

CHAPTER 2

Literature Syntheses

This study focuses on psychological well-being (emotional exhaustion) of FLEs as the result of customer aggression. Thus, this chapter presents the important role of employee psychological well-being and also presents a summary of studies of employees' psychological well-being in various organizations and contexts. The chapter concludes with a review and presentation of antecedents and effects of customer aggression on customer contact employees.

2.1 Psychological well-being of employees

In service organizations FLEs are the pivotal contact point between the organization and their customers – they are the public face of the organization (or brand). Moreover, through interaction with customers they are charged with representing the firm in a favorable light and impact perceptions of service quality. FLEs are not only 'producers' of a service, but they are also have a key marketing role. Therefore, the physical and psychological well-being of FLEs during and after face-to-face interactions with customers is of primary concern to managers. Extreme forms of customer aggression such as customer rage episodes are now an escalating phenomenon, occurring across the globe in store, online, and over the phone with potentially serious consequences not only for FLEs facing the brunt of the outburst, but also for the brand, even other customers, such that rage episodes are incurring substantial economic and social costs (Horovitz, 2011).

In recent years, social workers, airline employees, retail service workers, FLEs in the hospitality industry and even medical doctors have experienced a growing number of incidents of aggressive, deviant customer behaviour (Goussinsky, 2012). For example, three-quarters of Australian doctors had to stare down patients or their relatives who hurled verbal abuse at them over the past year, with nearly a third of them also experiencing physical aggression (Davey, 2012). Therefore it is not

surprising that a persistent issue of human interest in organizations is the well-being or happiness (Russell, 1930) of employees because it is crucial for employee's generally but also their organizational effectiveness and hence productivity.

Psychological well-being is defined as the overall effectiveness of individual psychological functioning (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). During the last century, scholars in organizational sciences focused on the employees' negative aspects of work and life because it impacted on the business, notably sales revenues (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). The emphasizing of negative aspects, while ignoring positive emotions, may become problematic in organization, especially employee behavior. Wright and Cropanzano (2004) stated that now the ratio of negative and positive literature in psychology is about 375:1. Most of the negative literature represents mental illness, depression, burnout, anxiety, fear and anger. As employee dissatisfaction and unhappiness was generated from negative perspective, a mental health approach was presented to address emotional maladjustment of employees. This may explain why the researchers tended to pay attention on positive perspective of well-being. Thus, recently psychology and organizational behavior literatures have taken an interest on positive aspects of psychological well-being (Ryff and Keyes, 1995; Mathur, 2007).

Wright and Cropanzano (2000) have compiled the definitions of psychological well-being and placed them into three characteristics. First, well-being is a phenomenological event (Diener, 1994) or a subjective experience (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). Psychological well-being lies in the experience of the individual; it means that people are happy when they believe that they are so (Wright and Cropanzano, 2000). Second, it involves emotional conditions. Individuals with positive psychology are more likely to engage with positive emotion and less likely to experience negative emotions (Warr, 1990). In other words, people who are happy will react more positively to negative events. Third, Diener, (1994) viewed psychological well-being as a global assessment rather than any specific aspect of one's life domain, thus the meaning of psychological well-being is one's life as a whole. Recently, positive psychological well-being has demonstrated that positive psychological well-being can increase job performance and individual capacity (Robertson et al., 2012). Even the tendency of literature focuses on explaining the role of psychological well-being in a positive way. The psychology and organizational behaviors literature still investigates

psychological well-being constructs in both positive and negative aspects to explain the employee affects, feelings and states in a variety of contexts. Table 2.1 presents a summary of studies of employee's psychological well-being including with relationships of constructs and research results.

Table 2.1 Summary of studies of employee psychological well-being

Authors	Context	Relationships	Results
Grant-Vallone & Encher (2001)	International expatriates	Organizational support → employee well-being	Organizational support predicted employee well-being
Hellgren & Sverke (2003)	Retail supervisors	Job insecurity → Impaired well-being	Job security predicted mental health complaints, but no effect on physical health complaints
Spell and Arnold (2007)	Employees in different organizations	Job control → procedural justice → psychological well-being	Procedural justice partially mediates job control-anxiety and job control-depression relationships
Panaccio & Vandenberghe (2009)	Employees and managers in Companies	Perceived organizational support → organizational commitment → well-being	Affective commitment and lack of employee alternatives mediate perceived organizational support-well-being relationship
Emberland & Rundmo (2010)	Norwegian employed adults	Job insecurity → psychological well-being	Only job insecurity behavior related to psychological well-being
Joslin et al., (2010)	Employees in communications Company	Sociological adjustment → psychological distress	Both perceived acceptance and work standard did not predict psychological distress

