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Overt And Covert Retaliation Of Service Employees Against Customers Who Mistreat Them

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OVERT AND COVERT RETALIATION OF SERVICE EMPLOYEES AGAINST CUSTOMERS WHO MISTREAT THEM

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my parents, Magdalena and Wiesław Sztumscy, and to my brother, Konrad. Thank you for your support and encouragement. A special thanks goes to my father, Wiesław Sztumski, Ph.D. You have been my role model and inspiration my whole life. Seeing how much you loved working in academia, I decided to obtain my Ph.D. and work in academia so I could be just like you. I also dedicate it to my children: Liliana and Logan. You have been my greatest motivation throughout the entire process from start to finish. I hope to be your role model who teaches you to follow your dreams and to never give up. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Scott, and my parents-in-law, Dan and Nancy Shepard. Thanks for all your help with taking care of the kids and for your moral support.

grateful for all your assistance and advice, which helped me transition in my career from a student to a professional scholar.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

> *Sonya told me, "His last words were 'If everybody working for this organization is as incompetent as you, no wonder your airline loses money.' He then stormed off. I wished him a good flight as if nothing had happened. The little old lady behind him in line had heard everything, of course, and she sweetly asked how I managed to stay so polite and cheerful in the face of his abusive behavior. I told her the truth. 'He's going to Kansas City,' I explained, 'and his bags are going to Tokyo.' She laughed and told me that I'd done the right thing." (Barreca, 1995, pp. 105–106)*

Serving customers, clients, or patients is not an easy task, especially when they are rude and disrespectful, when they make unreasonable demands and yell at or threaten service employees. This low-quality interpersonal treatment that service employees receive from their customers or clients is referred to as "**customer mistreatment**" (Bies, 2001). Such mistreatment is experienced by service employees daily, and it is prevalent in many service organizations (Baker-Caza & Cortina, 2007). For example, Grandey, Dickter, and Sin (2004) reported that on average service employees are mistreated by customers about seven times per day with 10 as the modal response. Considering that more than 80% of the labor force in the United States consists of service employees (Bitner, Zeithaml, & Gremler, 2010; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014), it is surprising that the phenomenon of customer mistreatment of service employees has been the subject of very little research in the organizational behavior literature (Bedi & Schat, 2007).

Very few studies have examined service employees' emotional and behavioral reactions to such mistreatment from customers (e.g., Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004; Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, & Walker, 2008; Yagil, 2008). These studies found that when service employees believe they have been mistreated, they become angry and upset, and reciprocate the unfair treatment according to the rule "tit-for-tat" in order to punish unpleasant customers. The most common ways service employees reciprocate the poor treatment is by being unpleasant to customers, refusing service, corrupting service or product, misguiding a customer, or taking

more time than necessary to process customer requests (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006; Hunter & Penney, 2014; Skarlicki et al, 2008; Wang, Liao, Zhan, & Shi, 2011). These behaviors have been conceptualized as incivility, as sabotage, or as customer-centered counterproductive work behaviors, and interestingly, employees perform them despite their training to adhere to proper display rules (i.e., being pleasant when interacting with customers; Grandey, 2000), training regarding how to deal with unpleasant customers (Reynolds & Harris, 2006), or electronic monitoring of performance (Holman, 2002). **Sabotage** is actions that "damage or disrupt the organization's operations by creating delays in production, damaging property, the destruction of relationships, or the harming of employees or customers" (Crino, 1994, p. 312). **Incivility** occurs when someone is rude and shows lack of regard for others as well as violates norms for mutual respect in interpersonal relations (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; van Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010). Because sabotage and incivility are performed with intent to harm others, they are nested within a broader concept of behaviors: **customer-centered counterproductive work behaviors**. These behaviors are defined as deliberate actions performed by employees that are intended to harm customers (Hunter & Penney, 2014). Because all these constructs have been used to study how mistreated service employees get back at customers who mistreat them and because they measure similar behaviors (I will present an extended discussion on this topic in the next chapter), I refer to them as "retaliation," "retaliatory behaviors," "customer-centered counterproductive work behaviors," or "counterproductive work behaviors toward customers" throughout the paper. Also, it is important to note that all of the previously defined behaviors belong to a class of behaviors called counterproductive work behaviors. **Counterproductive work behaviors** (CWBs) are defined as deliberate actions performed by employees that are

intended to harm organizations as well as their members ("e.g., clients, coworkers, customers, and supervisors"; Spector & Fox, 2005, pp. 151–152).

Researchers treat retaliation against customers (measured as sabotage, incivility, or customer-centered CWBs) as a unidimensional construct. Yet, there is some evidence showing that retaliation can be more overt (i.e., public) or more covert (i.e., private), and there is reason to believe these two forms of retaliation should not be treated as one and the same. Drawing upon literature on CWBs in the workplace, the precedence for a multidimensional nature has been set by Robinson and Bennett (1995), who have split CWBs into organizational (i.e., CWB-O, when organization is a target of such behaviors) and individual (i.e., CWB-I; when individuals within organizations, such as coworkers or supervisors, are targets of such behaviors). This distinction has revealed that these two different dimensions of CWBs vary in strength and kind of their predictors and outcomes; hence they should be examined separately. For example, Fox, Spector, and Miles (2001) found that justice was more strongly related to CWB-Os and interpersonal conflict was more strongly related to CWB-Is. Further, Spector, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler (2006) split CWBs into five categories: abuse toward others, production deviance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal. They also found that each dimension had different antecedents. Specifically, abuse and sabotage were best predicted by anger and stress, and withdrawal was related to boredom and being upset, while theft had no relationship with employees' negative emotional experiences at work. Recently, Tarraf (2012) examined the measure of incivility employees experience from coworkers and supervisors and found that it had overt and covert dimensions. Additionally, he found that in general covert incivility had stronger relationships with organizational outcomes (such as affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions) than overt incivility. He also found that covert incivility originating from the

supervisor had the strongest relations with these outcomes but overt incivility from supervisors failed to correlate significantly with any of these outcomes (Tarraf, 2012). It is important to note, though, that incivility in his study was measured as incivility experienced from coworkers and supervisors as sources of uncivil behaviors; hence he did not examine overt and covert incivility and as outcome (i.e., toward others) and he did not measure incivility to or from customers (only from coworkers and supervisors). In terms of retaliation against mistreating customers, Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that when employees engage in sabotaging customers, they may do so *overtly* (i.e., behavior is readily recognized by others as aggressive in nature) or *covertly* (i.e., the intent of the behavior is ambiguous and requires interpretation, and/or the employee's identity is unknown; e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Skarlicki et al., 2008). However, these behaviors have never been measured and their predictors have never been studied.

Based on these findings, it is likely that retaliation against customers can be split into overt and covert, and that these two forms of retaliation have different predictors. Following the distinctions between overt and covert dimensions in the literature discussed above, I define overt and covert retaliation against customers as follows. **Overt retaliation** is a public act of getting even with a customer, and it can include heated verbal confrontations or intimidation. As such, it violates proper display rules (e.g., providing service with a smile). **Covert retaliation**, on the other hand, is more private and can include spitting into food when a customer does not see, charging extra, or providing a poor service. Thus, in the case of covert retaliation, "getting even" does not necessarily violate display rules (Skarlicki et al., 2008) in interacting with customers (e.g., being friendly and enthusiastic; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Because of the more public character of overt retaliation, the intent of it is readily apparent, and those who engage in overt retaliation can experience counter-retaliation or punishment from management

(Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2001). Covert retaliation, which is more private, has intent that is not easily recognized as hostile; hence it could be explained by human error (e.g., serving a bad beer with a smile), or circumstances outside of employees' control (e.g., faulty equipment or poor reception; Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Covert retaliation may be then more difficult to detect and deal with because an employee can hide that he or she engaged in the act of covert retaliation (e.g., spitting in a customer's soup when nobody is looking), or the employee can obfuscate his or her intentions if caught (e.g., claiming that a machine malfunction was due to circumstances outside of an employee's control, rather than targeted retaliation; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Although both overt and covert retaliation lower the perception of service quality, customer loyalty, and ultimately, organizational profitability (Borucki & Burke, 1999; Bowen, Siehl, & Schneider, 1989; Harris & Ogbonna, 2002), these different behaviors could have different outcomes. While an employee who retaliates overtly could gain more satisfaction from showing a customer "who's the boss," or gain more respect from colleagues for standing up for himself or herself, he or she could also risk being fired. On the other hand, an employee who retaliates covertly may be sent for additional training, if the supervisor thinks he or she just made a mistake. Overt and covert retaliation may even have different predictors. However, because past research treats retaliation as a unidimensional construct (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011), little is known about that factors that influence whether employees will be more likely to retaliate against customers overtly or covertly, and as past research on dimensionality of CWBs in the workplace indicates, relying on a single index/compound measure or score may obscure reality as well as the presence of differential relations of the various dimensions.

Hence, the main purpose of this dissertation is to close this gap and determine whether retaliation can be split into two dimensions, overt and covert, and how personality of a mistreated service employee, who desires revenge on the perpetrator, affects whether he or she will be more likely to punish the perpetrator overtly or covertly (see Figure 1). Specifically, I expected that when employees are mistreated by customers, they desire revenge. This desire for revenge should be stronger when employees are high in negative reciprocity belief, which is a belief in "an eye for an eye." Next, employees would engage in overt or covert retaliation. Overt retaliation should be more likely when mistreated employees' agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness are low or when neuroticism and extraversion are high. Covert retaliation should be more likely when agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness are high or when neuroticism and extraversion are low.

By researching this model, I hoped to answer multiple calls from past research and contribute to literature on CWBs (including retaliation against customers) as well as personality. First, researchers called for multifoci research of CWBs, meaning that we should split CWBs depending on who the target or victim is, as employees may act differently toward different individuals (e.g., coworker, supervisor, subordinate, customer; Hershcovis & Reich, 2013). A majority of past research uses scales that combine all or some of these targets by asking about "someone in the organization," which obfuscates findings. The specific CWBs toward the different groups of individuals (i.e., coworker, supervisor, subordinate, customer) may be different, and their effects may also vary (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). In my dissertation I used a scale that measures CWBs that target customers as opposed to coworkers, subordinates, or supervisors.

Second, Spector and Fox (2005) claimed that research on CWBs would benefit from a more fine-grained analysis because of the potential for differential relations the more fine-grained behaviors have with predictors and/or criterions. On the other hand, some researchers (e.g., Aquino & Thau, 2009; Shapiro, Duffy, Kim, Lean, & O'Leary-Kelly, 2008) claim that examining new constructs representing CWBs that are similar to other constructs within the domain of CWBs leads to construct proliferation and a lack of unifying framework to study CWBs. Hence, in my dissertation, I treat all behaviors that fall under the umbrella of retaliation against customers as one to maintain more parsimony, but I split them into overt and covert dimensions, to examine whether overt and covert retaliation are affected differently by different personality variables.

Third, research on CWBs relies on ratings of these behaviors from different sources to measure these behaviors, such as self- and other (e.g., supervisor) ratings. These responses vary depending on who is the source of the rating (i.e., the employee or his/her supervisor), with supervisors reporting less CWBs. Berry, Carpenter, and Barratt (2012) also found a moderate correlation (.38) between CWBs reported by self and others and thought it would be important to determine what causes these differences. In my dissertation I argue that unlike overt CWBs, covert CWBs (such as retaliation against customers) are not likely to be caught and punished by the supervisors, which is reflected in the differences between responses from supervisors and employees themselves (Berry et al., 2012; Spector & Fox, 2002), and I examine personality as one contingency that contributes to these differences.

Fourth, most research on CWBs uses supervisors as sources of information about the CWBs study that subjects engage in to avoid common rater bias. However, as I have mentioned above, covert CWBs (including retaliation against customers) are not likely to be caught and

punished by the supervisors, and that is reflected in the differences between responses from different sources of CWBs, such as self vs. supervisors (Berry et al., 2012; Spector & Fox, 2002). Hence, it appears that most of what we know about personality as a predictor of CWBs is the relationship between personality and overt CWBs. Research shows that typically individuals who have low agreeableness are more likely to engage in CWBs than individuals who are high in agreeableness (e.g., Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007; Salgado, 2002). However, it could be that those who are high in agreeableness engage in more covert forms of CWBs, that is, forms that are more difficult for supervisors to detect. Those high in agreeableness also report engaging in CWBs as evidenced by the meta-analysis performed by Berry et al. (2012), where the magnitude of the correlation between agreeableness and self-reported CWBs is -.35. If individuals who are high in agreeableness did not engage in such behavior, the magnitude of the relationship between personality and CWBs would not be mild or moderate, but strong (i.e., the value of it would be closer to -1.00). Interestingly, other personality dimensions have even weaker correlations with CWBs.

