .03, SE = .02, p = .18$). Further, the path between EDA fit and natural expression was not significant ($\beta = .15, SE = .10, p = .16$). Thus, hypothesis 12a was not supported (Figure 2).
Deep acting was not found to be a significant mediator between EDA fit and job satisfaction. Hypothesis 12b was not supported because the indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .01, SE = .03, p = .86$; Figure 2). The relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction ($\beta = .02, SE = .10, p = .86$) also failed to achieve significance. However, the direct effect for EDA fit on job satisfaction was significant ($\beta = .48, SE = .12, p < .001$) as was the link between EDA fit and deep acting ($\beta = .27, SE = .11, p = .01$).

Hypothesis 12c was also not supported because the indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .002, SE = .02, p = .90$). A significant relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction was found ($\beta = .48, SE = .11, p < .001$). Surface acting also significantly predicted job satisfaction ($\beta = -.22, SE = .08, p = .004$), but the pathway from EDA fit to surface acting was not significant ($\beta = -.01, SE = .09, p = .91$; Figure 2).

Hypothesis 13a was not supported as the indirect effect was determined to not be significant ($\beta = .06, SE = .05, p = .19$; Figure 3). EDA fit was positively related to customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .36, SE = .09, p < .001$). Likewise, natural expression positively predicted customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .41, SE = .08, p < .001$). However, EDA fit did not significantly relate to natural expression ($\beta = .15, SE = .10, p = .13$).

Hypothesis 13b was not supported. The indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .04, SE = .03, p = .09$; Figure 3). The direct pathway from EDA fit to customer-oriented behaviors was significant ($\beta = .37, SE = .09, p < .001$), and it related positively to deep acting ($\beta = .27, SE = .10, p = .005$). Deep acting related to customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .15, SE = .08, p = .05$) as predicted, though approaching but not at the level of significance.

Hypothesis 13c was also not supported because the indirect pathway was not significant ($\beta = .001, SE = .01, p = .87$; Figure 3). Also, the link between surface acting and customer-
oriented behaviors was not significant \((\beta = -0.10, SE = 0.07, p = .17)\) nor was the relationship between EDA fit and surface acting \((\beta = -0.01, SE = 0.08, p = .87)\). The link between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors was significant \((\beta = 0.41, SE = 0.08, p < .001)\).

**Commitment to Display Rules as a Moderator**

Research Questions 1 and 2, and subsequent Working Hypothesis 1, sought to determine if commitment to display rules would interact with natural expression such that at higher levels of commitment to display rules the effect of natural expression on job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors would be stronger. To investigate this moderation and per best recommendations in continuous-data analyses, both natural expression and commitment to display rules were mean-centered. Mean-centering is recommended to precede moderation analyses to assist in interpretation and manage multicollinearity (Aiken, West, & Reno, 1991). For both outcome variables, the interaction of natural expression and commitment to display rules was non-significant suggesting commitment to display rules did not moderate the relationship between natural expression and job satisfaction \((\beta = 0.131, p = .120)\) nor the relationship between natural expression and customer-oriented behavior \((\beta = -0.128, p = .136)\).

The Working Hypothesis was not supported.

**Categorical Analyses**

Although it is customary in psychological research to treat ordinal data as continuous, as discussed above, Likert-type data is technically ordinal. Treating this data as categorical rather than continuous requires changing the statistics used to evaluate the hypotheses. Thus, I evaluated all the correlational hypotheses with corresponding statistics for ordered-categorical data in order to determine whether it would change the conclusions. Moreover, I re-evaluated the
mediation models hypothesized above with statistics that are appropriate for categorical data and are robust to non-normality.

Using categorical statistical methods is likely to improve the power of the tests (Hoyle, 2012) and can be more accurate in some situations (Li, 2016); however, treating the data as ordinal should not dramatically alter any findings. As such, I did not expect that any significant findings would become non-significant but rather that some non-significant findings might become significant. For example, confirmatory analyses of the latent variables were conducted again with the WLSMV (weighted least squared mean and variance adjusted) estimator in Mplus 7. This estimator is appropriate for ordinal data. The same measurement models were produced (e.g., the same items loaded onto the same latent variable as previously determined), but factor loadings were increased. It is worth noting that WLSMV has been reported to be “less biased and more accurate” than maximum likelihood estimators when estimating factor loadings (Li, 2016, p.936).

**Polychoric and spearman correlations.** Hypotheses 1-11 were initially evaluated using Pearson product-momentum correlations, which are appropriate for continuous data. Correlations between ordinal data can be calculated with either polychoric correlations or Spearman correlations. Polychoric correlations assume normality of the underlying latent variables whereas the Spearman correlation is a non-parametric statistic that makes no assumptions about the underlying distribution. Table 4 summarizes polychoric and Spearman correlations for the study variables.

By accounting for the ordinal nature of the data, some of the resultant correlations gained significance. For example, using both polychoric and Spearman correlations, Hypothesis 3, predicting a positive relationship between EDA fit and natural expression became significant.
(polychoric & Spearman: $r = .19, p = .01$), and Hypothesis 7, predicting a positive relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction, also became significant (polychoric: $r = .18, p = .02$; Spearman: $r = .19, p = .02$). Thus, Hypotheses 3 and 7 are supported with polychoric and Spearman correlations – results for all other hypotheses are unchanged.

**Mediated models with weighted least squares estimation.** The mediated relationships predicted in Hypotheses 12a-c and 13a-c lacked support using MLM estimation for continuous data, but some of the models were supported when investigated using weighted least square mean and variance adjusted estimation (WLSMV). WLSMV estimation treats ordinal data as categorical, and it is strongly recommended with categorical latent variables (Byrne, 2012; Hoyle, 2012). Moreover, WLSMV is robust to non-normality, for which I found evidence in this data after inspecting of quantile-quantile plots of the study variables. With the WLSMV estimator, structural coefficients are more accurately estimated when the data is skewed (Li, 2014).

Hypotheses 12a predicted an indirect relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction through natural expression. The data supported this mediated model because the indirect effect, indicating mediation, was significant ($\beta = .06, SE = .03, p = .03$). EDA fit positively predicted job satisfaction ($\beta = .47, SE = .08, p < .001$), and EDA fit related positively to natural expression ($\beta = .21, SE = .09, p = .02$), which further predicted job satisfaction ($\beta = .30, SE = .09, p = .001$). Hypothesis 12a was supported using procedures for categorical data (Figure 2).

Hypothesis 12 b was not supported. EDA fit significantly predicted deep acting ($\beta = .35, SE = .08, p < .001$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = .52, SE = .08, p < .001$); however, because the indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .01, SE = .03, p = .65$), the hypothesis was not supported.
Further, deep acting did not predict job satisfaction ($\beta = .04, SE = .09, p = .66$). This result is unchanged across statistical procedures (Figure 2).

The mediation model predicting a relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction via surface acting, Hypothesis 12c, was not supported. EDA fit did significantly predict job satisfaction ($\beta = .52, SE = .07, p < .001$) as did surface acting ($\beta = -.26, SE = .09, p = .003$), but the indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .007, SE = .02, p = .76$). Likewise, the relationship between EDA fit and surface acting was not significant ($\beta = -.03, SE = .09, p = .76$). The mediation model remains unsupported (Figure 2).

EDA fit had an indirect effect on customer-oriented behavior. EDA fit was positively related to customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .40, SE = .07, p < .001$), and the indirect effect was determined to be significant ($\beta = .10, SE = .04, p = .02$). EDA fit positively predicted natural expression ($\beta = .21, SE = .09, p = .02$). Natural expression, in turn, positively related to customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .47, SE = .07, p < .001$). This result provides support for Hypothesis 13a when the data is treated as ordinal (Figure 3).