Table 2.1 Summary of studies of employee psychological well-being (continued)

Authors	Context	Relationships	Results
Lui (2010)	Employees from companies in Taiwan	Emotional blackmail perception → well-being	Perception of threaten, blame and remorse were negatively associated with well-being
Robertson et al., (2012)	Employees in 12 UK organizations	Psychological well-being → productivity, positive job and work attitude → productivity	Psychological well-being-productivity relationship is stronger than positive job work-productivity relationship
Law et al., (2011)	Employees from Australian workplace project	Psychosocial safety climate → demands → psychological health	Psychosocial safety climate was negatively related with workplace bullying and harassment and in turn psychological health
Goussinsky (2011)	Service workers in Northern Israel	Job autonomy moderates emotional dissonance → well-being	Emotional dissonance is less likely to increase job-induced tension and emotional exhaustion when the level of job autonomy is high
Pugh et al., (2011)	Frontline employees in service jobs	Authentic emotion display moderates surface acting → well-being, surface acting self-efficacy moderates surface acting → well-being	Relationship of surface acting and emotional exhaustion was stronger when authentic emotion display and surface acting self-efficacy were high.
Tsaur1 &Tang (2012)	Female employees of tourist hotels in Taiwan	Job stress → well-being, regulatory leisure coping styles → well-being	Job stress was negatively related to well-being, planned breather leisure coping style

Table 2.1 Summary of studies of employee psychological well-being (continued)

Authors	Context	Relationships	Results
			was positively related to well-being whereas avoidance leisure coping style and well-being relationship was negative.
Sonnentag et al., (2013)	White-collar employees in construction companies in Germany	Workplace conflict → well-being, psychological detach from work → well-being	Employees with high level of task conflict and relation conflict reported poorer well-being. Psychological detach from work was positively associated with well-being
Retowski and Jankowska (2013)	Teachers in different schools	Attitude towards occupation → well-being	Attitude towards occupation was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to emotional exhaustion
Devonish (2013)	Employees in retail and wholesale Organizations	Psychological well-being mediates workplace bullying → task performance relationship	Only job satisfaction alone partially mediated relationship between workplace bullying and task performance
Minnotte et al., (2013)	Working adults in U.S	Work to life conflict mediates workplace characteristics → psychological distress	Work to life conflict partially mediated the relationships between job pressure – psychological distress and social support – psychological distress
Brunetto (2014)	Nurses and police officers in Australia	Engagement → well-being, well-being → affective	Engagement was positively related to well-being, well-

Table 2.1 Summary of studies of employee psychological well-being (continued)

Authors	Context	Relationships	Results
		commitment, well-being → intentions to quit	being was positively related to affective commitment, well-being was negatively associated with intentions to quit
Shuck & Reio (2014)	Health care employees in U.S, Canada and Japan	psychological workplace climate → depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and psychological well-being	Psychological workplace climate was positively related to personal accomplishment and overall well-being and negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization
Polatci & Akdogan (2014)	White-collar employees in Turkey	Psychological well-being → performance, psychological capital → psychological well-being, psychological capital → psychological well-being → performance	psychological well-being is positively related to performance, psychological capital is positively related to psychological well-being, and psychological well-being was a mediator of psychological capital-performance relationship
Mauno et al., (2014)	Employees in universities in Central Finland	Job insecurity → occupation well-being → turnover intention	Low occupational well-being (high exhaustion, low vigour) partly mediated the relationship between job insecurity and turnover intention at individual level and department level

From the summary Table 2.1, the focus is on of employee psychological well-being in an organizational context. The summary reveals that psychological well-being

construct represents the outcomes of workplace characteristics, attitude towards work such as job pressure, job stress, commitment, engagement and coping styles. A review literature also illustrates the dimensions which describe the measurement of psychological well-being namely; anxiety, depression, psychological distress, vigor, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, psychology health, job induced-tension, and job satisfaction. The majority of literature above showed that psychological well-being was examined among employees who work and deal with people intra organization such as teachers, employees in university, white collar employees and similar. Few studies have concentrated on frontline employees who deal with people from outside the organization. In other words employee well-being studies have, by and large, had an internal focus. . The current dissertation pays attention to FLEs in service organization where they interact with customers who are not a part of the organization itself. In other words the focus is on external generated stressors.