The following chapter provides an in-depth literature review on this subject.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition and Prevalence of Customer Mistreatment

Customer mistreatment of employees is a low-quality interpersonal treatment that service employees receive from their customers (Bies, 2001). Past research uses different labels for customer mistreatment such as "customer misbehaviors" (Fullerton & Punj, 1993; Harris & Reynolds, 2003), "deviant customer behaviors" (Reynolds & Harris, 2006), "aberrant customer behavior" (Fullerton & Punj, 1993), "unethical customer behaviors" (van Kenhove, de Wulf & Steenhaut, 2003), and "jaycustomers" (Lovelock, 1994). What these constructs have in common is that customers violate rules of conduct that should guide any social interactions and that this behavior is directed not at other customers and not at the business (such as stealing goods or cutting in front of other customers in a line) but is directed at the employees who serve them. This may occur when customers demean or disrespect employees, use condescending language, are physically aggressive toward them, and/or make unreasonable requests (Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004, Grandey, Kern, & Frone, 2007; Skarlicki et al., 2008).

Customer mistreatment occurs because of the belief that fast-paced, high-tech interactions leave customers with little time to be nice and that today's casual workplaces have fewer cues for appropriate interpersonal behavior than they did in the past (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson & Porath, 2004). Mistreatment is also enhanced by the widespread belief that "the customer is always right." Customers assume that the job of service employees is to please them, which introduces power imbalance to any employee-customer interaction and makes employees more vulnerable to mistreatment (Bishop, Korczynski, & Cohen, 2005; Grandey et al., 2004; Yagil, 2008). In fact, research shows that customers mistreat employees as often as every day (Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011), and Grandey et al. (2004) reported

that call center employees from their study were mistreated by customers seven times per day on average. Also, Ringstad (2005) found that 40% of the social workers who participated in the study reported being verbally abused by their clients in the past year, and Boyd (2002) found that 53% of employees in the airline and railways sector had been verbally abused by clients in the previous year. Similar statistics refer to nurses in the United States, with 53% of them being verbally abused (Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, & Sochalski, 2001). Another study with a sample of employees from the hospitality sector found that 82% of them had witnessed or been the target of aggression from customers in the previous year (Harris & Reynolds, 2003).

Considering that service employees constitute more than 80% of the labor force in the United States (Bitner et al., 2010; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014), customers' mistreatment potentially affects a large number of employees in the United States, and researchers argue that such mistreatment may be even more pronounced in the future (Caruana, Ramaseshan, & Ewing, 2001; Grandey et al., 2004; Harris & Reynolds, 2003; Wang et al., 2011). In addition, Grandey et al. (2007) found that verbal abuse from customers is more frequent than verbal abuse from coworkers or supervisors, likely because customer service employees spend more time interacting with customers than they do interacting with other employees (Dorman & Zapf, 2004). Also, whereas supervisors and coworkers may face sanctions for mistreating other employees based on workplace bullying policies (Johnson & Indvik, 2001), customers cannot really be penalized by organizations, and in fact they are constantly told that "the customer is always right" and "the customer comes first" (Grandey et al., 2007), which further encourages customers to use aggression in order to influence service employees to comply with their request (Reynolds & Harris, 2006). Considering the prevalence and frequency of mistreatment from

customers, it is not surprising that it has detrimental effects on service employees (e.g., Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004; Grandey et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2011).

Employees' Emotional Reactions to Customer Mistreatment

Past research has linked mistreatment from customers to stress, emotional dissonance, and emotional exhaustion (Hunter & Penney, 2014), as well as negative affect and anger (Bedi & Schat, 2007; Ben Zur & Yagil, 2005; Grandey et al., 2004; Grandey et al., 2007, Kern & Grandey, 2009; Wang et al., 2011). For example, Grandey et al. (2004) examined customer verbal abuse of call center employees. Specifically, they measured the effect of frequency of abusive calls from customers on the intensity of stress experienced by call center employees. They found that the appraised stressfulness of abusive calls correlated with negative affect at work and low job satisfaction of service employees, regardless of the frequency of such calls. In addition, Rupp and Spencer (2006) conducted an experiment in which participants were asked to role-play a customer service representative who was treated with or without any respect by a customer (confederate). In the condition representing mistreatment, confederates spoke impolitely, accused the participant of being lazy and slow, and threatened to boycott the company's product. They found that mistreatment from customers resulted in anger as well as higher levels of emotional labor and greater difficulties in complying with display rules. Interestingly, this occurred with just a single exposure to mistreatment in laboratory settings.

Different theoretical frameworks have been used to explain the negative emotions experienced by service employees after mistreatment. For example, according to Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) Affective Events Theory, salient events at the workplace can evoke an emotional reaction or mood change that in turn affects how people act. An affective work event is defined as "an incident that stimulates appraisal of and emotional reaction to a transitory or

ongoing job-related agent, object or event" (Basch & Fisher, 2000, p. 3). Based on Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) situations, when customers mistreat employees they interact with, such mistreatment constitutes negative affective events. Because service employees typically cannot pick their customers or remove themselves from negative affective events created by unpleasant customers, these events lead to negative emotions (i.e., annoyance, fear, anger, sadness, frustration, disgust, and disappointment) in service employees (Basch & Fisher, 2000; Groth & Grandey, 2012).

Mistreatment from customers can also be framed as a social job stressor (Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Penney & Spector, 2005), as it involves social interactions with customers that are emotionally taxing on customer service employees (e.g., Ben-Zur & Yagil, 2005; Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004; Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Wang et al., 2011). According to psychological theories of stress (e.g., Hobfoll, 1989, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), social stressors, unlike stressors rooted in the environment or in organizational and task structure, include situations that are social in nature and that invoke psychological or physical strain. Mistreatment from customers is perceived as stress because resources valued by service employees, such as positive evaluations, self-efficacy, optimism, and self-esteem (Hobfoll, 1989, 1991), decrease when customers signal to employees that they are incompetent and lower in the social hierarchy (Dorman & Zapf, 2004).

Another theoretical lens that helps us to understand why service employees experience negative emotions when being mistreated is that of the justice literature. Mistreatment from customers can be perceived as a source of injustice (E.g., Ho & Gupta, 2014; Rupp, McCance, Spencer, & Sonntag, 2008; Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011). Specifically, it is often seen as interactional injustice, as it represents a low-quality treatment that

service employees receive from customers (Bies, 2001; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Interactions with customers are fair if "an employee is treated with dignity and respect, and personal attacks are refrained from" (Rupp & Spencer, 2006, p. 971). Hence, fairness is violated if customers demean, disrespect, or yell at service employees. In addition, when customers mistreat service employees, they violate moral norms of social conduct where people show one another mutual respect (Folger, 2001). Such violations engender perceptions of interactional injustice (Bies & Moag, 1986), which make those who are mistreated angry because interactional injustice is immoral and poses a threat to one's self-worth and social identity (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003; Skarlicki et al., 2008).

In summary, mistreatment from customers is a negative event, a social stressor, or a form of injustice, and as such, it elicits negative emotions in mistreated employees. Because the most commonly employed means of releasing negative affect and restoring fairness in these situations is to reciprocate with further unfairness (Donnerstein & Hatfield, 1982; Kim & Smith, 1993), Pearson and Porath (2004) called for research on reciprocation of mistreatment from customers by service employees. These behaviors are important to study, as they can negatively affect customer service quality, customer loyalty, and hence the overall company performance (Lytle & Timmerman, 2006; Schneider, Ehrhart, Mayer, Saltz, & Niles-Jolly, 2005). However, very few studies have addressed this call (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011).

Employees' Desire to Reciprocate Mistreatment from Customers

Service employees are told to always be pleasant to customers, and they expect reciprocation of this positive treatment (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Such expectation is consistent with the premise of Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964). Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) states that human behavior is a function of social exchanges of valued resources

with others. These exchanges are voluntary and informal; hence they are based on the social norm of reciprocity. Because people expect fair exchange relationships, obtaining a valued resource from someone (e.g., pleasant treatment) creates an obligation to reciprocate in a positive way. On the other hand, receiving a negative treatment creates a desire to reciprocate in a negative way. Hence, when employees are mistreated by customers, they experience negative feelings discussed in the previous section, and they want to reciprocate the negative treatment in order to get even with the perpetrator through retaliation (e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Hunter & Penney, 2014; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011). Retaliation serves a psychological, instrumental, and moral purpose (Ho & Gupta, 2014). This is because retaliation helps to restore the victims' well-being by repairing self-image, and it serves as an outlet for the negative emotions caused by mistreatment (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Bies & Tripp, 2005; Ho & Gupta, 2014). Retaliation also helps deter the perpetrator from future mistreatment, and it realigns the dysfunctional power relationships between victims and their perpetrators (Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001; Ho & Gupta, 2014; Tepper & Henle, 2011). In addition, retaliation allows punishing the perpetrator for not following norms of moral conduct (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003; Folger, Cropanzano, & Goldman, 2005; Ho & Gupta, 2014; Skarlicki & Folger, 2004).

Although past studies on retaliation in the context of service employment argue that employees who are mistreated by customers engage in CWBs toward them to get even and to reciprocate the negative treatment, none of those studies have examined the desire to reciprocate the negative treatment, such as desire for revenge. Past studies suggest that the desire for revenge is an underlying mechanism for retaliation, as employees who are mistreated by customers engage in CWBs toward them to get even. For example, Wang et al. (2011) stated that mistreated

employees have a desire to reciprocate mistreatment to punish its source. Skarlicki et al. (2008) titled their article "Getting Even for Customer Mistreatment […]." Even Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that retaliation is performed by customer avengers, yet none of the studies have actually measured the desire for revenge. I fill this gap by utilizing the model of revenge in my dissertation.

According to the model of revenge (Tripp & Bies, 2009), when employees feel mistreated, they desire revenge to right the wrong. The conflict begins when the perpetrator mistreats the victim. This offense is the trigger of revenge as the perpetrator breaks social norms of mutual respect and hurts the victim's reputation (Bies & Tripp, 1998). Next, the victim analyzes how he or she feels as well as the reason behind the mistreatment. If the victim feels that mistreatment was intentional, the victim blames the perpetrator for acting inappropriately and feels anger, resentment, and the desire to get even to right the wrong. Avengers feel that punishment or retaliation is a moral and rational act (Folger et al., 2005; Skarlicki et al., 2008), and they are more likely to retaliate rather than reconcile or forgive the perpetrator if (1) they believe organization will not handle the offense and if (2) they believe they can get away with revenge or (3) they believe have the power to get even (Tripp & Bies, 2009).

The model of revenge has typically been applied to intra-organizational relationships where the perpetrators are either coworkers or supervisors (e.g., Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006; Bradfield & Aquino, 1999). There are two important distinctions between the relationships service employees have with their coworkers or supervisors vs. customers that would make this model even more relevant in examining the retaliation against customers.

First, whereas supervisors and coworkers may face sanctions for mistreating other employees or subordinates based on workplace bullying policies (Johnson & Indvik, 2001),

customers cannot really be penalized by organizations. Moreover, service employees are constantly told that "the customer is always right" and "the customer comes first" (Grandey et al., 2007). Hence, mistreated service employees likely do not believe that their organization would handle the offense, especially if there is no physical violence. According to the model of revenge, mistreated employees should be more likely to take restoring justice in their own hands and pursue their desire for revenge if they are mistreated by customers than if they are mistreated by coworkers or supervisors.

Second, unlike relationships with organizational insiders (e.g., supervisors or coworkers), employee-customer interactions are brief, are episodic, and satisfy short-term needs of customers (Duck, 1998; Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Most of these interactions are anonymous or unidirectional (e.g., employee must wear a name tag) where the parties do not have a history or expect to interact again in the future (Gutek, 1999; Gutek, Bhappu, Liao-Troth, & Cherry, 1999). As such, they involve more deceptive behavior than relationships that are long-term exchanges, such as relationships with other coworkers or supervisors (Duck, 1998; Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Skarlicki et al, 2008). Because the relationships between customers and employees are more impersonal and optional than relationships with coworkers and supervisors, the response to mistreatment from customers by employees is more frequent than the response to mistreatment from organizational insiders (Skarlicki et al., 2008). It then seems that service employees believe it is easier to get away with punishing customers who mistreat them than to get away with punishing coworkers or supervisors. This also suggests that employees would be more likely to retaliate against customers than coworkers or supervisors who mistreat them.