Because the indirect effect was also significant ($\beta = .07, SE = .03, p = .03$), the relationship of EDA fit with customer-oriented behaviors via deep acting, Hypothesis 13b, received support using the ordinal-data estimator (Figure 3). The direct pathway from EDA fit to customer-oriented behaviors after controlling for deep acting was significant ($\beta = .43, SE = .09, p < .001$). EDA fit also related positively to deep acting ($\beta = .35, SE = .08, p < .001$), which further positively predicted customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .21, SE = .09, p = .02$).

Finally, Hypothesis 13c continued to lack support. The indirect effect was not significant ($\beta = .005, SE = .01, p = .75$) therefore the mediated model was not supported (Figure 3). The direct pathway from EDA fit to customer-oriented behaviors after controlling for surface acting
was significant ($\beta = .49$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). However, EDA did not significantly predict surface acting ($\beta = -.03$, $SE = .09$, $p = .76$) nor did surface acting significantly predicted customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = -.17$, $SE = .08$, $p = .05$).

**Commitment to display rules as a moderator.** The moderating effect of commitment to display rules on the relationships between natural expression and customer-oriented behaviors continued to be unsupported (Hypotheses 14a and b). The interaction effect was non-significant for both the relationship between natural expression and job satisfaction ($\beta = .141$, $p = .233$) and the relationship between natural expression and customer-oriented behaviors ($\beta = -.049$, $p = .634$).

**Relative Use of Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies**

Though not hypothesized, levels of endorsement for each emotional labor strategy were compared. Participants did not endorse surface acting and deep acting as often as natural expression. Mean levels of surface acting were significantly lower than deep acting ($t(316.58) = -10.158$, $p < .0001$) and natural expression ($t(298.52) = -13.52$, $p < .0001$), and deep acting was reported significantly less than natural expression $t(306.71) = -2.6054$, $p < .0001$).

**Discussion**

The purpose of this exploratory study was to contribute to the literature on emotional labor by exploring how EDA fit, a new construct, relates to emotional labor, performance, and well-being. Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) previously proved that EDA fit is conceptually distinct from other person-environment fit measures and provides incremental validity in explaining outcomes, but researchers have not yet replicated these results. Furthermore, the predictive ability of EDA fit has not yet been tested in relation to the full range of emotional labor strategies or outcome variables. I aimed to address these gaps with this study.
Four objectives directed my exploration of EDA fit. The first objective was to produce a better understanding of the nomological network of variables related to EDA fit by replicating existing research and testing a new relationship. A second objective of this research focused investigation on exploring relationships between EDA fit and the three types of emotional labor. The third objective was to test these emotional labor strategies as mediators of the relationships between EDA fit and two works outcomes (job satisfaction and customer-oriented behavior). Finally, the fourth objective was to examine whether different types of natural expression might be revealed by considering commitment to display rules. I discuss these four objectives below.

**Exploring EDA fit in Relation to Outcome Variables**

The first objective of this study was to replicate and extend previous work and consequently augment the nomological network of variables related to EDA fit. In this study, EDA fit related positively to both well-being and performance outcomes supporting the notion that optimal person-environment fit is beneficial for individuals and organizations alike (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The positive correlation between EDA fit and job satisfaction is consistent with findings in previous work (Diefendorff et al., 2016; Gabriel et al., 2015) as well as conservation of resource theory. This theory also could be used to support the novel positive relationship between EDA fit and customer-oriented behavior. When employees feel that their abilities match the demands of their workplace, they retain greater personal resources and are more apt to perform discretionary work behaviors that benefit the customer and the organization (Bono & Vey, 2007; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Thus, the results of this study supported the findings of earlier research and added to the literature on EDA fit.
The Relationship of EDA fit with Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies

The second objective of this research was to relate EDA fit to three emotional regulation strategies (i.e., natural expression, deep acting, and surface acting). Natural expression was of special interest as researchers have not studied it as extensively as the other two regulation strategies (Humphrey et al., 2015). As a preliminary step, I investigated the dimensionality of emotional labor regulation strategies using confirmatory factor analyses. Importantly, these analyses supported the distinctiveness of all three emotional regulation strategies. EDA fit correlated with all three of the forms of emotional labor regulation.

Disinclination towards surface acting and deep acting. Participants endorsed natural expression most often, followed by deep acting, and then surface acting. The preference of natural expression over the other regulation strategies corroborates previous research (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gabriel et al., 2015). Gabriel and colleagues (2015) reported that almost 45% of a service work sample used low or extremely low levels of deep and surface acting strategies. These individuals were likely displaying natural emotions when not engaging in surface or deep acting. Thirty-two percent of the sample favored deep acting, 12% favored surface acting, and 11% favored both equally. In fact, Humphrey and colleagues suggest that individuals avoid using either deep acting or surface acting as much as possible and would need to be “induced into practicing them” (2015, p. 756). Further, they stated that when individuals know how to deep act or naturally express themselves, they rarely choose to surface act. The preference for natural expression in this study and as found in previous work may suggest that employees in customer service settings are well-suited to their jobs, and consequently, they may rarely need to engage in faking behaviors. Alternatively, high endorsement of natural expression may be problematic if the expressed emotions deviate from display rules. Altogether, we see that surface and deep acting may be relatively low base rate events underscoring, even more, the
importance of better understanding the dominant strategy natural expression and its dimensionality.

**The relationship between EDA fit and natural expression.** Based on existing research on natural expression, I expected to find a positive correlation between EDA fit and natural expression. I hypothesized that endorsing one’s ability to meet emotional demands at work would yield natural expression because when one feels that meeting job demands is easy and does not require faking, then individuals would naturally act rather than engage in deep acting or surface acting. This assumption was supported by the research of Gabriel and colleagues (2015) in which they identified a latent profile group called “non-acting” that was characterized by extremely low surface acting and low deep acting but had the highest levels of EDA fit. However, my results revealed only a relatively small correlation with natural expression, and this correlation was only significant when using ordinal analyses (i.e., using polychoric or Spearman correlations).

One explanation for the relatively small effect size may be that the measure of the construct is contaminated, and natural expression is more nuanced than previously believed. Researchers in emotional labor often discuss natural expression as the ideal emotional regulation strategy because it does not require faking and thus is believed to not require effort from the employee (Humphrey et al., 2015). However, this conclusion relies on two assumptions – namely that employees will choose to express themselves naturally whenever possible and that the natural expression will be beneficial to the organization. While research largely supports the first assumption (Humphrey et al., 2015), the second assumption is problematic as it may mask the possible multidimensionality of the natural expression construct. For example, natural expression can be an organizationally-desired and spontaneous emotion (e.g., a natural smile
when interacting with customers), or it can be organizationally-deviant but still impulsive (e.g., impulsively yelling at a customer). A third variety of natural expression may also exist in which an employee passively engages in work without any purposeful presentation of emotion. It is possible that the relationship between EDA fit and natural expression was weaker than expected because natural expression may capture multiple forms, which were not measured by the scale utilized in this study. If one form is unrelated or inversely related to EDA fit, then the correlation of a composite of types would likely be attenuated.

**The relationship between EDA fit and deep acting.** I expected that when individuals had high EDA fit, they would feel less inclined to engage in deep acting because they could innately meet job demands without needing to fake. However, unexpectedly, EDA fit related positively to deep acting. This finding matches the small \( r = .16 \) but significant positive correlation found by Gabriel et al. (2015). The positive relationship between EDA fit and deep acting may suggest that when individuals feel they can meet the demands of their workplace (i.e., have higher EDA fit), they are more motivated to try to do so by actively engaging in the cognitive modulation that is characteristic of deep acting.