Another interesting point is that the cultural context is ignored in the extant research. Most of research has been conducted in Western cultural context, which it can be strongly argued, is different from Eastern collectivist cultures. For instance, Thailand is a highly collectivist, high power distance country where many cultural values and societal norms are at variance with say the USA. The U.S.A on the other hand is seen as highly individualist and as such focuses on autonomy in dealing with people, and is a low power distance culture (Hofstede, 1983). Research found that US customers required a greater sense of control when faced with service failure than do their Thai counterparts (Surachartkumtonkun et al., 2013). This study fills these gaps by exploring FLEs' psychological well-being as a consequence of customer aggression in an Eastern (Thai) culture context.

Within service organizations, the people who play crucial roles in customer relationship management are the frontline employees. The FLE is the one who has direct contact with the customer. Over the last two decades, research into service organizations concurred that FLEs are key to positively influencing the customer experience (Gronroos, 2000). A growing body of research focused on FLEs performance and personality, as well as their attitude and work skills (Singh, 2000; Bitner, 1990). As a feature of their service work, FLEs have to come into contact with someone from outside the firms whilst considering the organization's interest at the

same time (Adams, 1976). Scholars pointed out that the nature of service work is stressful (Singh et al., 1994; Hartline and Forrell, 1996; Varca, 2009) but at the same time it is inherent with the job (Behrman and Perreault, 1984). The underlying dilemma of service work is that FLEs are faced with a role conflict situation, i.e., they must respond to customer requests while simultaneously having to consider their organization's policies (Varca, 2009). This role conflict acts as a stressor and consequently has a negative effect on both the organization and the FLEs. At FLEs level, role stress involves FLEs psychological well-being i.e., increased burnout, reduced job satisfaction and reduced commitment to work (Singh et al., 1996; Singh et al., 1994). And the consequences for the organization are reduced efficiency and productivity.

As noted above, FLEs are the public face and marketing-oriented boundary spanners of organization (or brand). This idea is supported by Zeithaml et al., (2008) who states that FLEs are the service firm in customer's eyes, the brand and the marketer in service organizations. The expectation of the firm for FLEs to retain customers and capture the customers 'share of wallet' is high. As stated previously, the job as designed by organization, produces a stress effect on FLEs, engaging with multifaceted roles is an essential task for FLEs in within service firms. A great responsibility of FLEs, which is assigned by organization, is the representation of the organization's brand. Thus, before delivering promises to customer, FLEs need to understand brand identities (Kimpakorn and Tocquer, 2010). As part of their role, FLEs routinely experience interaction with customers. Such work role requirement generates stress for FLEs (Netemeyer et al., 2005). Research on burnout has shown that FLEs in call centers from New Zealand, who engaged with role stressors such as role conflict, role overload and role ambiguity, were more likely to experience emotional exhaustion (Ashill et al., 2009). Hence, the work role requirement of FLEs in service organization is significant to their well-being.

As a frontline employee dealing daily with customers, they are also encouraged and even trained to engage in emotional labor during service encounters. However, Emotional labor is a work role that may cause significant stress for FLEs (Netemeyer et al., 2005). Emotional labor involves the way emotions should be expressed and which emotions should be suppressed in public (Hochschild, 1983). Service organizations

require FLEs to follow their (emotional) display rules during customer interactions (service encounters). Display rules are the rule of emotional presentation required by the organization (Hochschild, 1983). The most commonly strategies that FLEs use to express emotions in public are deep acting, which refers to the modifying feelings to match the required situation; and surface acting which refers to putting on a mask or faking an emotion (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey, 2000). Research disclosed that service workers who exhibit the unguenuine emotions (surface acting) during the service encounter can create emotional dissonance (Hoffman and Bateson, 2002), this may also lead to lower performance and in turn it is recognized as chronic work stressor (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993) that can impact negatively to FLEs well-being (Kinman, 2009). For example, Peng et al., (2010) studied the relationship between the job demands and emotional exhaustion through coping strategies (emotional labor) of 418 insurance salespersons in Western China. The results revealed that the deep acting was a negatively related emotional exhaustion. Deep acting can reduce emotional arousal, in this way emotional exhaustion is decreased (Grandey, 2000). Surface acting causes of employee stress and exhaustion (Grandey, 2003), so the result has found that surface acting was positively related to emotional exhaustion. Another example is the study of Kinman (2009), who examined outcomes of emotional labor performed by 124 cabin-crew (face to face interaction) and 122 telesales agents (voice to voice interaction) which employed by a UK-based short-haul airline budget. The results showed that cabin-crew and telesales agents who engaged with high level of emotional suppression were more likely to experience with psychological distress. Furthermore, emotional faking was positively associated with work-life conflict of both groups.