Third, service employees could be thought to have less position or resource power than customers, since most organizations say that "customers are always right" (e.g., Grandey et al.,

2004; Yagil, 2008), and service employees are monitored and instructed to always be pleasant to customers (Grandey, 2000; Holman, 2002). Yet research shows that employees do punish customers (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011) even though they receive proper training (Grandey 2000; Reynolds & Harris, 2006) and their performance is monitored (Holman, 2002). The reason why it happens is that although "customers are always right," they do not have a legitimate power to manage employees (via rewards and sanctions) like supervisors do, and employees resent being told by customers that they are the "subordinates" in interactions between service employees and customers (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002). Hence, it appears that service employees do have the power to get even with customers who mistreat them.

Employees' Behavioral Reactions to Customer Mistreatment

While it is plausible that employees would not seek revenge due to feelings of loyalty to the company or the fear of counter-retaliation, research suggests that victims of mistreatment from customers do take steps to restore the unfair treatment. An existence of a relationship between customer mistreatment of service employees and employee reciprocation of such mistreatment toward customers has been supported by both qualitative and quantitative studies (e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2002, 2006, 2009; Harris & Reynolds, 2003; Ho & Gupta, 2014; Hunter & Penney, 2014; Skarlicki et al., 2008; van Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010; Walker, van Jaasrveld, & Skarlicki, 2014; Wang et al., 2011). For example, Harris and Reynolds (2003) conducted a qualitative study on hospitality industry employees and found that employees retaliate against customers who mistreat them, Skarlicki et al. (2008) found that perceptions of interactional injustice in call center customer service representatives were positively related to retaliation against aggressive customers, even after controlling for intra-organizational sources of injustice (i.e., from supervisors or coworkers). Further, Wang et al. (2011) analyzed daily survey

data from 131 call center employees in China and found that daily customer mistreatment significantly predicted service employees' daily retaliatory behaviors. Also, Ho and Gupta (2014) examined retaliation against customers in Singaporean context. Coworkers rated how often they observed the focal employees (customer contact employees from two hotels) engaging in customer-centered CWBs. Although they did not find a significant relationship between mistreatment and customer-centered CWBs, they did find that CWBs were more likely if mistreated employees had a high self-efficacy and support from supervisors.

Based on these studies, it appears that the most common ways service employees reciprocate the poor treatment is by being unpleasant to customers, refusing service, corrupting service or product, misguiding a customer, or taking more time than necessary to process customer requests (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006; Ho & Gupta, 2014; Hunter & Penney, 2014; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011). Interestingly, although all of the studies mentioned above refer to the behaviors that service employees use to reciprocate the negative treatment they experience from customers as retaliation, they conceptualize and measure them as sabotage, incivility, or customer-centered counterproductive work behaviors.

For example, Skarlicki et al. (2008), Harris and Ogbonna (2002), Harris and Reynolds (2003), and Wang et al. (2011) operationalize retaliation as **sabotage**, which they define as either actions that "damage or disrupt the organization's operations by creating delays in production, damaging property, the destruction of relationships, or the harming of employees or customers" (Crino, 1994, p. 312) or "a counterproductive work behavior whereby an employee intentionally harms the legitimate interest of a customer" (Wang et al., 2011, p. 312). Examples of sabotage include slowing down service, deliberately mistreating customers, and playing pranks on

customers, as well as showing hostility, irritation, or frustration at customers and damaging their property (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Lee and Ok, 2014).

Other researchers conceptualize and operationalize retaliation as **incivility**, which occurs when someone is rude, shows lack of regard for others, and violates norms for mutual respect in interpersonal relations. Further the intent to harm a recipient of incivility may not be readily apparent (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Examples of service employee incivility include "ignoring customer requests, making demeaning remarks and speaking rudely to customers" (Walker, 2010, p. 2). More specific examples include ignoring a customer, getting blunt with a customer, being derogatory to a customer, or escalating tone of voice when speaking to a customer (van Jaarsveld et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2014).

Other researchers (e.g., Gupta & Ho, 2014; Hunter & Penney, 2014) have used a broader term for CWBs to encapsulate the different behaviors employees engage in that are counter to the organization's legitimate interests. **Counterproductive work behaviors** (CWBs) are generally defined as deliberate actions performed by employees that are intended to harm organizations as well as their members ("e.g., clients, coworkers, customers, and supervisors"; Spector & Fox, 2005, pp. 151–152). It is important to note that because both sabotage and incivility may be voluntarily performed with intent to harm others, they are nested within this category of behaviors. However, CWBs may also include other behaviors that harm organizational members more intensely than incivility or sabotage, such as physical aggression (Spector & Zhou, 2014). Yet the scales used to measure CWBs toward customers by Ho and Gupta (2014) as well as Hunter and Penney (2014) include behaviors that are more mild in nature, similarly to sabotage or incivility, such as arguing with a customer, making fun of a customer to someone else, making a customer wait longer than necessary, ignoring a customer,

raising one's voice to a customer, insulting a customer, contaminating a customer's food, confronting a customer about the tip, increasing the tip without the customer's permission, threatening a customer, and lying to a customer. Hence physical aggression is absent from the studies on customer-centered CWBs. Based on this review, it appears that the domains of these constructs capturing retaliation against customers (i.e., sabotage, incivility and customer-centered CWBs) have a large overlap; hence, in my dissertation I call the behaviors service employees use to punish customers who mistreat them as "retaliation," "retaliatory behaviors," "customer-centered CWBs," or "CWBs against customers."

Issues with the Current Research on Service Employees' Retaliation against Customers

After reviewing the literature on retaliation of customer service employees toward customers who mistreat them, it becomes apparent that while prior research has examined various types of CWBs to measure retaliation and has used different terminology to distinguish them conceptually (e.g., customer-centered CWBs, sabotage, incivility), the constructs of incivility, sabotage, and customer-centered CWBs and their measurement are, to a large extent, similar. This creates numerous problems that prevent theoretical parsimony or progress (Sober, 1981; Tepper & Henle, 2011).

First, there is a lack of a unifying framework. Such proliferation of substitute terms for retaliation makes it difficult to compare findings across studies of retaliation against customers or to move research on retaliation against customers forward. This is evident as researchers who study one of these three constructs do not cite research done on the other two constructs and search for similar predictors, which stales the research progress in the area of retaliation against aggressive customers. For example, Wang et al. (2011) stated that there was "only one study (Skarlicki et al., 2008) that has answered Pearson and Porath's (2004) call for more research on

how mistreatment by customers may lead to negative employee behaviors directed toward them—such as employee sabotage of customers" (p. 312). However, other researchers have investigated this problem as well, such as van Jaarsvelt, Walker, and Skarlicki (2010), who examined the relationship between employee and customer incivility. The statement by Wang et al. (2011) is surprising, considering Pearson and Porath (2004) specifically used the term "incivility," not "sabotage," in their paper. Also, Hunter and Penney (2014), in their paper on customer-related CWBs, have reviewed literature on CWBs in general (i.e., related mainly to intraorganizational relationships, such as those between employees and other employees or supervisors), and yet they did not include the studies on sabotage or incivility performed by service employees on customers who mistreat them, even though both sabotage and incivility fall under the category of CWBs. As a result, they used similar predictors to explain these behaviors as the predictors that past studies on retaliation had examined, such as poor treatment from customers, emotional exhaustion, and trait anger.

While researchers try to make a case for the importance of examining these different forms of behavior, they all present similar arguments, which undermines the need to differentiate them (at least when we examine service employee retaliation against customers). For example, researchers who measure retaliation as incivility (e.g., Walker, 2010) claim that it is important to study customer-related incivility because of the following:

1.   Incivility decreases perceptions of service quality and affects organizational performance (Walker, 2010). However, sabotage and customer-related CWBs have the exact same effects. For example, Skarlicki et al. (2008) found that customer-directed sabotage was negatively related to service employee performance ratings. Wang et al. (2011) also stated that sabotage is "harmful to customer relationships" (p. 312). Also, Hunter and

Penney (2014) started their paper claiming that customer-related CWBs are common sources of customer complaints (Brady, 2000) and that they lead to reduced productivity as well as financial loss for organizations (Borucki & Burke, 1999; Wardi & Wietz, 2004).

2. Incivility might be more common than other forms of employee deviance, such as physical aggression, as service employees experience it daily. However, the author has added that "existing research, however, does not focus specifically on employee incivility targeting customers but that employee behavior could be more common than other forms of organizational deviance" (Walker, 2010, p. 4). Surprisingly, Skarlicki et al. (2008) made similar claims about sabotage: "Previous research shows that employee sabotage is most often an act of retaliation motivated by perceptions of injustice" (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002; Skarlicki et al., 2008: p. 1335). Further, Harris and Ogbonna (2002) in their qualitative field study with 182 informants (from two hotel and two restaurant chains) found that more than 85% of them admitted to some form of sabotage against customers within the week prior to the interview; more than 90% of all informants (including CEOs) agreed that such behavior occurs every day. Also, they found that all of the informers have witnessed some form of customer sabotage. Hence this argument also makes a weak case for picking incivility over sabotage. In addition, Wang et al. (2011) found that call center service employees experience sabotage daily.

3. Understanding incivility toward customers could help human resources managers recruit and select service employees. While this is valid, researchers who study customer-related sabotage and CWBs make similar arguments. For example, Wang et al. (2011) stated that their research on service employee sabotage would help managers increase person-job fit

in service employees. Also, Hunter and Penney (2014) claim that understanding customer-related CWBs has a "considerable utility in helping organizational scientists and service managers better understand and potentially control these costly behaviors" (p. 263).

Another problem is that the existing measures are very context specific. For example, Skarlicki et al. (2008) and Wang et al. (2011) used the same scale created specifically for call center employees, and questions measuring sabotage include "Hang up on the customer," "Intentionally put the customer on hold for a long period of time," "Purposefully transferred the customer to the wrong department," "Purposefully disconnected the call," and "Told the customer that you fixed something but didn't fix it." Due to this context specificity, it is very hard to administer the different measures (i.e., measures of incivility, sabotage, and CWBs) to the same employees and statistically examine the extent to which the different measures are correlated with one another. Also, because of the context specificity of the measures, it is hard to generalize or apply the findings of these studies, unless the employees to which these findings generalize work in similar conditions (mainly in call centers or restaurants).

Finally, the existing scales that measure retaliation toward customers as incivility, sabotage, or CWBs fail to discriminate between overt and covert behaviors and just lump them together as one dimension (e.g., Ho & Gupta, 2014; Hunter & Penney, 2014; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Walker, 2010; Wang et al., 2011). However, Robinson and Bennett (1995) stated that all counterproductive work behaviors may be more private and covert or more public and overt. Also, Berry et al. (2012) found that when supervisors report subordinates' CWBs, they report significantly less of these behaviors than the subordinates do, and they suggested it was because supervisors are not aware of all the CWBs that their subordinates engage in, which happens

when these behaviors are covert. In addition, an analysis of field interviews from past research on service encounters and counterproductive employee behaviors (e.g., Bitner, Booms, and Mohr, 1994; Griffin, O'Leary-Kelly, and Collins, 1998) suggests that in the context of services, deviant behaviors may be overt or covert. Covert behaviors are those that are concealed from customers, whereas overt actions are purposefully displayed in front of others (Harris and Ogbonna, 2002). In fact, Harris and Ogbonna (2002) stated that when employees engage in sabotaging customers, they may do so *overtly* (i.e., behavior is seen by others as intentional and aggressive in nature) or *covertly* (i.e., the intent of the behavior is not clear and requires interpretation and/or the employee remains anonymous; e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Skarlicki et al., 2008). However, to date there is no scale that would measure overt and covert retaliation against customers separately and no research that would allow us to predict under what conditions service employees would engage in overt or covert retaliation against customers who mistreat them. Although recently the construct of incivility from supervisors and coworkers has been recently split into overt and covert (Tarraf, 2012), the scale that measures these two dimensions cannot be applied to CWBs against customers because the behaviors listed in the scale are not similar to behaviors that occur when service employees interact with customers.

In summary, retaliation against customers by mistreated service employees can be overt or covert, yet there are no scales to measure that and no studies examining when employees are more likely to engage in these different forms of retaliation. Further, we cannot even gain an insight into this from research on CWBs toward other targets such as organizations or coworkers. Although Tarraf (2012) has split incivility into overt and covert, the scale only applies to organizational insiders (coworkers or supervisors), not outsiders, such as customers. In addition, there is a need for a scale that encompasses retaliatory behaviors that could be performed by

most service employees and a scale that would allow for measuring overt and covert retaliation in a variety of settings for the research on retaliation against customers to be parsimonious, yet to have a broad scope. Hence in my dissertation I address these two issues.