Individuals with greater EDA fit may also elect to deep act because they have more resources in store to expend on deep acting. The fit between work demands and personal abilities may allow individuals to perform better at work, which may consequently replenish their resources and promote more deep acting. Also, those with high EDA fit may deep act because experience has shown them that deep acting yields positive outcomes. For example, deep acting leads to job satisfaction (Bhave & Glomb, 2016) and to improved job performance (Humphrey et al., 2015). Taken together, this supports the notion that individuals with high EDA fit engage in deep acting because they see it as an advantageous tool for producing successful goal attainment.
Moreover, the relationship between EDA fit and deep acting is likely reciprocal. In other words, greater EDA fit may lead employees to engage in deep acting, and the benefits of successful deep acting may enhance self-efficacy and belief in one’s ability to meet emotional demands at work.

**The relationship between EDA fit and surface acting.** The lack of a significant negative relationship between EDA fit and surface acting contradicts previous research (Gabriel et al., 2015) – though the previously reported effect size was relatively small ($r = -.12$). This null relationship between EDA fit and surface acting may indicate that other individual differences or situational characteristics dictate choice to surface act – not belief in personal ability. For example, research has shown that negative personality traits, poor well-being, and stressful work environment all relate to greater amounts of surface acting (Bhave & Glomb, 2016; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Chau, Dahling, Levy, & Diefendorff, 2009; Dahling & Perez, 2010; Kiffin-Petersen, Jordan, & Soutar, 2011; Kim, 2008; Lee, Ok, & Hwang, 2016; Seery, Corrigall, & Harpel, 2008; Yang & Chang, 2008).

Individuals with negative affectivity may prefer surface acting because they cannot naturally present or sustain the emotions required in service. Similarly, individuals experiencing stress or increased demands during customer interactions may surface act because they do not have the energy or time to cognitively modulate for deep acting. Moreover, if employees have many interactions at work or have to shift between different emotions very quickly they are unlikely to be able to display natural expressions fully or engage in deep acting. Together, this suggests that the employee’s personality and situational demands may be stronger inducers of surface acting than the employee’s perception of ability to meet display rules.
The Role of Emotional Labor Strategies in Predicting Work Outcomes

As an extension of the second objective, to relate EDA fit to emotion regulation strategies, and as a precursor to the third objective (i.e., utilizing emotional labor strategies as a mediator between EDA fit and outcomes), I investigated the relationship between the emotional labor strategies and two work outcome variables (job satisfaction and customer-oriented behavior). The three emotional labor strategies related to the two work outcomes differently.

Natural expression as a predictor of outcomes. Natural expression related positively to both job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors. Though researchers have previously reported the positive relationship between natural expression and job satisfaction (Diefendorff et al., 2005), the relationship between natural expression and customer-oriented behaviors is novel. The positive relationship between natural expression and customer-oriented behaviors is conceivable because the benefits of natural expression include protection from burnout, inauthenticity, and faking. This protection arguably leaves the individual with more psychological resources to apply towards customer service (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gabriel et al., 2015). The relationship to well-being and desirable performance outcomes revealed in this study provides further evidence of the potential benefits of natural expression.

Deep acting as a predictor of outcomes. Deep acting related positively to job satisfaction only when using ordinal analyses. Therefore, if a true positive relationship exists between deep acting and job satisfaction, it is a relatively weak one. Although deep acting has been positively associated with job satisfaction in previous work (Lee et al., 2016), both literature reviews (Grandey, 2003) and meta-analysis (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2001) suggest that the relationship is generally non-significant.

Perhaps the effort exerted by employees to engage in deep acting consumes resources and diminishes job satisfaction. Alternatively, perhaps employees’ own awareness that the desired
performance at work is not natural is dissatisfying. Even more, perhaps employees perceive their attempts at deep acting as disingenuous, and therefore, a source of job dissatisfaction. Thus, the weak positive relationship is consistent with existing literature and indicates that the other noted benefits of deep acting do not outweigh the costs associated with its use.

On the other hand, deep acting related positively to customer-oriented behaviors. This is not surprising, as deep acting has been linked to improved customer satisfaction as well (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011), but it appears that deep acting, while good for customers, has costs for the individual. From a COR perspective, deep acting is damaging as it requires psychological resources to mentally modulate emotions and present a false expression, but overtime, successful invocation of deep acting may be beneficial for the individual. If deep acting is effective, emotional displays will meet display rules, and customers will be pleased resulting in positive rewards both from the organization and the customer. A meta-analysis on emotional labor provided support for these outcomes of deep acting as it was linked to improved emotional performance and personal accomplishment (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). These positive outcomes restore resources that can be reinvested into the work and can promote future extra-role behaviors. For example, Kiffin-Petersen and colleagues (2011) found support for positive relationships between deep acting and individually-focused and organizationally-focused OCBs. It seems that deep acting is a “no pain, no gain” situation where the customer benefits, but there are initial costs to the employee. Presumably there are benefits to the employee over time as the deep acting leads to improved job performance and reduced strain on the employee (Grandey 2015).

**Surface acting as a predictor of outcomes.** Surface acting was negatively related to job satisfaction, which is consistent with previous literature (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Hülsheger &
Schewe, 2011). When an individual is faking at work, negative outcomes (e.g., burnout) follow and job satisfaction suffers due to the exhausting consumption of psychological resources. However, there was not a significant relationship between customer-oriented behaviors and surface acting. This null relationship may suggest that the resource depletion due to surface acting does not necessarily impact customers or discretionary behaviors. For instance, Hülsheger and Schewe (2011) found small negative relationships with task performance and customer satisfaction, but credibility intervals contained zero, so these relationships may be unreliable. Moreover, Kiffin-Petersen and colleagues (2011) did not find a significant relationship between surface acting and OCBs. Thus, it seems surface acting does not impact all forms of performance but does hurt job satisfaction.

As with deep acting, surface acting appears to have costs to the individual but unlike with deep acting, these costs appear to be stronger, more pervasive, and problematic for well-being. Surface acting is linked not only to decreased job satisfaction but also increased emotional exhaustion, psychological strain, and psychosomatic complaints (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Performance may be saved from negative consequence though if surface acting is only used with certain situational constraints or personality types and if employees do not see customer-oriented behaviors as extra-role. Instead, they provide the desired customer service, even if surface acting, for other reasons such as avoiding reprimand. In sum, surface acting appears to impact well-being but not job performance.

**The Role of Emotional Labor Strategies Mediators**

The third objective of this study was to investigate whether the relationship of EDA fit on outcomes was mediated by the emotional regulation strategies. I tested these relationships using both continuous and categorical methods; however, only categorical methods supported the
mediated relationships between EDA fit and both outcomes via emotional labor strategies. The need for more powerful statistics to produce the indirect pathways suggests that these relationships are not as explicative as the direct pathways, which have stronger effects.

Natural expression mediated the pathways between EDA fit and both outcomes suggesting that the gains in job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors are caused by employees displaying emotions naturally because they have a high level of EDA fit. The store of resources expected with natural expression leads to greater job satisfaction and greater customer-oriented behaviors. Notably, the direct pathways between EDA fit and job satisfaction and EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors were also significant and substantially stronger than the indirect pathways indicating that natural expression is not the only or most salient means to improved outcomes. Thus, natural expression may have a small but significant role in explaining the relationship between EDA fit and enhanced well-being and performance.

EDA fit also acted on customer-oriented behaviors both directly and through the construct of deep acting. This is logical as employees who are deep acting are purposefully trying to improve their job performance by meeting display rules. Again, the indirect effect was weaker than the direct effect meaning that deep acting is not the primary pathway between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors. These results support relationships suggested by Grandey and Gabriel (2015), in which they expected that focal antecedents that measured person-job congruence influence emotional labor strategies which influence focal outcomes such as individual and organizational well-being.