Research to date has examined the link between FLEs displays of emotional labor and psychological well-being involved with the job demands and interactions with day-to-day services encounters, rather than focusing the on interactions with aggressive customers. Interestingly, and relevant to the current study, research found that when FLEs were treated unfairly by customers, they found it difficult to follow the emotional display rules of the firms dictated by their organization (Rupp and Spencer, 2006). But dealing with angry and even abusive customers presents a new challenge for FLEs. There is another view of FLEs psychological well-being called “a dark side of service jobs” (Goussinsky, 2012) which communicates the interactions with abusive customers.

Customer misbehaviors research is a growing area of service management. During service tasks, FLEs have to interact with many kinds of customers and unavoidably, this sometimes includes particularly abusive customers. Previous research showed that service workers interacted with aggressive customers in variety of contexts, for example in a call center employee context it was found that employees faced verbal aggression, on average, ten times a day (Grandey et al., 2004). Other studies highlighted airline employees (Boyd, 2002), waitstaff (Fisk et al., 2011), call center employees (Harris, 2013), and frontline employees in hotel (Harris and Reynolds, 2003). Literatures proposed that facing customer misbehavior predicted negative outcomes i.e., employee emotional exhaustion (Evers et al., 2001; Dorman and Zapf, 2004; Ben-Zur and Yagil, 2005; Grandey et al., 2007) and negative work related attitudes (Harris and Reynolds, 2003). Recently, Harris and Daunt (2013) conducted qualitative research and revealed that FLEs viewed deviant customer as a source of stress and in turn found it detrimental to physical and emotional health in their working lives. Another study that investigated the effect of customer aggression on happy service employees is the work of Goussinsky (2011). This research demonstrated that service workers who, frequently faced with customer aggression were more likely to experience job-induced intension, job related attitude and emotional dissonance. Moreover, an interesting finding was that the negative consequences of customer aggression increased, even in employees with positive disposition. Research has shown the associations between customer aggression and FLEs psychological well-being. However, it is interesting to note that many studies have examined the working employees' psychological well-being, but only few studies have investigated empirically how FLEs appraise the customer aggression and lead to psychological well-being (emotional exhaustion).

In summary, FLEs work has a dual purpose, since they need to concentrate on the provision of excellent customer service while also enhancing the organizational earnings. In addition, during the service interaction FLEs are encouraged to follow the emotional display rules of the organization. Moreover, the probability of FLEs confronting abusive customers is higher than that of other employees. Such situations are highly relevant concerning FLEs psychological well-being, particularly their emotional resources. With regard to psychological well-being, this study concentrates on FLEs emotional exhaustion as it is a key outcome of FLEs cognitive appraisal when

dealing with customer aggression. Emotional exhaustion (a key dimension of psychological well-being) has been investigated in cognition and stress literatures (Grandey et al., 2004; Enosh et al., 2012; Kozusznik et al., 2012). The outcomes of employee emotional exhaustion in organization are absenteeism (Grandey et al., 2004) and withdrawal (Boyd et al., 2009). From the literature above, it is presumed that routine interactions with customers are often stressful. Thus, investigating FLEs emotional exhaustion is highly relevant in a customer aggression context. It is noted that employee emotional exhaustion is problematic in task performance which in turn affects organizational performance. Hence, if employee emotional exhaustion can be diminished, it will be a benefit to the organization. However, no evidence was found that literatures proposing factors which could help to buffer the cognitive appraisal and emotional exhaustion linkage of service workers. Thus, this dissertation fills the following gaps:

- 1) This study focuses on psychological well-being of frontline employees (FLEs) who have regular face to face contact with customers.
- 2) Few studies were found where FLEs emotional exhaustion was linked to cognitive appraisal processes in the context of customer aggression situations.
- 3) No study has examined the impact of customer aggression on emotional exhaustion in an Eastern cultural context. It might be expected that cultural values and norms might influence FLEs reaction to customer aggression in a way that is divergent across East-West cultures (Patterson et al 2009; Hofstede, 1983).
- 4) Furthermore, no study has examined the ‘customer is always right’ organizational philosophy as a moderator of the customer aggression-cognitive appraisal relationship; and emotional intelligence to buffer the cognitive appraisal-psychological well-being relationship.