In order to have a better understanding of CWBs against customers, issues with the research to date, and the importance of my study, I will now place customer-centered CWBs in the broader context of research on CWBs in general (i.e., from and toward organizational insiders and outsiders) and discuss research on CWBs that is relevant to my study.

Placing CWBs against Customers in a Broader Context of CWBs

In order to help readers understand the issues with the current research on CWBs on customers, it may be helpful to provide some background information regarding research on CWBs in general (i.e., from and toward organizational insiders and outsiders). It is particularly important to discuss the dimensionality of CWBs, narrow vs. broad measure approach, and target specificity. Later I will also discuss the current state of research on the relationship of personality and CWBs, as personality is a moderator in my model.

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are generally defined as deliberate actions performed by employees in order to violate organizational rules and harm organizations as well as their members (Spector & Fox, 2005). They are often referred to as "deviance" or "deviant behaviors" (e.g., Klotz & Buckley, 2013). Researchers have introduced different taxonomies of CWBs. Hollinger and Clark (1982) divided CWBs into property deviance, which includes misuse of employer assets; and production deviance, which includes violation of work norms. Gruys and Sackett (2003) found that CWBs include theft, destruction of property, misuse of information, misuse of time and other resources, unsafe behaviors, poor attendance, poor-quality work, alcohol use, drug use, inappropriate verbal actions, and inappropriate physical actions.

Spector et al. (2006) suggested five categories of CWBs, including abuse against others (e.g., ignoring or arguing with others), sabotage (e.g., destroying organizational property), production deviance (e.g., intentionally working slowly or incorrectly), theft, and withdrawal (e.g., arriving late for work or taking unauthorized breaks).

Researchers found that some of these behaviors are more likely to co-occur. For example, an employee who is persistently late for work is also more likely to misuse company time but less likely to verbally abuse others; hence CWBs can vary on different dimensions. The most widely replicated factors of CWBs include two target dimensions: interpersonal (CWB-I), which are directed toward an individual, such as coworker or supervisor, and organizational (CWB-O), which are directed toward an organization itself (Berry et al., 2007; Dalal, 2005; Lee & Allen, 2002; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Another broad classification splits CWBs into two broad dimensions: major vs. minor, depending on how serious they are (Bowling & Gruys, 2010; Robinson & Bennett, 1995), although later, Bennett and Robinson (2000) argued that the major-vs.-minor distinction is quantitative and not qualitative in nature, and hence their new scale only focused on CWB-I and CWB-O. Also, Neuman and Baron (1998) argued that CWBs can be performed as a reaction to provocative events or to obtain a valued result, and divided CWBs into hostile vs. instrumental. Finally, researchers suggested that CWBs may be overt or covert (e.g., Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Unlike overt CWBs, covert CWBs allow employees to harm others with little risk of retaliation from them (Baron & Neuman, 1996). It is important to note that while some CWBs may co-occur on some of these dimensions, they may differ on other dimensions. For example, according to Gruys and Sackett (2003), while theft from a coworker and verbal abuse of a customer are both serious offenses and target an individual, they may differ on the overt-vs.-covert dimension.

The purpose of these broader dimensions is to better capture the similarities and differences among different CWBs. This way we can find their common predictors as well as motivational mechanisms behind them, and help organizations prevent the occurrence of CWBs. However, to my knowledge there are no studies that would examine predictors of overt or covert CWBs. Only recently, Tarraf (2012) split incivility into overt and covert, but he examined them as antecedents, not outcomes, and the sources of this incivility were supervisors and coworkers. In other words, he did not examine incivility as an outcome directed toward customers or the antecedents of the different dimensions of incivility. Hence, considering the current state of research on CWBs, it is difficult to predict what kind of employees, including service employees, would be more likely to engage in overt vs. covert CWBs.

Importance of Target Specificity and Broad Measure Approach. As researchers started examining the predictors of CWBs, two issues emerged. One was lack of target specificity (i.e., who the CWBs are directed against: coworkers, supervisors, clients), and another was measuring the different behaviors that constitute CWBs, instead of the dimensions.

With respect to the first issue, researchers examined a variety of antecedents of CWBs, such as incivility, organizational injustice, and interpersonal conflict (Chen & Spector, 1992; Fox & Spector, 1999; Greenberg, 1990; Penney & Spector, 2005 Sprung & Jex, 2012) as well as personality (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Dalal, 2005; Salgado, 2002). However, most studies measure CWBs with scales that combine all or some of the potential targets of them (e.g., supervisors, coworkers, or organizational outsiders) by asking about "someone in the organization." However, Hershcovis et al. (2007) and Hershcovis and Barling (2010) called for multifoci research on CWBs. Hershcovis et al. (2007) found in their meta-analysis that trait anger and interpersonal conflict are more strongly related to CWB-Is and job satisfaction as well as

organizational constraints to CWB-Os. Further, they found that some variables (e.g., poor leadership and interpersonal injustice) were stronger predictors of CWB-Is depending on whether the target was a supervisor or a coworker. Hence, Hershcovis et al. (2007) called for target specificity in future studies. Specifically, they concluded: "Future research also needs to modify and validate existing scales to recognize target specificity. ... In particular, we advocate a measurement approach that includes the specific target under investigation (e.g., supervisor, coworker, or organization). … Measures that combine targets may provide results that either understate or overstate the population effect. Given the current findings, we believe that combined measures may provide ambiguous if not misleading information about the strength of predictive relationships" (Hershcovis et al., 2007, p. 235). Later, Hershcovis and Barling (2010, p. 25) have added that this "could lead researchers to overlook mediators and outcomes that are specific to a perpetrator." This prompted Hunter and Penney (2014) to develop the scale to measure customer-directed CWBs by service employees as they primarily interact with customers.

With respect to the second issue, researchers started studying various specific behaviors that fall under the umbrella of CWBs, such as revenge, bullying, abusive supervision, incivility, workplace deviance, mobbing, tyranny, undermining, and interpersonal conflict (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010), and many of these are hard to distinguish. This focus on different behaviors, instead of dimensions, led to construct proliferation and lack of a unifying framework to study CWBs (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Shapiro et al., 2008; Tepper & Henle, 2011), which is now being replicated with customer-centered CWBs as I have mentioned before. Following Bennett and Robinson's (2000) argument, taking a broad approach produces more reliable and valid measures, and it improves our ability to predict deviant behaviors. Also, using a broad construct

allows the generalization of research findings to phenomena that are similar in nature but not studied extensively (Roznowski & Hulin, 1992). Although there is a plethora of different manifestations of CWBs, research shows that some of these manifestations are very similar to one another and share similar antecedents; hence, they may be functional substitutes for one another (Robinson & Bennett, 1997).

Personality as a Predictor of CWBs. Although there are many predictors of CWBs, I only focus on the Five Factor Model of Personality, as it is relevant to my study. **Personality** is unique characteristics of an individual that determine the pattern of the individual's interactions with the environment across situations (Kleinmuntz, 1967). The five factors include agreeableness, neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. **Agreeableness** is the tendency to be cooperative, caring, and gentle. **Neuroticism** represents the tendency to feel anxious and hostile. **Extraversion** is the tendency to be talkative, dominant, and assertive. **Conscientiousness** is the tendency to act responsibly and to achieve one's goals. **Openness to experience** is the tendency to be to be creative, imaginative, and unconventional (Hogan & Ones, 1997). The Five Factor Model has been extensively researched as a predictor of CWBs. Of all five factors, conscientiousness appears to have the most consistent relationship with CWBs. For example, Salgado (2002), in his meta-analysis, found that conscientiousness (r_c = .26) and agreeableness (r_c = .20) were related to lack of CWBs. Berry et al. (2007) found in their meta-analysis that conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability (the opposite of neuroticism) were negatively related to CWBs. Mount, Iles, and Johnson (2006) found that low agreeableness and low conscientiousness but no other personality dimensions were correlated with more CWBs. Also, Bowling and Eschleman (2010) found a negative relationship for agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. However, Bowling and Eschleman

(2010) also examined the role of personality traits as moderators in the stressor-CWB relationship, which has been unexamined previously. They found that that relationship was stronger for employees low in conscientiousness or negative affect. They gave two possible explanations for that. One was that individuals with a high conscientiousness or low negative affect only engage in CWBs after other coping mechanisms are not effective, whereas to those with low conscientiousness or high negative affectivity, CWBs are automatic responses. Another was that those with low conscientiousness or high negative affectivity have a low threshold for engaging in CWBs. However, in my opinion, it may be the case that employees low in conscientiousness or high in negative affectivity or neuroticism are more likely to engage in overt CWBs, which are more automatic responses, and employees on the opposite side of these personality dimensions are more likely to engage in covert CWBs, which require remaining calm and being motivated to come up with more clandestine ways to get back at others. In terms of agreeableness, Bowling and Eschleman (2010) found no significant effect on the relationship between stressors and CWBs. They speculate that it is because the scale measured the empathy and altruism subfacets of agreeableness but not morality, which reflects one's tendency to behave ethically. However, it seems plausible that they did not find a significant effect because people engage in CWBs regardless of their agreeableness. Instead, based on their level of agreeableness, they may be engaging in different kinds of CWBs, such as overt and covert.

Past research on personality and CWBs looks only at the amount of CWBs but not overt vs. covert dimensions of CWBs. It may be the case that employees low in agreeableness, conscientiousness, or emotional stability are more likely to engage in overt CWBs and employees high in these personality traits are more likely to engage in covert CWBs. Partial support for this assertion comes from the literature on methodology in measuring CWBs. Several

researchers have found that there are differences in the frequency of CWBs performed by research subjects, depending on whether this frequency is reported by the subjects themselves (i.e., self-reports), or their peers and supervisors (other-reports). Typically the subjects themselves report engaging in more CWBs than their peers or supervisors report them engaging in. Berry et al. (2012) performed a meta-analysis and found that self-raters report significantly more CWBs than other-raters as the corrected mean difference was $d = 0.35$ and the confidence interval did not overlap with zero. Further, this difference was higher ($d = .44$) when other-ratings were provided by supervisors only. They also stated that the moderate correlation between self- and other-report CWB (.38) suggests that each source of CWB ratings captures unique variance likely because "other-raters do not have adequate opportunity to observe employees engaging in CWB" (p. 624). Most studies rely on other-ratings to avoid common method bias, but this likely manipulates the magnitude of the relationship between these personality traits and CWBs. Covert CWBs are much harder to detect, so we likely only know the magnitudes of relationships between personality traits and overt CWBs and just assume that people with the opposite traits do not perform CWBs, when it is likely that they do perform CWBs, just ones that are less visible. If they did not engage in such behavior, the magnitude of the relationship between personality and CWBs would not be mild or moderate, but the value of it would be closer to 1 (i.e., the relationship would be stronger). To my knowledge, we know little regarding how personality relates to overt and covert CWBs, including CWBs toward customers.

Hence the goal of my study is to examine how personality traits affect the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt or covert retaliation to address these gaps in the past research. The specific hypotheses are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The Effect of Customer Mistreatment on Desire for Revenge to Reciprocate Mistreatment

As I have previously stated, **customer mistreatment** is a low-quality interaction of customers with service employees (Bies, 2001). It occurs when customers violate norms and conventional social rules that guide interpersonal interactions in relation with service employees (Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Wilson & Holmvall, 2013) and they do so with the intent to invoke psychological harm (Greenberg & Barling, 1999). Further customer mistreatment is typically verbal or attitudinal in form and less intense than physical violence (Wilson & Holmvall, 2013; Zhan, 2011). Hence, it may include behaviors such as swearing, name-calling, and verbal attacks of service employees (Wilson & Holmvall, 2013), but it excludes behaviors such as stealing products from a store or jumping the line (Zhan, 2011). Also, even though mistreatment from customers typically is not as intense as physical aggression, service employees experience it every day. Past research found that service employees are mistreated by customers more than they are by coworkers or supervisors (Grandey, Kern, & Frone, 2007) and that it can be as often as seven times per day on average (Grandey et al., 2004). Because of their frequent occurrence, these daily hassles are very frustrating and stressful and lower service employees' well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Zhan, 2011).

Past research found that when mistreated, individuals experience negative affect and want to reciprocate the mistreatment (Berkowitz, 1993; Bies & Tripp, 1995; Donnerstein & Hatfield, 1982; Kim & Smith, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Hence, they experience the desire for revenge. Although past studies suggest that the desire for revenge is an underlying mechanism for retaliation, none of the studies on retaliation in the context of customer service have examined it. For example, Wang et al. (2011) stated that mistreated employees have a desire to

reciprocate mistreatment to punish its source. Skarlicki et al. (2008) titled their article "Getting Even for Customer Mistreatment […]." Even Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that retaliation was performed by customer avengers, yet none of the studies have actually measured the desire for revenge.