**The Role of Commitment to Display Rules as a Moderator**

The fourth and final objective of this study was to better understand the role of congruent and incongruent natural expression as a potential moderator of the relationships between natural
expression and study outcomes. As aforementioned, different forms of natural expression have not been explored in research but may relate differently to other variables. To this end, I tested the use of commitment to display rules as a moderator. Commitment to display rules did not prove to be an effective moderator in this study though it was successful in earlier research (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005) where the relationship between display rule perceptions and surface acting was stronger when commitment to display rules was higher. The lack of interaction between natural expression and commitment to display rules may indicate that those who naturally act are completely indifferent to the display rules or it may suggest that organizationally-deviant natural expression did not occur often enough to be detected.

Summary of Findings

In summary, EDA fit was considered both in terms of its effect on well-being and performance – two qualitatively different outcomes in the work place. Results showed that EDA fit behaves as other P-E fit constructs in that it contributes to both well-being and performance. On the other hand, differential relationships emerged between emotional labor regulation strategies and outcomes suggesting qualitative differences between these strategies. Natural actors, who opt to minimize surface and deep acting, experience a constellation of positive outcomes including greater belief in ability, greater commitment to the display rules of the job, greater satisfaction at work and greater willingness to go above and beyond their job requirements. Simply put, these individuals are in a suitable job. Natural actors maintain a healthy reserve of resources both because they don’t expend as much relatively, and they build resources through successful interactions. Their strong belief in their ability to be successful at work drives their choice to naturally act and leads to positive outcomes.
But all is not lost for deep actors. The positive intercorrelations between EDA fit, job satisfaction, customer-oriented behaviors, commitment to display rules, and deep acting suggest that there is a class of employees who feel efficacious in meeting display rules and are willing to expend effort to do so. For deep actors, the investment of resources yields short-term losses but long-term gains as their job satisfaction suffers but customer-oriented behavior increases. The benefits to service from deep acting has been established in prior work where deep acting was linked to extrarole service performance and ability to meet customer expectations (Chi, Grandey, Diamond, & Krimmel, 2011). However, as found by Grandey (2000) deep acting is a temporary stage on the way to natural expression in which an employee is learning to meet display rules. This explains the why deep acting is not as prevalent as natural acting since it is a temporary and transitory stage for many employees. In fact, age is positively related to greater natural expression (Dahling & Perez, 2010), and it is likely that when employees are older, or have greater organization tenure, they can naturally act and no longer need to deep act. This bodes well for the deep actor who must pay the price of deep acting for a short while before receiving a return on investment as a natural actor.

Finally, surface acting is a pathway for the unhappy. These employees are not well-suited to their work environments and for them emotional labor is an expense with no proceeds. Surface actors have decreased job satisfaction and do not perform above and beyond their work roles. Surface acting has no relationship with perceived ability but rather may reflect a simple lack of motivation. The negative relationship with commitment to display rules suggests that employees who surface act have a diminished desire to even try to meet display rules through deep acting. These individuals appear to do the bare minimum to maintain employment but do not enjoy the work. Thus, service work costs surface actors resources that are unlikely to replenish at work.
The moderate negative correlation between surface acting and natural expression suggests that those who are naturally suited to the environment feel little need to fake, and conversely, those who surface act cannot naturally express themselves at work. Surface actors are not happy at work, but these findings suggest that they do not withhold service to customers especially if they deem all service to be in-role.

Overall, it is clear that natural expression is the most desirable method for performing emotional labor, but deep acting is superior to surface acting, which supports ample previous research (Humphrey et al., 2015). The relationship between job satisfaction, customer-oriented behaviors and commitment to display rules all weaken when moving from natural expression to deep acting and weaken again when considering surface acting. Natural expression is a powerful predictor of outcomes and a mediator between individual perceptions and outcomes. It is the most endorsed emotional regulation strategy but the least studied. Thus, further research into this construct is needed and imminent.

**Limitations, Future Directions, and Implications**

Though this study makes several contributions to the growing research on emotional labor, there are some limitations that require consideration. Firstly, the ordinal nature and slight non-normality was initially disregarded in favor of the standard treatment for this type of data in industrial-organization psychology. However, some findings changed once the ordinality of the data was considered. This may suggest a lack of power that could have been managed with a larger sample size. A-priori power analyses did indicate insufficient sample sizes for many of the structural equation models, to this end, the mediated models were also explored using the causal steps approach (Baron & Kenny, 1986) but nothing was gained from this investigation. Future
research should try to replicate these findings with a larger sample size to determine if inadequate power was the only reason models were unsupported.

Secondly, this study used self-report measures. EDA fit was measured directly with three items asking individuals to assess the match between their job and abilities jointly. Indirect measures of person-environment fit, where an individual evaluates his/herself and the environment in separate items (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), are also available (Becker, 2009) and in some cases may be preferred over direct measures because they prevent confounding of person and environment (Edwards, 1991). Experts in person-environment fit advise against using both approaches interchangeably as they have different strengths and weaknesses. Thus, replication with the indirect measure should be conducted.

Finally, employee responses might have been influenced by the nature of the data collection in that employees were surveyed at their workplace about work experiences and performance. Although employees were informed that the survey was anonymous and that they could not be punished for their responses, they may have been more cautious about responding in non-favorable ways. The employees may have felt pressure to answer with socially desirable responses if they believed that they could be identified in some way. Additionally, the survey was lengthy, and fatigue may have compromised data quality; however, careless responding items were included in the survey and results remained unchanged after screening out individuals who were deemed to be careless responders. Researcher may attempt to replicate the relationships in this study with data collection away from the workplace.

Future researchers should build on this work by exploring other emotion-based variables that come into play in service organizations and see if EDA fit is predictive. For example, EDA fit has not been studied in conjunction with non-customer-oriented OCBs, but this effort is
worthwhile to see if individual beliefs in abilities lead to benefits only for customers or whether the conserved resources benefit co-workers and the organization as well. Moreover, natural expression should be studied further. The assumption that individuals conform to display rules is troublesome and should be explored. Future researchers should consider other methods to parse out potential different forms of natural expression and re-investigate the relationships. For example, perhaps developing direct measures of concordant and deviant natural expression should be attempted. The dimensionality of natural expression is important to consider given how natural expression has emerged as a powerful and salient construct in emotional labor research.

The implications of EDA fit are important because it is clear that high EDA fit leads to beneficial outcomes for both individuals and organizations. Knowledge of an individual’s EDA fit ahead of time may be useful in selection and promotion when applicants have previous experience in the job type. In addition, employers can benefit from identifying their natural actors, deep actors, and surface actors and building training programs customized for each. Perhaps some surface actors can be trained to identify and engage in deep acting strategies when they are faced with emotional demands. For example, Hochschild (1983) found that training employees to appraise situations differently was successful at attenuating employee stressors. With time, deep actors might develop into natural expressers via training, experience, and increased P-E fit. Finally, surface acting may be minimized in the workplace through careful selection programs that tend away from hiring individuals with negative affective traits or by trying to prevent situations with high interaction characteristics that may induce surface acting.