The following section describes the nature of customer aggression. Typologies of aggressive behaviors are discussed, including the antecedents and effects of customer aggression.

2.2 Customer aggression

As noted above customers, are increasingly the perpetrators of aggressive deviant behavior there is growing evidence that customers are increasingly angry, abusive and aggressive and prone to bouts of employee-directed rage (Davey, 2012; Daunt, 2013; McColl-Kennedy et al. 2009). Sociologists argue that increased aggression is linked to the nature of contemporary society (Krahe, 2010), and these trends appear global (Surachartkumtonkun et al. 2013). The result is employee stress and burnout especially amongst FLEs who face customers day in day out, trying to achieve ever increasing targets and demands from supervisors and customers (Ben-Zur and Yagil 2005).

Literature to date uses a range of terms to describe customer aggression, such as customer misbehaviour (Huang et al., 2010), customer deviance (Reynolds and Harris, 2006), problem customers (Bitner et al., 1994), unfriendly customers (Walsh, 2010), unfair customers (Berry and Seiders, 2008), angry customers (Dallimore et al., 2007), customer rage (Surachartkumtonkun et al., 2013), and dysfunctional customer behaviour (Harris and Reynolds, 2003; Harris and Reynolds, 2004; Fisk et al., 2010). Such customer behaviours might include verbal abuse, such as raised voices, sarcasm, screaming, intimidation, yelling, swearing, speaking with a strong voice, and arguing forcefully; physical threats, such as slamming down fists, shoving, or slamming down a phone; and non-verbal signals, including angry facial expressions, staring, and other body language (Grove et al., 2004; Huang et al., 2010; Patterson et al., 2009). Moreover, Harris and Reynolds (2004) categorises eight forms of customer misbehaviours. Five of them are misbehaviour in face to face circumstances and dishearten the FLEs i.e. “oral abusers”, “physical abusers”, “undesirable customers”, “vindictive customers”, and “sexual predators”. The other three misbehaviours took place on organizational property and systems i.e. “property abusers”, “service workers”, and “compensation writer”.

2.2.1 Antecedents of customer aggression

It must be remembered that services are first and foremost social exchanges between people, and consequently customer dissatisfaction and anger expressions during the service interaction may lead to misbehaviors (including aggression).

Frequently the cause of customer aggression comes from the service failure due to organizational systems and /or inappropriate behavior of customer contact employees. Patterson et al., (2009) suggested that following service failure, the customers looked forward to getting recovery from the organization or employees, but they didn't. When customers engage with anger or rage emotions, they are more likely to express their feelings by physical (harmful behaviors), verbal, and non-verbal (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2009).

Negative affect of customer can be the action of instigators. Negative affect is the extent to which an individual engages levels of distressing emotions (Watson and Clark, 1984). Individual negative affect may produce the tendency of violation and lead to experiencing disruptive behaviors (Eysenck and Gudjonsson, 1989). According to social psychology literature, it has been suggested that negative affect relates to aggression (Douglas and Martinko, 2001). Customers who experienced negative affect were more likely to exacerbate inappropriate behavior (Yi, 2006). This result was aligned with the work of Heaven (1996).

The actor and target perspective is also a perspective on aggression. In the service interaction, direct contact between customer and service provider is inescapable (Bowen and Schneider, 1985). Kelly and Michela (1980) suggested that "attribution" is important to customer-employee interaction as it is the determinant of that interaction. Regularly, individuals appraise the cause of others' behavior and then respond to their interpretation (Harvey and Weary, 1984). Therefore, in a service transaction, Fisk et al., (2010) explain the determinant of customer deviant behavior that during the service encounter when customers evaluate the service employee's behavior and, if such behavior dissatisfies them, then they are likely to respond defiantly to that behavior.

Apart from those, the psychological perspective such as violation of perceived justice is also the trigger of customer aggression. Generally, if an individual who experiences the action and deems it unfair, they are more likely to engage with negative emotions such as anger, outrage (Skarlicki et al., 1999). Research shows that perception of injustice is a predictor of support for workplace aggression. Kennedy et al., (2004) revealed that when employees perceived injustice in the workplace, they tended to express anger or rage to their supervisors. From the employee side, the customer also is

similar. Yi (2006) studied the antecedents and consequences of customer's bad behavior in a sports center. The result of Yi (2006) found that a customer's perception of interactional justice can lower the degree of that customer's bad behavior.