Revenge is an attempt to harm the party blamed for mistreatment (Stuckless & Goranson, 1992). This may be done by inflicting damage, injury, discomfort, or punishment on the perpetrator (Aquino, Tripp & Bies, 2001). Revenge reaffirms and validates moral standards and has been universally accepted as a norm for over 3,000 years, as it was stated in the Hammurabian code and later in the writings of Aristotle as well as the biblical injunction of " A life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth … bruise for bruise" (Exodus 21: 23–25). Based on the model of revenge (discussed in the review section) in the workplace, revenge desires are triggered by injustice, which damages the victim's ego or identity as well as moral norms and rules of conduct (Bies and Tripp, 1998). Hence, victims of mistreatment experience the desire for revenge because they are motivated by their self-interest, to protect their self-worth and identity; or out of moral duty, to protect norms that should guide any social interaction (i.e., deontic justice). In other words, revenge is sparked by morality- or identity-based mechanisms (Jones, 2009).

According to the *morality-based* (i.e., *deontic*) *perspective*, victims desire revenge because they see it as a moral imperative to right a wrong (Bies & Tripp, 1996). They feel they need to punish a perpetrator because it is their moral duty (Folger, 2001) to guard the moral order, including the right of all individuals to be treated with respect and dignity (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). This includes the interaction that service employees have with customers (Skarlicki et al., 2008). Victims experience a sense of moral unease after being mistreated

because when a perpetrator violates moral principles, it is as if the perpetrator placed himself or herself "above them as if superior to moral authority" (Folger et al., 2005, p. 217). This feeling then creates a desire to see that perpetrators are held accountable for their immoral actions (Folger, 2001). Past research found that not punishing transgressors is seen as unethical (Folger et al., 2005). Further empirical evidence suggests that individuals are willing to sacrifice their well-being in order to punish those who engage in unethical acts (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1986; Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, & Gee, 2002).

According to *identity-based mechanisms*, victims desire revenge because mistreatment signals to them that they are not respected by those who mistreat them, and that they are inferior as compared with those who mistreat them (Tyler & Lind, 1992). This possesses a threat on one's self-esteem and triggers the need to defend against such threats (Aquino & Douglas, 2003). Revenge allows individuals to save face (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000) and restore their damaged esteem (Bies & Trip, 1996). Past research found that when employees are mistreated by their supervisors, they reciprocate the mistreatment, and this relationship is mediated by desire for revenge (Jones, 2009). Similarity, if employees are mistreated by customers, they should experience the desire to get even with them by reciprocating the mistreatment.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between perceived mistreatment from a customer and desire for revenge by service employees who perceived they were mistreated.

The Moderating Effect of Negative Reciprocity on the Relationship between Customer Mistreatment and Desire for Revenge

Past research found that not everyone seeks an-eye-for-an-eye retribution following mistreatment (Rupp & Bell, 2010). Some individuals believe that two wrongs do not make a

right (Turillo et al., 2002 p. 850). According to Rupp and Bell (2010), this happens when people are capable of self-regulating their moral behavior. However, Folger et al. (2005) argued that those who consider themselves moral are actually more likely to punish perpetrators because they believe punishing others for not following moral principles is actually moral, since retaliation involves the biblical injunction of "A life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth … bruise for bruise." Either way, people vary in their desire for revenge following mistreatment, and according to the model of revenge (Tripp & Bies, 2009), they are more likely to desire revenge when they believe in the norm of reciprocity. Hence, service employees who experience mistreatment from customers firsthand should be more likely to desire revenge on these customers if they strongly endorse a negative norm of reciprocity.

Reciprocity comprises quid pro quo behaviors, meaning that the treatment we receive generates an obligation to treat someone in a similar manner (Gouldner, 1960). Most studies examine positive reciprocity or positive exchanges, where positive treatment is reciprocated with positive treatment (e.g., returning favors). These positive exchanges increase trust as well as lower uncertainty in social relationships (Colquitt, LePine, Piccolo, Zapata, & Rich, 2012), which promotes continuation of exchanges (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). For example, when employees feel supported by their organizations and supervisors, they reciprocate this positive treatment by engaging in organizational citizenship behaviors, which help supervisors and organizations achieve their goals (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

Similarly, just as there is a norm of positive reciprocity, there is a norm of negative reciprocity, and these two are mutually exclusive. Gouldner (1960) first noted that some people endorse a negative norm of reciprocity, where negative treatment promotes "not the return of

benefits but the return of injuries" (p. 172). Recent research also found that individuals believe that when someone mistreats them, it is acceptable to retaliate in return (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). However, in spite of the universal belief that people should get what they deserve, some people endorse this belief to a greater extent than others. People who endorse the norm of reciprocity to a greater extent are more likely to carefully track obligations. Those who endorse this norm to a lesser extent, on the other hand, are less concerned about obligations or when favors are not returned (Clark & Mills, 1979; Murstein, Cerreto, & MacDonald, 1977; Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). In addition, people who strongly endorse the norm of negative reciprocity believe retribution is the correct and proper response to mistreatment, and this affects their actions (Gallucci & Perugini, 2003; Perugini, Gallucci, Presaghi, & Ercolani, 2003). For example, McLean and Parks (1998) found that individuals who are high in negative reciprocity rule endorsement are more likely to seek retaliation than avoidance. Also, Eisenberger, Lynch, & Aselage (2004) found that when the confederate in their experiment disagreed with participants' opinions and ridiculed their ability, participants who strongly endorsed the negative reciprocity norm were more likely to experience anger, to disagree with the confederate, and to doubt the confederate's ability.

This research and theory suggest that when customers mistreat service employees, those employees who have been victims of mistreatment from customers and who strongly endorse the negative reciprocity rule should be more likely to desire retribution on those who treated them poorly than those employees who endorse the negative reciprocity rule to a lower extent.

Hypothesis 2: Negative reciprocity beliefs moderate the positive relationship between perceived mistreatment from a customer and desire for revenge by service employees

who perceived they were mistreated, such that the relationship is stronger when negative

reciprocity beliefs are high.

The Effect of Desire for Revenge on Retaliation

Research shows that avengers fulfill their desires to harm their perpetrators by engaging in retaliation against them (Bies & Tripp, 1996). This is consistent with the model of revenge, and it can be explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action (reformulated later into the Theory of Planned Behavior).

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, every behavior is preceded by an intention to engage in that behavior, and intentions are the most direct precursor or a motivational force of a behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Further, the theory claims that stronger intentions lead to increased effort to perform the behavior, which also increases the likelihood for the behavior to be performed. Recognizing that behavioral intention alone cannot exclusively determine whether or not the actual behavior will follow, Ajzen (1991) reformulated the theory as the Theory of Planned Behavior and included perceived behavioral control as a moderator in the relationship. Perceived behavioral control is a belief regarding the extent to which someone is able to act on his or her intentions. This belief is based on past experience and efficacy in engaging in a similar behavior or anticipated obstacles that could inhibit the enacting of the desired behavior. These theories have been used in predicting deviant behavior, such as criminal offenses (Kiriakidis, 2008), academic misconduct (Stone, Jawahar, Kisamore, 2010), gambling (Martin, Brock, Buckley, & Ketchen, 2010), and speeding (Elliott & Thomson, 2010). Based on these theories, assuming that service employees believe they are able to retaliate against customers who mistreat them, service employees who have a strong desire for revenge (i.e., behavioral intention) should

be more likely to retaliate against customers who committed the act of mistreatment than employees who have a low desire to seek revenge.

These theories explain how behavioral intentions of taking revenge may turn into an action. However, in order to understand whether such action will include overt retaliation or covert retaliation, we should keep in mind that punishing the misbehaving customer overtly requires confrontation and may result in counter-retaliation as well as escalation of conflict (Aquino et al., 2001) or repercussions from management for treating customers in ways that are unauthorized by the company. This creates an uncertainty as to whether others would recognize such behavior as retaliation, whether it would be sanctioned, and whether it will lead to more encounters with the perpetrator. Hence, not every victim will feel comfortable retaliating against the perpetrators overtly. However, victims who are motivated to restore fairness and who seek revenge could still reduce the uncertainty related to punishing perpetrators and punish someone in ways that will not be so obvious to either management or those who are being punished. This would be the case if retaliation were covert.

Harris and Ogbonna (2002) interviewed service employees and found that when service workers want to punish customers who mistreat them, they retaliate either overtly or covertly. **Covert retaliation** includes actions through which a service employee harms the employee's perpetrator but the perpetrator cannot readily interpret the behavior as an intentional punishment. Instead, the service employee's behavior could be interpreted as an honest mistake or error that the employee has no control over. **Overt retaliation** includes actions that could be easily interpreted by customers as intentionally rude and discourteous (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Tarraf, 2012). For example, overt retaliation could include intimidation, threats, refusal of service, or argumentation. Covert retaliation could include behaviors such as adding unnecessary

extra charges, altering food before serving it to the customer, charging extra, processing a customer's request longer than necessary, misinforming a customer, altering a customer's order and blaming it on circumstances outside of the employee's control, or other actions (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Skarlicki, et al., 1999; Skarlicki et al., 2008). Although overt retaliation could include violent acts, like homicide, these instances are extremely rare (Neuman & Baron, 1998), they have not been measured in past studies, and hence they are excluded from my study.

>*Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between desire for revenge and (a) overt retaliation or (b) covert retaliation against customers by service employees who perceived they were mistreated.*

The following section presents hypotheses regarding when overt or covert retaliation may be more likely to happen.

What Determines Whether Employees Will Be More Likely to Punish Misbehaving Customers Overtly vs. Covertly?

Research has shown that counterproductive work behaviors are a function of both context and individual characteristics (Penney, Hunter, & Perry, 2011). Also, according to the Theory of Reasoned Action, the relationship between one's intentions and behaviors may be moderated (Ajzen, 2002). This is because intentions are often hypothetical and costless; thus they overestimate actual performance of intended behaviors, which is especially true if the intended actions have cost or risk associated with them (Ajzen, 2002), as would be likely with overt retaliation. According to past research, the intentions-behavior relationship may be moderated by individual characteristics. For example, personality moderates the relationship between intention to exercise and performing exercises (Bozionelos & Bennett, 1999; Rhodes, Courneya, &

Hayduk, 2002). This suggests that personality could be an individual-level characteristic that will determine whether a victim of an aggressive customer will feel more or less comfortable retaliating overtly or covertly. Also, in terms of service jobs, research shows that CWBs occur even when service quality is being monitored (Holman, 2002), which suggests that the context of service interactions is a weak situation that allows for expression of employee personality (Mischel, 1976). This likely occurs because the relationships customer service employees usually have with customers (unlike the relationships they have with their coworkers or supervisors) are short-term exchanges (Duck, 1998). For this reason, personality of service employees serves as a moderator in my model.

Personality as a Moderator

Service employees' reaction to mistreatment from customers (i.e., situational variable) should be affected by employee personality (i.e., individual characteristic) as it determines how individuals interact with their environment (Kleinmuntz, 1967). In my model I focus on the moderating role of personality characteristics as captured by the Five Factor Model (FFM). I chose the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality because it has been universally accepted as a meaningful description of the structure of personality traits, it has been widely used in selection of service employees, which is relevant from a practical standpoint, and there has been a substantial number of empirical studies linking personality to counterproductive work behaviors, which I have reviewed in the previous section.

First, the Five Factor Model provides the most comprehensive way of understanding personality differences among individuals (Barrick, Mount, & Li, 2013). It consists of five dimensions, which include agreeableness, neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. **Agreeableness** is the tendency to be cooperative, caring, and gentle.

Neuroticism represents the tendency to feel anxious and hostile. **Extraversion** is the tendency to be talkative, dominant, and assertive. **Conscientiousness** is the tendency to act responsibly and to achieve one's goals. **Openness to experience** is the tendency to be to be creative, imaginative, and unconventional (Hogan & Ones, 1997). Everyone's personality traits are stable over time, as scores on each dimension show only a minor variation across the lifespan of adults (Costa & McCrae, 1988; McCrae & Costa, 1990), and they can be used to describe the personality of individuals from different cultures (Schmitt, Allik, McCrae, & Benet-Martínez, 2007). Because the FFM traits are broad, are context independent, and apply to any individual, they explain and predict one's behavior across many different situations (Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006).