Conclusions

Research on person-environment fit has shown that when alignment between an
employee’s KSAOs and the environment is high, both the individual and the organization benefit. The present study explored a new fit construct, EDA fit, that assessed the perceived congruence between emotional demands of a workplace and emotional abilities of an employee. The results of this investigation showed that EDA fit was related both to performance and well-being as well as the emotional labor strategies that are often employed in customer service settings. This information has implications for organizations with respect to training and selection.
References


Table 1  
*Power Analysis for Structural Equation Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th># of LVs</th>
<th># of OVs</th>
<th>Minimum Sample Size</th>
<th>Minimum Sample Size</th>
<th>Minimum Sample Size</th>
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<td>1-11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>12a: EDA → NE→JS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b: EDA → DA→JS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12c: EDA → SA→JS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>13a: EDA → NE→COB</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>13b: EDA → DA→COB</td>
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<td>1258</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHa: NE*CtDR → JS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHb: NE*CtDR → COB</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* LV = latent variable. OV = observed (indicator variable). Job satisfaction was measured with two items after one item was removed from analyses. Power = .80. Effect sizes from Cohen (1988).
Table 2
Goodness of Fit Statistics for the Emotional Labor Measurement Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>MLM $\chi^2$ ($df$)</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
<th>$\Delta \chi^2$ ($df$) compared to 3-factor model</th>
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<tr>
<td>3-Factor</td>
<td>157.140 (74)</td>
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<td>.047</td>
<td>.941</td>
<td>.928</td>
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<td>2-Factor</td>
<td>292.977 (76)</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>152.682 (2)***</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-Factor</td>
<td>648.115 (77)</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td>.522</td>
<td>234.1197 (1)***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$, *** indicates $p < .001$. The chi-square difference test was conducted using the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square for the MLM (Satorra-Bentler’s Maximum Likelihood Mean Adjusted) estimator.
Table 3
*Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlation Coefficients*

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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</thead>
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<td>2. NE</td>
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<td>.89</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3. DA</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. SA</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. JS</td>
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<td>-1.35</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-1.9*</td>
<td>.76</td>
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<td>6. COB</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>.52</td>
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<td>1.39</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.83</td>
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<td>7. CtDR</td>
<td>4.33</td>
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<td>-1.7*</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.89</td>
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</table>

*Note.* * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$. N = 160. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. EDA = emotional demands-abilities fit. NE = natural expression. DA = deep acting. SA = surface acting. JS = job satisfaction. COB = customer-oriented behaviors. CtDR = commitment to display rules. Cronbach’s alpha is on the diagonal.
Table 4
Polychoric And Spearman Correlation Coefficients

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>-.45**</td>
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<td>.19*</td>
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<td>4. SA</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>5. JS</td>
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<td>6. COB</td>
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<td>-.21**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
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Note. * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$. $N = 160$. Polychoric correlations are below the diagonal. Spearman correlations are above the diagonal. EDA = emotional demands-abilities fit. NE = natural expression. DA = deep acting. SA = surface acting. JS = job satisfaction. COB = customer-oriented behaviors. CtDR = commitment to display rules.
Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model
Figure 2. Structural equation modeling results for the mediated relationship of EDA fit on job satisfaction via all emotional regulation strategies. All coefficients are standardized. Pathways on the left utilize the MLM estimator for continuous data. Pathways on the right utilize the WLSMV estimator for ordered-categorical (ordinal) data. Dotted lines represent non-significant pathways. Solid lines represent significant pathways. EDA = emotional demands-abilities fit. NE = natural expression. DA = deep acting. SA = surface acting. JS = job satisfaction. * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$
Figure 3. Structural equation modeling results for the mediated relationship of EDA fit on customer-oriented behaviors via all emotional regulation strategies. All coefficients are standardized. Pathways on the left utilize the MLM estimator for continuous data. Pathways on the right utilize the WLSMV estimator for ordered-categorical (ordinal) data. Dotted lines represent non-significant pathways. Solid lines represent significant pathways. EDA = emotional demands-abilities fit. NE = natural expression. DA = deep acting. SA = surface acting. COB = customer-oriented behaviors. * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$
APPENDIX
A Mediated Model of Emotional-Demands Abilities Fit and Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies

Having the right person in the right job enhances job performance in a workplace. Person-environment (P-E) fit is the suitability for a specific individual to function in a certain situation (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). P-E fit is high and favorable outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment result when the attributes of the individual and those of the environment align. A mismatch between person and environment yields a lack of fit and undesirable consequences like stress and withdrawal behaviors (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

The value of P-E fit has led to increased research efforts from which researchers have identified over 40 different types of P-E fit (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). One subcategory of P-E fit is demands-abilities (D-A) fit, which assesses the match between an employee’s job requirements and his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). D-A fit can target specific abilities such as creativity (Choi, 2004) or motivating subordinates (Edwards, 1996). In this paper, I focus on the specific alignment between the emotional demands of the workplace and the emotional abilities of the employee. Emotional demands-abilities (EDA) fit is a facet-level variety of D-A fit that was developed by researchers to assess the congruency between a person’s emotional capabilities and the emotional demands of the job (Diefendorff, Greguras, & Fleenor, 2016).

The identification of EDA fit is part of the “affective revolution” - a movement seeking to incorporate affective components into efforts to understand the workplace (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). However, only limited research exists on EDA fit. The scholarship that does exist states that EDA fit has incremental validity above and beyond other P-E fit measures (Diefendorff et al., 2016). Further, important attitudinal and performance
outcomes relate to EDA fit. Given the value of EDA fit and the recent recognition of the importance of affect in the workplace, it is important to build on this introductory work and further explore the construct. As such, the purpose of this paper is to attempt to replicate and build on the EDA fit research started by Diefendorff and colleagues (2016), as well as further integrate EDA fit into existing research regarding both emotions in the workplace and the broader construct of P-E fit.

**Person-Environment Fit**

Both person- and environmental-level factors influence an individual’s experience at work. Person-level influences include an individual’s knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs; Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). Other characteristics can include needs or personality. Ample evidence suggests that variation in these person-specific factors can lead to different performance levels and different experiences in the workplace (e.g. Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011; Mitchell & Daniels, 2003). Environmental factors, such as job demands, reward systems, culture and climate, and physical environment can also relate differentially to employee performance (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011; Edwards et al., 2006). Given that individual and environmental characteristics can both vary, researchers investigate the match between the abilities of an individual and the commensurate demands of the individual’s environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

According to P-E fit theory, a misalignment between a person and the environmental demands leads to stress – especially in cases where the demands of the environment outweigh the individual’s KSAOs (Edwards et al., 1998). This stress can lead to both psychological strain (e.g. anxiety or dissatisfaction) and physiological strain (e.g. increased blood pressure or
increased smoking habits). While having greater abilities than demanded may not be as deleterious, this condition has the potential to be problematic for the individual as well. For example, even cases of boredom, where abilities outweigh demands, are likely to lead to psychological strain.

In contrast, high P-E fit makes a positive difference for both the organization and the individual, as a match between workers’ KSAOs and their situational demands protects them from stress and leads to better performance and well-being (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In a large meta-analysis investigating multiple types of fit (i.e., person-job, person-supervisor, person-organization, and person-group), Kristof-Brown and colleagues (2005) found that greater fit related to better performance, higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intentions.

Edwards and Shipp (2007) presented an integrative framework of the many different conceptualizations of person-environment fit. They explored three different categories of P-E fit (supplementary fit, demands-abilities fit, and needs-supplies fit), which were further studied with different contents (i.e., facet, domain, and global) and environmental-levels (i.e., individual, job, group, organization, and vocation) leading to the delineation of 45 distinct types of P-E fit. Of particular interest in this paper is demands-abilities fit. High D-A fit relates positively to organizationally desired outcomes such as job satisfaction and job performance (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), whereas low D-A fit can lead to anxiety and depression (Park, Beehr, Han, & Grebner, 2012). As aforementioned, D-A fit has been investigated globally (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown, 2000), and on a facet-level that focuses on demands and abilities for specific tasks in a workplace (Edwards & Shipp, 2007).
Among demands and abilities, those that pertain to emotions often come into play in an organization (Elfenbein, 2007). A focus on demands and abilities that pertain to emotions is timely due to the increased focus on the pervasive role that emotions play at work in organizational psychology and organizational behavior literatures (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). In line with these efforts, this paper focuses on emotional demands and abilities fit (EDA fit).