2.2.2 Effects of customer aggression on FLEs

Aggressive behavior has negative effects on FLE's physical and psychological well-being (Harris & Reynolds 2003; Reynolds & Harris 2006; Walsh, 2011; Yagil, 2008) and hence their on-the-job performance and consequently organizational productivity. Previous studies identify a range of aggressive behaviors and the impact they have on frontline staff from various points of view. For instance, Harris and Reynolds (2003) indicated that dysfunctional customer behavior affects FLEs and managers with four main consequences; long-term psychological, short term emotional, behavioral, and physical effects. This is consistent with Yagil (2008), who identified three outcomes; 1) emotional reactions which express anger, depression, feelings of degradation, anxiety and sleeplessness; 2) work-related attitudes and behaviors which are seen in lower job satisfaction, reduction in staff morale, and absence from the workplace; 3) physical harm demonstrated by kicking, slapping, and destruction of frontline staff personal property.

Research on the psychological and behavioral consequences of customer aggression is prevalent. For example, Fisk and Neville (2011) studied the effects of customer entitlement on wait staff service workers' psychological well-being. They found that when dealing with rude and aggressive patrons, waiting staff reported physiological arousal, negative effects, burnout, and feelings of dehumanization. Finally the relationship between regularly dealing with rude and unfriendly customers and employee well-being in a call center context found that when employees perceived customer unfriendliness, they felt under stress, perceived lower self-esteem and lower levels of job satisfaction (Wegge et al., 2007).

A side effect of customer aggression is employee revenge. Customer mistreatment can also generate the phenomena of employees seeking to sabotage the customer. Employees' reaction to mistreatment has been shown to be harmful to the customer relationship (Bitner et al., 1990). For example, Skarlicki et al., (2008) found that employee sabotage was a reaction to unfair treatment from a customer. In a study of

customer service employees in call centers, the relationship between customer perceptions of interpersonal injustice and customer-directed sabotage was significant and positive, while moral identity (symbolization and internalization) of the employee moderated such association. Moreover, customer-directed sabotage had a negative correlation with the customer service employee's performance ratings. Hence there is considerable evidence of the multiple negative effects of being regularly exposed to customer aggression.

Affective events theory posits that individuals react to negative events (customer aggression) through an appraisal and emotion process (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). This is consistent with stress and coping theory (Lazarus and Folkmans, 1984) which argues that individuals evaluate stressful situations and appraise what is at stake, what is being threatened or what needs are being violated (e.g., one's self-esteem, sense of injustice, physical security, etc) and respond with a satisfactory or unsatisfactory outcome (emotional exhaustion). When employees confront an aggressive customer, they interpret the situation and whether they are relevant to their well-being; this is the primary appraisal process, then they plan to react to that situation; this stage is called secondary appraisal. According to stress and coping theory, customer aggression produces the cognitive appraisal process; primary and secondary appraisal. For example, call centre operators experience customer verbal aggression an average of ten times per day and perceive this verbal aggression as stressful and threatening (Grandey et al., 2004). These perceived threats in turn influence FLEs' emotional exhaustion and absenteeism rates. For secondary appraisal, Rafaeli et al., (2012) examined the effects of customer verbal aggression on employee's cognitive (secondary appraisal) functioning by using an experimental method. The results revealed that even minor aggression from customer can strongly affect the cognitive performance of customer service employees and reduce their task performance (Rafaleli et al., 2012).

Referring to Yagil (2008) and Harris and Reynolds (2003), they both mention that consequence of customer aggression can be a short-term emotional effect (Harris and Reynolds, 2003) and emotional reactions (Yagil, 2008). In summary, emotional exhaustion is one dimension of emotional well-being that is influenced by customer aggression. Muldary (1983) stated that individual who appraises the situation as more stressful, would perceive their job to be more demanding. The current study doesn't test

the impact of customer aggression on emotional exhaustion directly. Rather it predicts (in line with the theory of stress and coping) that service employee's first appraise the stressful event (customer aggression) as to the nature and extent of the threat or violation, and then react into emotional response. To support this idea, research indicated that academic teaching staff working at public university in Portugal reported occupational stress i.e., work overload, career progress, relationship at works and administrative task (Gomes et al., 2013). Teaching staffs viewed occupational stress as a perceived threat to their physical well-being and goals at work (i.e, cognitive appraisals). Staffs with higher levels of threat perception were more likely to experience burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Another example is the work of Grandey et al., (2004) i.e., the verbal aggression of customers related to stress appraisal and affect on call center worker's emotional exhaustion.

The implication of literature synthesis of this chapter will be employed to develop conceptual model and hypotheses testing in the next chapter.