Second, the five factors have a practical importance to the field of management (Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006), as they have been shown to predict employee motivation and performance across different occupations, including service work (see Barrick & Mount, 1991). Four of the five traits that are especially useful in selection of service employees include conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness, as these traits are positively correlated with overall customer service (Hurley, 1998). Service jobs require dependability, interaction with customers, empathy, friendliness, emotional labor, and the display of positive emotions even when times are stressful (Hurley, 1998). Hence individuals high in conscientiousness (i.e., being dependable), extraversion (i.e., being sociable), and agreeableness (i.e., being friendly and empathic) and low in neuroticism (i.e., having patience and self-control) have been proclaimed a good fit for service jobs, as these characteristics lead to high performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Hurley, 1998). On the other hand, practitioners are advised not to select service employees who are low in conscientiousness, extraversion, or agreeableness, or high in neuroticism, as employees with these characteristics are more likely not

only to perform poorly but also to engage in CWBs (Bowling, Burns, Stewart, & Gruys, 2011; Bowling & Eschleman, 2010; Mount et al., 2006).

In the following paragraphs, I present arguments supporting my claim that the personality of service employees mistreated by customers should affect the relationship between desire for revenge and overt as well as covert retaliation.

Agreeableness. Agreeableness is the propensity to get along with others and maintain good relationships with everyone, as it reflects one's desire to fulfill one's need for communion-striving (Barrick, Mount, & Gupta, 2003). In other words, agreeable people are motivated to seek collaboration and harmony in social interactions (Penney, David, & Witt, 2011). Individuals who are high in agreeableness are friendly, cooperative, and soft-hearted (Barrick & Mount, 1991). They are also considerate, submissive, and empathetic, and they tend to avoid arguments with others (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990; Skarlicki, et al., 1999). On the other hand, those who are low in agreeableness are more likely to be antagonistic, confrontational, and unpleasant to others. They are also less concerned with others' feelings, so they do not feel guilty when they upset others. In fact, they may be ruthless and even cruel (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997; Trapnell & Wiggins, 1990).

With respect to agreeableness and CWBs, most research shows that people are more likely to be hostile toward others when they are low in agreeableness than when they are high in agreeableness (e.g., Salgado, 2002; Skarlicki et al., 1999), but CWBs in such research are not examined separately as overt or covert. However, Berry et al. (2012) found in their meta-analysis that self-raters with various levels of agreeableness reported engaging in more CWBs than other-raters reported them engaging in CWBs because other-raters are often not aware of employees' engagement in CWBs, especially when such acts are private or covert. Also, since the

relationship between agreeableness and CWBs is moderate ($r_c = -.35$, Berry et al., 2012; $r_c = -.20$, Salgado, 2002), there are individuals who are high in agreeableness and yet engage in CWBs. This suggests that people who are low in agreeableness in general are more likely to engage in overt interpersonal deviance but people who are high in agreeableness are less likely to engage in such deviance. However, that does not necessarily mean that they do not engage in covert deviance. This is because past research suggests that individuals high in agreeableness are more likely to follow social rules (Mount et al., 2006) and they are more capable of controlling their expression of anger when interacting with others than those who are low in agreeableness. Hence, individuals high in agreeableness may express anger in ways that allow them to maintain civil in relationships with others and act as if they follow social rules, which is the case when someone engages in deviant behaviors covertly.

Based on the definition of agreeableness as well as the review of past findings regarding agreeableness and deviant behaviors, it appears that agreeableness will influence the extent to which service employees, who desire revenge on mistreating customers, will retaliate against them overtly or covertly. Specifically, when agreeableness is low, service employees, who desire revenge on customers who mistreat them, will be more likely to engage in overt retaliation. On the other hand, when agreeableness is high, service employees, who desire revenge on customers who mistreat them, will be more likely to engage in covert retaliation. The rationale behind it is that overt retaliation consists of behaviors such as direct argumentation, confrontation, and demonstration of anger, and these are the behaviors individuals low in agreeableness are more likely to express (Skarlicki et al., 1999). Those who are high in agreeableness, on the other hand, seek cooperation and harmony, are more submissive, and strive to maintain positive relations with others; hence they will likely try to avoid heated confrontations. In order to take revenge on

those who mistreat them, they should be more likely to retaliate against them in more clandestine ways, by engaging in covert retaliation.

Hypothesis 4: Agreeableness moderates the relationship between desire for revenge and retaliation such that (a) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and overt retaliation when agreeableness is low and (b) there is a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation when agreeableness is high.

Extraversion. Extraversion is the degree to which individuals feel comfortable in social situations. It is the propensity to be assertive when interacting with others, and it reflects one's desire to fulfill one's need for status striving (Barrick et al., 2003). In other words, extraversion determines the degree to which one will demonstrate social dominance in one's interactions with other individuals. People who are high in extraversion have a lot of energy, and tend to be talkative and assertive. They also enjoy being the center of attention, and they often seek excitement or stimulation. On the other hand, people who are low in extraversion prefer to spend more time alone and are characterized as reserved, quiet, and submissive (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990).

Most research shows that there is no significant relationship between extraversion and CWBs (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Bowling & Eschleman 2010; Mount et al., 2006; Salgado, 2002), which means that individuals engage in CWBs regardless of their level of extraversion. However, deviance in such research is not examined separately as overt or covert. Also, as previously mentioned, Berry et al. (2012) found in their meta-analysis that self-raters with various levels of extraversion reported engaging in more CWBs than other-raters reported them engaging in CWBs because other-raters are often not aware of employees' engagement in

CWBs, especially when such acts are private or covert. Research in the area of conflict shows that people who are high in extraversion tend to be more argumentative (Blickle, 1997), and more likely to express and elicit anger in confrontations with others, because of their need to dominate others (Bono, Boles, Judge, & Lauver, 2002; Buss, 1991). Hence, extraverts are especially likely to show dominance over others when they are rewarded for such behavior, as is the case when there are other people witnessing their behavior. These studies suggest that people engage in overt or covert CWBs depending on their level of extraversion. Individuals who are high in extraversion may express anger in ways that allow them to show their dominance over others, as is the case when someone engages in CWBs or retaliation overtly. On the other hand, individuals who are low in extraversion, who tend to be submissive, may feel more comfortable by engaging in deviant behaviors covertly.

Based on the definition as well as the review of past findings regarding extraversion, it appears that extraversion will influence the extent to which service employees, who desire revenge on customers who mistreated them, will retaliate against them overtly or covertly. Specifically, when extraversion is high, service employees, who desire revenge on customers who mistreat them, will be more likely to engage in overt retaliation. On the other hand, when extraversion is low, such service employees will be more likely to engage in covert retaliation. The rationale behind these relationships is that overt retaliation consists of behaviors that involve direct argumentation, confrontation, and a demonstration of anger as well as social dominance. Such behaviors are more likely to be expressed by individuals high in extraversion (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Blickle, 1997; Buss, 1991; Bono et al., 2002; Goldberg, 1990). Those who are low in extraversion, on the other hand, are more submissive, less likely to show anger, more quiet, more reserved, and less comfortable with direct interactions with other people (Costa &

McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990). Thus, they will likely try to avoid heated confrontations. In order to take revenge on those who mistreat them, they should be more likely to retaliate against them in more clandestine ways, by engaging in covert retaliation.

Hypothesis 5: Extraversion moderates the relationship between desire for revenge and retaliation such that (a) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and overt retaliation when extraversion is high and (b) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and covert retaliation when extraversion is low.

Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is the propensity to direct attention and other resources toward goal completion as it reflects one's accomplishment striving (Barrick et al., 2003; Penney et al., 2011). Conscientiousness also reflects one's perseverance as well as tendency to be cautious and analytical (Hogan & Hogan, 2001; Barrick & Mount, 1991). Highly conscientious individuals are responsible, consider the consequences of their behavior before acting (Bowling & Eschleman, 2010; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990), and control their work-related behaviors (Salgado, 2002). On the other hand, those who are low in conscientiousness tend to be less responsible, be less careful, and act haphazardly (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

A meta-analysis conducted by Mount and Barrick (1995) shows that people who are conscientious tend to be persistent as they take initiative and expend energy when working toward achieving their goals. This is why conscientiousness is related to high job performance (Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski, 2002) across all occupations (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991), including customer service jobs (Liao & Chuang, 2004). With respect to conscientiousness and deviance, research shows that conscientiousness is negatively associated with deviant behaviors;

however, the relationship is moderate. For example, Salgado (2002) in his meta-analysis found that the correlation between conscientiousness and deviant behaviors is -.26. Similar results have been reported by Berry et al. (2007), Bowling and Eschleman (2010), and Mount et al. (2006), which suggests that not only individuals who are low in conscientiousness engage in deviant behaviors. It is important to keep in mind, though, that the deviant behaviors measured in these studies were represented by both overt and covert acts. Again, Berry et al. (2012) found in their meta-analysis that self-raters, even those with a high level of conscientiousness, reported engaging in more CWBs than other-raters reported them engaging in. Other-raters are often not aware of employees' engagement in CWBs, especially when such acts are private. Research has found that highly conscientious people are more likely to suppress their anger (Jensen-Campbell, Knack, Waldrip, & Campbell, 2007), and that highly conscientious individuals are more likely to deal with negative emotions in constructive ways (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). Thus, it is likely that highly conscientious individuals engage in more covert acts of deviance that others do not easily see.

Based on the definition of conscientiousness as well as the review of past findings regarding conscientiousness and deviant behaviors, it appears that conscientiousness will influence the extent to which service employees, who desire revenge against mistreating customers, will retaliate against them overtly or covertly. Specifically, when conscientiousness is low, mistreated service employees will be more likely to engage in overt retaliation. On the other hand, when conscientiousness is high, mistreated service employees will be more likely to engage in covert retaliation. The rationale behind these relationships is that overt retaliation is a result of acting in a rash manner and showing anger, and this is how individuals who are low in conscientiousness act (Jensen-Campbell et al., 2007). Covert retaliation, on the other hand,

requires more planning and patience than does overt retaliation, as the goal of covert retaliation is to perform it in a way that would not be noticed by management, and such behavior is more likely in individuals who are high in conscientiousness (Jensen-Campbell et al., 2007). In order to take revenge on those who mistreat them, highly conscientious victims of customer mistreatment should then be more likely to retaliate against customers in more clandestine ways, such as by engaging in covert retaliation.

> *Hypothesis 6: Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between desire for revenge and retaliation such that (a) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and overt retaliation when conscientiousness is low and (b) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and covert retaliation when conscientiousness is high.*

Neuroticism. Neuroticism is a tendency to experience negative emotional states. Individuals who are high in neuroticism are more likely to be depressed, angry, anxious, temperamental, and impulsive (Barrick & Mount, 1991). On the other hand, those who are low in neuroticism, or who are emotionally stable, remain calm and composed even in stressful situations (Mount, Barrick, & Stewart, 1998). Highly neurotic individuals also tend to dwell on negative aspects of their lives, and experience greater distress whenever they are faced with adversity (Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010; Watson & Clark, 1984). This is likely the reason that they perceive ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult (Fiske, Gilbert, & Lindzey, 2009). Also, because individuals high in neuroticism are preoccupied with dwelling on negative feelings, they are less likely to engage in divergent (i.e., creative) thinking (Chamorro-Premuzic & Reichenbacher, 2008).

With respect to neuroticism and deviance, findings from meta-analyses regarding the relationship between neuroticism and CWBs are inconclusive. For example, Salgado (2002) found no relationship between neuroticism and CWBs, but Berry et al. (2007) found a significant negative relationship between neuroticism and CWBs in their meta-analyses. It is then likely that employees engage in CWBs regardless of their level of neuroticism. Also, Berry et al. (2012) found that there was a significant mean difference in the amounts of CWBs reported between supervisors and employees (d = 0.44) and that self-raters (i.e., employees) reported engaging in more CWBs than supervisors reported them engaging in. These findings further support the claim that employees engage in deviant behavior regardless of the level of neuroticism; however, the level of neuroticism may affect the kind of behaviors employees engage in, with some CWBs being more private than others and less likely to be detected by supervisors. Past research shows that individuals high in neuroticism are also more reactive to stressors in their lives than individuals who are low in neuroticism (Bolger & Schilling, 1991), and they have a hard time regulating their emotions when they are mistreated. For this reason, they often deal with stress using maladaptive coping strategies (Liu, Wang, Zhan, & Shi, 2009; Wang et al., 2011; Weintraub, & Carver, 1986) or strategies that intensify interpersonal conflicts with others (Bolger & Schilling, 1991; Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). Some examples of the negative behaviors that neuroticism has been related to are violating moral codes and engaging in disruptive behaviors (Eysenck & Gudjonsson, 1989; Skarlicki et al., 1999), as well as physical violence, theft, and vandalism (Heaven, 1996; Skarlicki, et al., 1999). Research also shows that because of the neurotic individuals' elevated reactivity to aversive events, they are more likely than their counterparts to argue with others when faced with stress (Bolger & Schilling, 1991; Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). Some research also suggests that neurotic individuals who have

been mistreated are more fearful of future incivility; hence, to prevent it, they are more likely to respond with aggression (Penney & Spector, 2005; Schat & Kelloway, 2005). These findings then suggest that neurotic individuals are more likely to engage in overt deviance.