**Emotions and the Work Context**

Recognition of the importance of emotions in the workplace is a relatively new phenomenon (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Only in the last three decades have researchers recognized that emotions play a role in the motivation of employees in the workplace. Thus, incorporating affective components into theory will lead to a greater understanding of workplace behavior (Barsade, Brief, Spataro, & Greenberg, 2003). Over time, jobs have become more interactive and require more interpersonal interaction (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). As emotions are a large part of interpersonal functioning, understanding emotions is vital (Grandey, 2008).

Researchers in organizational psychology and organizational behavior understand that the emotional experiences of employees while at work influence employee well-being, employee performance, and many organizational-level work outcomes (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; George & Brief, 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). For example, positive affect has been linked to better decision making (Staw & Barsade, 1993) and creativity (James, Brodersen, & Eisenberg, 2004), whereas negative feelings have been linked to increased turnover intentions (George & Jones, 1996). Additionally, emotional work is a large component of many different types of jobs, including service work (customer service and retail), caring work (nurses and doctors), and social control work (police officers and judges; Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008). The
The marriage of the literatures on person-environment fit and emotions in the workplace is emotional demands-ability fit.

**Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit**

Emotional demands-abilities fit (EDA fit), the perceived match between the emotional requirements of one’s workplace and one’s own abilities to meet those demands, received focus as a by-product of the affective revolution of the 21st century (Diefendorff et al., 2016). EDA fit relies completely on the individual’s perception. An employee subjectively assesses his or her own emotional abilities and emotional demands. Employee perceptions of their own emotional abilities are likely to rely on their perceptions of differences in personality (Goldberg, 1992), emotional intelligence (Barsade & Gibson, 2007), or disposition (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). For example, employees high in extraversion, emotional intelligence, or positive affectivity may rate their own emotional abilities higher.

The emotional demands are a function of the job itself. Organizations dictate these demands, which may include interaction characteristics or display rules. Interaction characteristics include frequency, duration, or routineness of interactions (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005). Increases in any interaction characteristic relate to increases in emotional demands. Display rules are the organizationally-dictated guidelines for how employees display emotions at work (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Display rules prescribe what emotions employees should display and should not display. In evaluating EDA fit, employees compare their perceptions of emotional demands against their perceptions of their abilities to manage the demands.

In their seminal work, Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) found that the EDA fit was an empirically distinct fit conceptualization. In two studies that used full-time, adult employees, the
researchers found that after controlling for overall demands-abilities fit, needs-supplies fit, person-organization fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-group fit, EDA correlated with performance and well-being variables. Specifically, EDA fit related positively to self- and supervisor-ratings of job performance, job satisfaction and psychological need satisfaction. Furthermore, with the same controls, they found that EDA fit was associated negatively with work tension, inauthenticity and burnout.

To date, only one other study has investigated EDA fit. Using a person-centered approach, researchers determined that when EDA fit is high, employees are much less likely to engage in any emotional faking behaviors at work in order to make their external emotions match their job’s expectations (Gabriel, Daniels, Diefendorff & Greguras, 2015). The lack of faking, as will be discussed below, is beneficial to the individual. Given the value of P-E fit, and EDA fit more specifically, it is worthwhile to continue exploration of this construct to understand better its antecedents and outcomes.

**Potential Outcomes of Emotional Demands Fit**

Because research on EDA fit is so recent, researchers have not explored the full nomological network. The limited existing scholarship has linked EDA fit to several outcome variables such as job satisfaction; however, to be reliable, these relationships require replication. EDA fit is also most relevant for service jobs, so it follows that it should be especially relevant for service-orientated outcomes. Customer-oriented behaviors are one example of a positive outcome specific to service organizations. Thus, I will examine the relation between EDA fit and both the broad construct of job satisfaction, and the more specific outcome of customer-oriented behaviors.
Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction is “…a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). It relates to many positive outcomes for employees and organizations, such as increased organizational commitment, increased job performance (Brown & Peterson, 1993), reduced anxiety, and decreased workplace turnover (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001; Organ, 1990; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Yang, 2010). Diefendorff and colleagues (2016) anticipated that high EDA fit would relate to positive feelings and consequently increase job satisfaction. Researchers found support for this hypothesis with one sample of mainly Chinese, full-time, adult employees but a study with a second sample consisting of managers from the United States did not lead to find a positive link. The conflicting results may be a function of ethnic differences, organizational function, or simply random chance; regardless, further research is warranted. Because EDA fit reflects a beneficial match between employee and organization, it is reasonable to expect a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Given the expectation of positive outcomes from EDA fit, I hypothesize the following (see Figure 1):

Hypothesis 1: EDA fit will positively relate to job satisfaction.

Customer-Oriented Behaviors. Customer-oriented behaviors (COBs) are a specific type of work performance that is of particular interest to service-based organizations (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997). COBs are a particular type of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCBs are discretionary, informal behaviors that reflect employees’ inclinations and efforts to go beyond their prescribed job descriptions to help their organization and coworkers (Organ & Paine, 1999). These behaviors improve the work environment and facilitate interpersonal relationships (Organ, 1997). COBs are OCBs that employees direct specifically towards the customer and that indicate employees’ interest in exerting extra effort to provide superior
customer service to customers (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997; Bettencourt, Gwinner, & Meuter, 2001; Wu & Liao, 2016). COBs are important because they enhance customer service quality and customer experience.

To understand factors that may influence the exhibition of OCBs (and COBs), it is helpful to describe them in the context of conservation of resources (COR) theory. COR theory posits that individuals have resources (e.g. objects, conditions, personal characteristics or energies) that they seek to protect and increase (Hobfoll, 2001). The use or loss of resources by job demands can lead to decreased effort, burnout, or strain. Employees, therefore, seek to protect and recover resources to lower strain. Individual’s resources replenish through rewards received from good performance or through positive social interactions (Hobfoll, 1989).

An adequate store of resources correlates with suitable P-E fit (Wheeler, Halbesleben, & Shanine, 2013) and increased tendency to engage in OCBs (Astakhova, 2015; Chiu & Tsai, 2006). OCBs also related positively to increases in P-E fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). When P-E fit is high, the employee experiences less stress and retains resources, which may be expended to engage in OCBs or COBs. Demonstration of OCBs, as well as desirable job performance, will lead to replenished resources because positive feedback and positive interactions are restorative. Therefore, it follows that when EDA fit is high, and performance is enhanced (Diefendorff et al., 2016), individuals will be more likely to have greater resources from positive feedback and minimized job strain. Individuals can allocate the surplus of resources towards discretionary behaviors such as COBs. Thus, I hypothesize (see Figure 1):

**Hypothesis 2**: EDA fit will positively relate to customer-oriented behaviors.
**Emotional Labor**

A highly important topic in emotion research is emotional labor (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Emotional labor is a by-product of job design that has consequences for both employees and the organization (Hochschild, 1983). It refers to the way employees manage organizational expectations of emotional displays at work (i.e. display rules; Hochschild, 1983). The three different strategies for regulating emotional displays include surface acting, deep acting, and displaying naturally felt emotions (henceforth called natural expression; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

Surface acting reflects a choice to superficially alter the external display of emotions but make no effort to change true feelings. Deep acting is a purposeful attempt to change internal feelings in order to cause an external display of the desired emotion. Finally, natural expression is the exhibition of unaltered, spontaneous, and genuine feelings. This third variety indicates that employees may display emotions that require no effortful adjustments (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

The different strategies for managing the emotional requirements of the job suggest that individuals may have different preferences or emotional abilities that lead to different approaches to meet the job demands. By definition, natural expression will occur when there is no discrepancy between the required emotions and the felt emotions. In cases of high EDA fit, one would expect this alignment, which would be the desired circumstance for both the employee and the organization. The literature shows that natural expression is the most frequently utilized but least studied regulation method, which indicates the need for continued study (Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff, 2015; Diefendorff et al., 2005).

Lack of a discrepancy between felt and expected emotions is not always the case. Emotional dissonance is certain when organizations instruct employees to display emotions they
do not feel, (Grandey, Diefendorff, & Rupp, 2013). Employees may then choose to surface act or deep act in order to manage their job requirements. As surface and deep acting reflect modifications individuals makes to fit their environment. Use of either strategy suggests that the match between the employees and their environment is minimal. This indicates low EDA fit.

In the only study to relate EDA fit to emotional labor, Gabriel and colleagues (2015) identified five separate types of actors: deep actors, surface actors, regulators, low actors, and non-actors. Each type of actor utilized different levels of surface and deep acting. Deep and surface actors where high on deep and surface acting respectively, but low on the other regulation strategy. Regulators were high on both strategies, low actors used both strategies moderately, and non-actors used extremely low levels of either type of emotional regulation strategy. Among these five acting types, EDA fit distinguished non-actors from all other profiles. Although this study did not use a direct measure of natural expression, the authors designated “non-actors” to be those employees who manifested both extremely low surface and extremely low deep acting. Therefore, these employees were likely displaying genuine feelings. When EDA fit is high, individual are less likely to need to fake emotions and are more likely to display their natural emotions. Thus, I hypothesize (see Figure 1):

**Hypothesis 3:** EDA fit will positively relate to natural expression.

**Hypothesis 4:** EDA fit will negatively relate to deep acting

**Hypothesis 5:** EDA fit will negatively relate to surface acting

**Emotional Labor and Job Satisfaction.** Natural expression and high EDA fit relate positively to work engagement, organizational citizenship behaviors (Cheung & Lun, 2015), and job satisfaction (Diefendorff et al., 2016). These findings are not surprising given that natural expression and high EDA fit suggest that employees are able to meet the demands of their
environment and should therefore not experience emotional dissonance or stress. In terms of COR theory, natural expression requires the least resources of all the emotional regulation strategies because the employee is not using resources to force external displays, and so the employee is less likely to feel strain.

On the other hand, the experience of emotional dissonance (i.e. discrepancy between internally felt and externally displayed feelings), requires greater resources to manage and is linked to harmful outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, withdrawal, less commitment, and turnover (Abraham, 1999; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Emotional dissonance is certain with surface acting or deep acting, meaning either strategy is more harmful than natural expression (Humphrey et al., 2015). However, the ample research regarding surface acting and deep acting has overwhelmingly found that surface acting is the more pernicious strategy (Humphrey et al., 2015; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011).

Deep acting is less damaging to an individual because the internal efforts to modify feelings to match required emotions minimizes emotional dissonance. For example, thinking of an unhappy time in one’s life in order to display sympathy to a customer reduces emotional dissonance more so than feeling internally happy but having to appear sympathetic. With deep acting, reduced emotional dissonance requires fewer resources. In contrast, surface acting uses the greatest resources because the false outward expression requires constant monitoring and maintenance (Humphrey et al., 2015). The literature on emotional labor supports the benefit of deep acting over surface acting. Deep acting is related to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction (Bhave & Glomb, 2016), personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), and improved job performance (Humphrey et al., 2015), whereas surface acting is related to emotional exhaustion (Chau, Dahling, Levy, & Diefendorff, 2009), job dissatisfaction.
Given the support for positive relationships between natural expression and deep acting with job satisfaction and a negative relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction, I propose:

**Hypothesis 6:** Natural expression will relate positively to job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 7:** Deep acting will relate positively to job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 8:** Surface acting will relate negatively to job satisfaction.

**Emotional Labor and Customer-Oriented Behaviors.** Researchers have found positive relationships between deep acting and natural expression with OCBs (Cheung & Lun, 2015). Surface acting on the other hand negatively relates to OCBs (Yue, Wang, & Groth, 2015). From a conservation of resources perspective, this follows as the depletion of resources and consequential strain from faking during surface acting is less likely to lead the employee to engage in extra-role positive behaviors. In contrast, natural expression will preserve resources that can be invested in OCBs because no resources are used to align external expression with the organizationally-required emotional display. Finally, deep acting is not as costly as surface acting because continuous resources are not used; however, some resources are necessary to change the inwardly felt emotion so that the outward display complies with display rules. Given this, I propose the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 9:** Natural expression will relate positively to customer-oriented behaviors.

**Hypothesis 10:** Deep acting will relate positively to customer-oriented behaviors.

**Hypothesis 11:** Surface acting will relate negatively to customer-oriented behaviors.

**The Nuance of Natural Expression**
As stated by researchers, knowledge of display rules does not presume conformity to them (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). The disagreement between required and felt emotions is known as “emotion-rule dissonance” (Holman, Martinez-Inigo, & Totterdell, 2008; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). This type of dissonance is a precursor to both surface acting and deep acting, but may also exist with naturally expressed emotions. With surface acting and deep acting, the emotion-rule dissonance exists requiring surface acting or deep acting to yield an organizationally-desired display; however, in cases of natural expression, even if emotional dissonance (i.e., disagreement between felt and expressed emotions) does not exist, emotion-rule dissonance may. This would appear as a genuine expression of organizationally-inappropriate emotions, such as yelling at customer who annoys you.

Current tools to measure natural expression do not differentiate between whether the emotion expressed is in alignment with display rules or not (Diefendorff et al., 2005), but the difference is meaningful as emotion-rule dissonance is linked to negative consequences such as emotional exhaustion, psychological strain, and reduced organizational attachment (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Naturally expressed emotions that are dissonant with the display rules of the organization may therefore lead to negative consequences rather than the positive outcomes generally associated with natural expression as discussed above. For example, an employee who displays natural but undesired emotions in a job setting may experience rebuke from supervisors. Depending on the individual and the consequence of the discordant natural expression, resources may be used differently. For example, an employee may save resources by choosing to refuse to engage in faking behaviors, or an employee may use resources to manage the possible punishment and feeling of failure in the work context.
Distinguishing between natural expressions that are congruent with organizational display rules requires measuring the employee’s commitment to display rules as done by researchers previously (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Commitment to display rules reflects an employee’s intention and effort towards displaying organizationally desired emotions. For my purposes, I will be mindful of the difference between natural expression that is concordant with company desires and not. I will incorporate and manage this nuance differently depending on frequency of deviance.

An Integrated Framework

Efforts to investigate the relationships between EDA fit, emotional regulation strategies, and both personal and organizational outcomes are worthwhile given that EDA fit is a new construct that requires further study and validation. In order to better understand the role of EDA fit, researchers should investigate possible mechanisms through which it influences important work outcomes. The emotional labor strategies discussed above are possible routes through which EDA fit may influence outcomes indirectly. Scholars believe that the way an employee perceives the emotional demands of his or her workplace will influence the choice in emotional regulation strategy to meet the emotional requirements of the job (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Kim, 2008; Mesmer-Magnus, DeChurch, & Wax, 2011). These regulation strategies, in turn, lead to different work outcomes for the organization and the individual (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Grandey, 2000; Grandey, 2003; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Kim, 2008; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). For example, Goldberg and Grandey (2007) found that surface acting mediates the relationship between display rules and outcomes related to resource depletion (namely, exhaustion and task performance).
A similar model may best suit the constructs presented above, given the conceptual similarities. Mediated models of emotional labor suggest that characteristics of the job (such as the emotional job requirements or EDA fit) relate to emotional regulation strategies, which further relate to outcomes. The resources available for performance or well-being depend on the expenditure of resources during emotional regulation, which are reliant on the conditions of the workplace. Thus, a mediated model of emotional labor is proposed (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007). In the present study, I will investigate this mediated model using job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors as work outcomes. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 12: (a) Natural expression (b) deep acting and (c) surface acting mediate the relationship between EDA fit and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 13: (a) Natural expression (b) deep acting and (c) surface acting mediate the relationship between EDA fit and customer-oriented behaviors.