Based on the definition of neuroticism as well as the review of past findings regarding neuroticism and deviant behaviors, it appears that neuroticism will influence the extent to which service employees who desire revenge on mistreating customers will retaliate against them overtly or covertly. Specifically, when neuroticism is high, service employees who desire revenge on customers who mistreat them will be more likely to engage in overt retaliation. On the other hand, when neuroticism is low, service employees who desire revenge on mistreating customers will be more likely to engage in covert retaliation. The rationale behind it is that overt retaliation consists of behaviors that are harsh, are impulsive, and involve demonstration of anger through lashing out at others, and as such they visibly violate display rules that service employees are expected to follow with interactions with customers (Skarlicki et al., 2008). These are the behaviors individuals high in neuroticism are more likely to express, as these individuals are impulsive, are angry, have more trouble regulating their behavior (Bowling & Eschleman, 2010), are more likely to respond to stressful events in a confrontational manner (Milam, Spitzmueller, & Penney; 2009), and are less likely to come up with creative ideas (Chamorro-Premuzic & Reichenbacher, 2008), likely including ideas regarding punishing perpetrators in clandestine ways. Those who are low in neuroticism, on the other hand, should be more likely to punish others in ways that would allow them to be creative and express themselves as ones who do not act on an impulse or are aggressive (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Hence, they should be more likely to punish their perpetrators through covert retaliation, as it requires remaining calm and

creativity in coming up with punishment that would allow getting back at someone in a way that would not violate display rules or be easily recognized by others as deviant behavior.

Hypothesis 7: Neuroticism moderates the relationship between the desire for revenge and retaliation such that (a) there is a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when neuroticism is high and (b) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and covert retaliation when neuroticism is low.

Openness. Openness to experience is a tendency to be curious and creative (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Individuals who are high in openness tend to seek out new experiences and try new ideas. They also enjoy solving intellectual problems, and unlike those who are not open to experience, they thrive in an environment that challenges them (Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae, 1987). Research also shows that open individuals are more likely to engage in self-monitoring (Blickle, 1997 Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000). In addition, studies show that those who are high in openness to experience are more likely to adapt to any changes in their environment and deal with any obstacles in a creative way. Such adaptability requires persistence and the development of different, more appropriate ways of doing things (Costa & McCrae, 1992; LePine, Colquitt, & Erez 2000). On the other hand, those who are low in openness are set in their ways and have a more rigid repertoire of responses to new stimuli. This is why they are more comfortable in a stable environment or situations they are familiar with. When they deal with a situation that is novel to them, they are more likely to be distressed (Goldberg, 1990).

Most research shows that there is no significant relationship between openness and deviant behaviors (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Bowling & Eschleman 2010; Mount et al., 2006; Salgado, 2002), which means that individuals engage in CWBs regardless of their level of

openness. But it is important to note that none of these studies have examined overt and covert types of CWBs separately. Hence, this lack of correlation could be due to the different sign of relationship between openness with covert and overt retaliation canceling each other out. This is supported by Berry et al. (2012), who found in their meta-analysis that self-raters with various levels of openness reported engaging in more CWBs than other-raters reported them engaging in CWBs. Other-raters are often not aware of employees' engagement in CWBs, especially when such acts are private. An exception to the lack of correlation between openness and CWBs was a study done by Mount et al. (2006), who found that there was a significant negative relationship between openness and CWBs (both self- and other-rated) directed at coworkers. Interestingly, most of these behaviors were public (e.g., "Said something hurtful to someone at work," "made a […] racial remark at work," "publicly embarrassed someone at work"). They explained it by noting that people who are low in openness are "creatures of habit" who are narrow-minded, lack flexibility, and have low tolerance for surprises (Goldberg, 1990) and that their intolerance of injustice and preference for the status quo motivates them to engage in counterproductive behaviors. Also, Lee, Ashton, and Shin (2005), who used the same scale of counterproductive work behaviors, found that individuals who are lower in openness were more likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors toward other individuals. However, based on the measurement of CWBs in these studies, this is likely only the case when CWBs are more public and overt.

Based on the definition as well as the review of past findings regarding openness, it appears that openness will influence the extent to which service employees who desire revenge on mistreating customers will retaliate against them overtly or covertly. Specifically, when openness is low, service employees who desire revenge on customers who mistreat them will be more likely to engage in overt retaliation. On the other hand, when openness is high, service

employees who desire revenge on mistreating customers will be more likely to engage in covert retaliation. Considering covert retaliation requires coming up with creative ways of dealing with unpleasant customers, I expect that service employees who are high in openness to experience and who have a desire to retaliate against mistreating customers will be more likely to punish these customers covertly. On the other hand, since punishing them in an overt way (e.g., yelling or swearing) is more rigid and does not require much creativity, I expect that service employees who are low in openness to experience and who have a desire to retaliate against mistreating customers will be more likely to punish these customers overtly.

> *Hypothesis 8: Openness moderates the relationship between desire for revenge and retaliation such that (a) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and overt retaliation when openness is low and (b) there is a stronger positive relationship between desire for revenge and covert retaliation when openness is high.*

CHAPTER 4 METHODS

Participants and Procedure

Two hundred and fifty-five participants were recruited through Qualtrics (www.qualtrics.com), the online survey company. Although using online panels in applied psychology and management studies has been on the rise, there have been concerns regarding the data quality obtained in this way. Recently Walter, Siebert, Goering, and O'Boyle (2016) conducted meta-analyses using 54 independent samples and 17,324 participants to compare means, internal consistencies, and effect size estimates of conventional and online panel data. They found that online panel data have psychometric properties similar to data obtained from conventional samples.

Prior to data collection to help determine the sample size, a power analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1 software (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). I found that for a small effects size, in order to detect increase in R^2 by .02 (Cohen, 1988) when testing interactions, I would need a sample size of almost 400 subjects, and for a medium effect size, in order to detect an increase in R^2 by .13 (Cohen, 1988), I would need around 100 subjects. Also, past studies on customer mistreatment and retaliation in face-to-face interactions have used around 200 participants (e.g., Chi, Tsai, & Tseng, 2013).

Participants completed online surveys administered by Qualtrics. Qualtrics contacts and asks a subset of their subject pool, whose members meet certain criteria, to fill out online surveys. Qualtrics does that by sending out an email that explains the study goals, the time to complete surveys, and the incentive amount for participation (determined by Qualtrics). Participants for this study were selected to complete the surveys if they worked at least 20 hours per week, if they were personal care or service workers (e.g., work with clients, patients,

customers, etc.), who interact with clients face-to-face (to exclude service workers who work in call centers, as they have a limited ability to retaliate overtly), who have an opportunity to get back at rude customers, and who have worked in their current position for at least six months. The sample had an average age of 45 (SD = 13) years and was 45% male. The respondents worked in various service sectors including retail, hospitality, health care, education, public services, religious services, construction, transportation, banking, real estate services, postal services, consulting, and legal services. Although past studies have mainly relied on study participants working in restaurants (e.g., Harris and Ogbonna, 2006; Hunter & Penney, 2014), hotels (e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 2002), retail stores (e.g., Kern & Grandey, 2009), and call centers (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2011), service employees include any employees who spend a substantial amount of time interacting with organizational outsiders, such as customers, clients, or patients (Grandey et al., 2007; Kern & Grandey, 2009).

All the data, including the data on the dependent variable, came from a single source— the study subjects (i.e., service workers) themselves, as they are the most reliable source of information regarding their engagement in covert retaliation. Typically having different repondents (sources) providing scores on independent and dependent variables is preferred, as it should attenuate common source bias (i.e., any possible spurious covariance between the predictor and criterion variables, which may otherwise be produced by the fact that the respondent providing scores on the measures of these variables is the same person; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, since the assumption is that covert retaliation is not easily noticed by supervisors, coworkers, or customers, these other sources would likely not provide accurate data, as they may not have had the opportunity to observe covert CWBs that

study subjects engage in (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Berry et al., 2007; Fox et al., 2001; Berry, Carpenter, & Barratt, 2012; Vardi & Weitz, 2004). Hence, other-reported ratings of customer-centered CWBs would be less accurate than self-reported ratings (Yang & Dieffendorff, 2009).

In order to minimize common source bias, Podsakoff et al. (2003) recommended temporal separation in collecting responses on predictors and criteria. Hence, participants were asked to complete surveys at two points in time. At Time 1, respondents filled out the demographic information. They also completed a questionnaire asking about the service climate in their organizations, experiencing mistreatment from customers during the last six months, as well as their personalities, negative reciprocity belief, and desire for revenge. At Time 2 participants responded to a questionnaire assessing overt and covert retaliation against demeaning customers. Temporal separation should reduce biases in the participants' responses on subsequent questions by reducing consistency motives (i.e., propensity for respondents to try to maintain consistency in their responses to similar questions especially when responses consider their attitudes, feelings, and behaviors in the past) by making prior responses less salient, and not readily accessible for retrieval from memory (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The two times the data were collected were separated by two weeks. This time lag has been used in similar studies in the past (e.g., Avey, Wu, & Holley, 2015; Wang et al., 2011; Zhan, 2011) and appears to be sufficient to allow previously recalled information, when data are collected at time one, to leave short-term memory before more data is collected (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, the response set for the measures consisted of a seven-point Likert-type scale, with responses ranging from "strongly disagree," "very inaccurate," or "never" (1) to "strongly agree," "very accurate," or "all the time" (7). The scores on individual items for

each scale were averaged to form a score, such that greater values show higher levels of a construct than lower values. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of each scale was calculated where appropriate. All scales used in this study are presented in the Appendix.

Perceived Mistreatment from Customers. I measured perceived mistreatment from customers using the scale developed by Wang et al. (2011). This scale measures behaviors that service employees perceive as aggressive and unfair. Wang et al. (2011) have combined a 21-item measure of customer-related social stressors from Dorman and Zapf (2004) as well as an eight-item measure of customer interpersonal injustice behaviors from Skarlicki et al. (2008) to obtain a variety of customer mistreatment behaviors described in the literature. However, they have eliminated items that did not reflect an obvious mistreatment. Because it is a formative measure where each item describes distinct aspects or facets of a construct and any redundancy among scale items is eliminated during the scale development process (Frone, 1998; Liu et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2011), Cronbach's Alpha for this measure has not been calculated. In other words, because the items on this scale are not interchangeable (or highly correlated), internal consistency is irrelevant as a measure of reliability (Bollen, 1984; Bollen & Lennox, 1991; Spector & Jex, 1998).

Desire for Revenge. I measured desire for revenge with three items adapted from Jones's (2009) desire for revenge scale. Two items assessed retaliatory intentions: "When customers put me down, I intend to settle the score with them" and "When customers put me down, I plan on getting even with them." The third item assessed the expected utility of revenge, which is the degree to which an individual believes that the benefits of revenge are worth the potential costs. This item was "If I were mistreated by a customer it would feel good to get back in some way." I have excluded the item "If I were mistreated by a customer, the satisfaction of getting even

would outweigh the risks of getting caught," as it would likely not be endorsed by those who prefer to engage in covert retaliation. The Cronbach's Alpha for this three-item scale was .91.

Negative Reciprocity Beliefs. Negative reciprocity beliefs were measured with a scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (2004) and later adapted by Mitchell and Ambrose (2007), who eliminated four items that were highly correlated with a social desirability scale. The items ask about the advisability of retribution for mistreatment. Sample items are "A person who has contempt for you deserves your contempt" and "If someone says something nasty to you, you should say something nasty back." Based on CFA results presented in the Results section (see Table 3 and Table 4), the two negatively worded items have been removed. Cronbach's Alpha for the eight-item measure was .95.

Agreeableness. I measured agreeableness using the 10-item version of the Agreeableness scale of Goldberg's (1992) Big Five factor markers in the International Personality Item Pool. A sample item is "I make people feel at ease." Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .88.

Extraversion. I measured extraversion using the 10-item version of the Extraversion scale of Goldberg's (1992) Big Five factor markers in the International Personality Item Pool. A sample item is "I feel comfortable around people." Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .92.

Conscientiousness. I measured conscientiousness using the 10-item version of the Conscientiousness scale of Goldberg's (1992) Big Five factor markers in the International Personality Item Pool. A sample item is "I am always prepared." Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .87.