Summary

Overall, I expect that EDA fit will relate to job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors both directly and indirectly. Indirectly, EDA fit will influence job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors via emotional regulation strategy, such that greater EDA fit will relate positively to natural expression and negatively to surface acting and deep acting. Faking emotions superficially (i.e. surface acting) is likely to have a negative impact on both job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors in employees. Engaging in sincere efforts to modify feelings so that they match the job requirements better (i.e., deep acting) or simply and naturally displaying appropriate emotions demanded by the work (i.e., natural expression) will enhance job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors.
Method

Participants and Procedure

I will collect data from customer service workers employed by a Southeastern hotel management company. Both male and female employees of varying racial backgrounds and ages will be in the sample. They will be both full-time and part-time employees with different jobs within the hospitality industry. Employees will complete online surveys containing survey items described in the subsequent sections and delineated in Appendix A. A native Spanish speaker, with no affiliation to the company, will translate the survey questions into Spanish for non-English speakers. A translator, with no affiliation to the company, will translate the survey questions into other languages for non-English speakers as needed. I will use a back-translation method to ensure proper translation. Employees will complete appropriate consent forms and will receive a compensatory gift card upon completion of the survey. A facilitator, who is fluent in English and Spanish, will be available to help participants to complete the survey if they cannot read or use a computer independently.

Measures

The online survey will include demographic questions to assess the participants’ age, gender, educational background, tenure with the company, and employment status (full-time or part-time). In addition, participants will complete the following scales. A complete list of all items in the survey is available in Appendix A.

Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit. I will assess perceived emotional demands-abilities fit using the three-item scale developed by Diefendorff et al. (2016). The items, based on earlier work of Cable and DeRue (2002) include “The match is very good between the emotional demands of my job and my personal skills,” “My ability to manage my emotions is a good fit
with the requirements of my job,” and “My personal abilities and background provide a good match with the emotional demands that my job places on me.” Participants will evaluate these on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 5 = completely). Cronbach’s alpha from the original work was .87.

**Emotional regulation.** I will assess surface acting, deep acting, and natural expression using the same emotional labor items utilized in Diefendorff et al. (2005). In Diefendorff and colleagues (2005), subscales to measure each type of emotional labor were developed by selecting relevant items from two other emotional labor measures: Kruml and Geddes (2000) and Brotheridge & Lee (2003). I chose to follow this procedure because it led to distinct items to measure all three strategies for emotional labor, unlike previous scales that only assessed surface acting and deep acting strategies. Participants will respond to all items using a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree). Researchers have used this emotion regulation scale in previous investigations and have reported Cronbach alphas for the scales assessing surface, deep, and natural expression strategies as 0.91, 0.82, and 0.75 respectively (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

**Surface acting.** I will use seven items to measure the amount of surface acting employees believe they engage in. The subscale will include five questions from the Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003), and 2 items that were adapted from the emotive dissonance-emotive effort scale from Kruml & Geddes (2000). These are the same items previously used by Diefendorff and colleagues (2005). One example item is “I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way.”

**Deep acting.** As done in previous research (Diefendorff et al., 2005), I will use four items to measure the amount of deep acting in which employees believe they engage. The subscale will
include three items from the Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and a single item from Kruml and Geddes (2000). A sample item is “I try to actually experience the emotions I must show to customers.”

**Natural Expression.** The scale of natural expression is comprised of two items that were previously developed by Diefendorff and colleagues, (2005) and one item from Kruml and Geddes (2000). The natural expression scale included questions such as “The emotions I express to customers are genuine.”

**Job satisfaction.** I have chosen to evaluate job satisfaction with a three-item subscale on the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins & Klesh, 1979). Items include “All in all, I am satisfied with my job”, “In general, I don’t like my job” (reverse-coded), and “In general, I like working here.” Participants will rate all items on a five-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree). Cronbach’s alpha estimate was 0.84 (Bowling & Hammond, 2008).

**Customer-oriented behaviors.** I will measure behaviors reflecting the employee’s desire to serve the customer beyond organizationally specified job role requirements using the 5-item service delivery subscale of the customer-oriented boundary-spanning behavior scale (Bettencourt, Brown, & MacKenzie, 2005). Researchers estimated Cronbach’s alpha for this scale to be 0.91. Example items include “Regardless of circumstances, I am exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers” and “I follow up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.” Participants will rate all items on a five-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree).

**Commitment to Display Rules.** I will measure behaviors reflecting the employee’s commitment to expressing the emotions desired by the organizational display rules using a 4-
item scale of organizational commitment. I will modify the KUT scale (Klein, Cooper, Molloy, & Swanson, Unidimensional, Target-free), that Klein and colleagues developed (2014) by changing the target of each item to the display of organizationally expected emotions. Researchers who have examined other targets of commitment, such as an organizational goal, found an estimated Cronbach’s alpha for this scale to be around 0.97 (e.g., Klein et al., 2014). An example item is “How committed are you to displaying the emotions expected of you by your organization?” Participants will rate all items on a five-point Likert scale (5 = completely to 1 = not at all).

**Proposed Analyses**

I will first calculate descriptive statistics for all study variables. Next, I will create a matrix of correlations among study variables. Hypothesis 1 and 2 will be assessed by calculating a correlation between EDA fit and job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors, respectively. I will examine correlations between EDA fit and each regulation strategy to evaluate Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5. With respect to hypotheses 6-11, I will assess my predictions using the calculated correlation between each regulation strategy and the two outcomes of interest (job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors).

Mediation analyses will be explored using structural equation modeling for Hypotheses 12a-c and 13a-c. Six models will be tested to assess the extent to which each of the three regulation strategies mediate the relationship between EDA fit and both job satisfaction and customer-oriented behaviors. The proposed conceptual model is in Figure 1.
References


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model of relations between emotional demands-abilities fit, emotional
PROPOSAL APPENDIX

Items Measuring Emotional Demands-Abilities Fit
1 – Not at all to 5 - completely

The match is very good between the emotional demands of my job and my personal skills
My ability to manage my emotions is a good fit with the requirements of my job
My personal abilities and background provide a good match with the emotional demands that my job places on me.

Items Measuring Emotional Labor Regulation Strategies

1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree

Surface acting
I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way
I fake a good mood when interacting with customers
I put on a “show” or “performance” when interacting with customers
I just pretend to have the emotions I need to display for my job
I put on a “mask” in order to display the emotions I need for the job
I show feelings to customers that are different from what I feel inside
I fake the emotions I show when dealing with customers

Deep acting
I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to customers.
I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display toward others.
I work hard to feel the emotions that I need to show to customers.
I work at developing the feelings inside of me that I need to show to customers.

Natural expression
The emotions I express to customers are genuine.
The emotions I show customers come naturally.
The emotions I show customers match what I spontaneously feel.
Items Measuring Outcomes

**Job Satisfaction**
All in all, I am satisfied with my job
In general, I do not like my job
In general, I like working here

**Customer-Oriented Behaviors (adapted to for self-report)**
I follow customer service guidelines with extreme care
I follow up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems
Regardless of circumstances, I am exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers
I work hard to follow through on promised I make to customers.
I take time to understand customer needs on an individual basis

Items Measuring Commitment to Display of Organizationally Expected Emotions
(adapted to change target)

How committed are you to displaying the emotions expected of you at the workplace?
To what extent do you care about displaying the emotions expected of you at the workplace?
How dedicated are you to displaying the emotions expected of you at the workplace?
To what extent have you chosen to be committed to displaying the emotions expected of you at the workplace?