Neuroticism. I measured neuroticism using the 10-item version of the Emotional Stability scale of Goldberg's (1992) Big Five factor markers in the International Personality Item

Pool. A sample item is "I am relaxed most of the time" (reversely coded item). Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .95.

Openness. I measured openness using the 10-item version of the Intellect scale of Goldberg's (1992) Big Five factor markers in the International Personality Item Pool. A sample item is "I have excellent ideas." Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .86.

Retaliation against Customers. Retaliation against customers was measured using items from a customer-centered CWBs scale (Hunter & Penney, 2014) as well as one item from Wang et al. (2011): "Told a customer that you fixed something but didn't fix it" and one item from Hunter and Penney (2007) used by Ho and Gupta (2014): "Failed to verify the accuracy of a guest's order." Following Spector et al. (2006), I asked 10 industrial/organizational psychology graduate students at a midwestern university to serve as subject matter experts (SMEs) and used a Q-sort technique to assess the content validity of overt and covert retaliation against customers. This sorting technique involved combining distinct items from the three measures of retaliatory behaviors against customers and asking the SMEs to sort these items into overt and covert behaviors. The SMEs were given definitions of the overt and covert retaliatory behaviors, and they were asked to match each item with one category. A threshold of 80% (8 out of 10 students) or more agreement between the SMEs was used to classify an item into the overt or the covert category. Any items that did not meet this criterion, that could be interpreted as either or neither overt or covert behavior, or items that would not apply to majority of service employees (as determined by 80% or more of SMEs) were eliminated. The following items were classified by at least 80% of the SMEs as overt retaliation against customers: "Acted rudely toward a customer," "Argued with a customer," "Raised your voice to a customer," "Refused a reasonable customer request," "Insulted a customer," and "Threatened a customer." Items that

were classified by at least 80% of the SMEs as covert retaliation against customers included "Lied to a customer," "Made a customer wait longer than necessary," "Ignored a customer and pretended you did not see or hear him or her," "Corrupted service or product without the customer knowing about it," "Failed to verify the accuracy of a guest's order," and "Told a customer that you fixed something but didn't fix it." These Q-sort results are presented in Table 1.

This content validity of my measure was performed with a Q-sort technique using SMEs rather than using factor analysis of items because this is a formative scale where indicators are not highly related and thus not interchangeable measures of a single underlying construct. Factor analysis is appropriate when a scale is reflective and all indicators load onto one factor. For this reason, the coefficient α also was not calculated (Bollen & Bauldry, 2011; Bollen & Lennox, 1991; Diamentopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001; Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000; Hunter & Penney, 2014).

Control variable. I controlled for climate for service with a scale developed by Kelley (1992). A sample item is "In this organization a reputation for good service is emphasized." Cronbach's Alpha for this measure was .78.

Analyses

Preliminary Analyses. Prior to analysis of the results, I followed the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) and performed data screening necessary to run regression analyses. This included checking the accuracy of the input, evaluating the amount and distribution of missing data, checking for normality of the data distribution, and assessing multicollinearity.

I evaluated the accuracy of input by checking any out of range values, inspecting means and standard deviations, and identifying univariate outliers. There were no out-of-range values, and all means and standard deviations were plausible. Also, after transforming raw data into z scores, I checked for any cases with z scores outside the range from -.3.29 to +3.29 on one or more variables, as that would be an indication of univariate outliers. No cases with univariate outliers were found. Next, I inspected my input for missing data, and no missing data were found. To check for normality of the distribution, I examined skewness and kurtosis for significance by dividing the values of skewness by the standard errors of skewness, and the values of kurtosis by the standard errors of kurtosis. However, because with large samples any statistic may be significant, I also examined the distribution of scores under the normal curve (by visually examining histograms for each variable). The variables that were significantly skewed include climate for service, negative reciprocity, desire for revenge, and overt and covert retaliation. However, based on past research and theory, these variables are expected to be skewed; hence no transformations of these variables were performed, as that would make the results harder to interpret. Finally, I assessed multicollinearity by examining variance inflation factors (VIF). No VIF values were higher than the cutoff point of 10 (Ryan, 1997); hence multicollinearity did not present a biasing problem.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on three constructs collected at Time 1 (i.e., climate for service, negative reciprocity, and desire for retaliation) to assess common method variance. Common method variance was a concern, as these constructs were measured using self-report data that were collected at the same point in time. Measurng different constructs "at the same point in time may produce artificial covariance independent of the content of the constructs themselves" (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 882) because

there is an increased probability that the responses to measures of the predictor and criterion variables co-exist in the short-term memory of respondents. One remedy is to perform Harman's single-factor test, where CFA is performed to check whether a single factor can account for the covariances among items from various scales collected at the same time. The assumption of this test is that if a single factor can account for the majority of covariance among the measures, then common method variance exists (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

It is important to note that CFA was not conducted on mistreatment from customers, as it is a formative measure (Wang et al., 2011). Again, the reason behind it is when it comes to formative measures, each item describes distinct aspects/facets of a construct, and any redundancy among scale items is eliminated during the scale development process. CFA only aplies to reflective measures, which are highly correlated and hence more likely to load on a single dimension (Bollen & Lennox, 1991; Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Jarvis, 2005).

Regression Analyses. Hypotheses 1 through 8 were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression. To test Hypothesis 1, the outcome variable of desire for revenge was regressed on the predictor variables (control variable: climate for service as well as the independent variable: perceived mistreatment by customers). In order to test Hypothesis 2, the moderating effect of negative reciprocity beliefs on the relationship between perceived mistreatment by customers and desire for revenge, the interaction term between negative reciprocity beliefs and perceived mistreatment by customers was added to the analysis. To test Hypothesis 3, the outcome variables of overt and covert retaliation were independently regressed on the predictors (control variable: climate for service as well as the independent variable: perceived mistreatment by customers). To test Hypotheses 4 through 8, the moderating effect of personality on the

relationship between the desire for revenge and overt or covert retaliation, the interaction term between the desire for revenge and a personality dimension was added to the analysis testing Hypothesis 3.

Additional Analyses. In addition to the regression analyses that tested the hypotheses, I used the PROCESS SPSS Macro (Hayes, 2013) to test whether desire for revenge mediated the effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt as well as covert retaliation, and to examine the conditional indirect effects in my model. Mediation was tested using Model 4 and the conditional indirect effects were tested using Model 21 in the PROCESS SPSS Macro. These macros produce bootstrap confidence intervals to test significance of indirect effects. Preacher and Hayes (2008) recommend using at least 5,000 bootstrap samples when testing for indirect effects, as the more samples that are used, the more accurate the results are. I used 10,000 bootstrap samples of all 255 cases from my dataset when conducting the analyses. These samples were created based on random resampling with replacement. From these samples 10,000 estimates of the indirect effect were created, and their means as well as standard deviations and confidence levels were calculated. Indirect effects are significant at $p < .05$, if 95% of bootstrap confidence intervals exclude zero. Unlike the Sobel test, which assumes a multivariate normal distribution, this method does not require having normal distribution in order to obtain reliable results (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993; Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's Alpha reliabilities are reported in Table 2.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Table 3 provides model fit indices for the confirmatory factor analyses. Three CFAs were conducted. In the first model, all items were loaded onto their respective factors (3 items measuring climate for service, 10 items measuring negative reciprocity, and 3 items measuring desire for revenge). I looked at several fit indices to examine the fit of the models: chi-square (χ^2) comparative fit index (CFI), and normed fit index (NFI). Models fit adequately if chi-square is not significant (which is often not the case, especially when samples are large) and when the values of NFI and CFI are greater than .9 (McDonald & Ho, 2002). In addition, I examined factor loadings to see if the indicators are significantly related to their respective latent constructs as well as squared multiple correlations to see if the latent constructs explain enough variance in the indicators, as with large samples factor loading may be significant though not meaningful. Typically when squared multiple correlations are larger than .3 we can conclude that the amount of variance explained by constructs is meaningful.

The first CFA showed that the model did not fit data (χ^2 = 373.840, p < .001; CFI = .89; NFI = .87). Also, even though all loadings were significant, the squared multiple correlations for the two reversely coded items that belong to the negative reciprocity scale were lower than the cutoff of .3 (see Table 4). Although reverse-coded items are typically used to reduce the potential effects of response pattern biases (Hinkin, 1995), they are often "bad items" that tend to produce artifactual factors consisting exclusively of negatively worded items (Harvey, Billings, & Nilan,

1985; Podsakoff, 2003). Hence, I have removed these two items from the measure of negative reciprocity.

In the second model, I have removed the two reversely coded items from the scale measuring negative reciprocity. The CFA showed that the model now fitted adequately (χ^2 = 310.327, p < .001; CFI = .92; NFI = .90).

In the third model, all items from the second model were loaded onto their respective factors but the inter-correlations between the three factors were all fixed to 1.0. Fixing the correlations to 1.0 indicated that the three latent variables were equivalent to just one latent construct. Next, I compared the third model with the second model. If the third model would fit my data better than the second one, it would suggest substantial common method variance. I performed comparison tests between the two models by relying on the values of CFI and NFI, which are not as sensitive to sample sizes as chi-square (Kelloway, 1998; Marsh, Bella, & Hau, 1996). If the changes are significant (differences in the values of CFI and NFI are higher than the cutoff of .01), it indicates that the one factor model does not fit well (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). I found that the change in chi-square was significant ($\Delta \chi^2$ = 622.173 > χ^2 crit. (α = .001, Δ df = 3) = 16.27), and so were the changes in CFI (Δ CFI = .20) and NFI (Δ NFI = .20), as both were higher than the cutoff of .01. Because the third model showed a worse fit than the second model, common method variance is not an issue with my data.

Regression Analyses (Hypotheses Testing)

All regression analyses were performed using mean centered data on all predictors variables to avoid multicollinearity as recommended by Aiken and West (1991).

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 predicted that there was a positive relationship between perceived mistreatment by a customer and a desire for revenge by service employees who

perceived they were mistreated. This hypothesis was supported by both the correlation (r = .25, p < .01; see Table 2) and regression analysis (see step 2 in Table 5). Specifically, the regression analysis revealed that even after controlling for climate for service, a perceived mistreatment by a customer was positively and significantly related to a desire for revenge by service employees who were mistreated (B = .20, S.E. = .05, p < .01).

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 predicted that the positive relationship between perceived mistreatment by a customer and a desire for revenge by service employees who perceived they were mistreated would be stronger for employees higher in negative reciprocity beliefs. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between perceived mistreatment from customers and negative reciprocity beliefs had a significant effect on desire for revenge by service employees (B = .15, S.E. = .04, p < .001; see Table 5), which means that negative reciprocity beliefs moderated the relationship between perceived customer mistreatment and desire for revenge. Specifically, as seen in Figure 2, service employees who have low negative reciprocity beliefs are less likely to desire revenge on customers who mistreat them, and service employees who have high negative reciprocity beliefs are more likely to experience desire for revenge when they feel mistreated by customers. Hence, this hypothesis was supported.

Hypotheses 3a and 3b. Hypothesis 3a predicted that there was a positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation against customers by service employees who perceived they were mistreated. This hypothesis was supported by both the correlation (r = .37, p < .01; see Table 2) and regression analysis (see Table 6). Specifically, the regression analysis revealed that even after controlling for climate for service, the desire for revenge by mistreated

service employees was positively and significantly related to overt retaliation against customers ($B = .20$, S.E. $= .03$, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3b predicted that there was a positive relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation against customers by service employees who perceived they were mistreated. This hypothesis was supported by both the correlation ($r = .40$, $p < .01$; see Table 2) and regression analysis (see Table 7). Specifically, the regression analysis revealed that even after controlling for climate for service, the desire for revenge by mistreated service employees was positively and significantly related to overt retaliation against customers ($B = .24$, S.E. $= .04$, $p < .001$).

Hypotheses 4a and 4b. Hypothesis 4a predicted that agreeableness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when agreeableness was low. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between desire for revenge and agreeableness had a significant effect on overt retaliation against customers ($B = -.16$, S.E. $= .03$, $p < .001$; see Table 8), which means that agreeableness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliaion. Specifically, as seen in Figure 4, service employees who have low agreeableness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are high in agreeableness are less likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Hence, Hypothesis 4a was supported.

Hypothesis 4b predicted that agreeableness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the

desire for revenge and covert retaliation when agreeableness was high. As seen in Table 13, this hypothesis was not supported (B = -.02, S.E. = .04, ns).

Hypotheses 5a and 5b. Hypothesis 5a predicted that extraversion moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when extraversion was high. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between desire for revenge and extraversion had a significant effect on overt retaliation against customers (B = .11, S.E. = .02, p < .001; see Table 9), which means that extraversion moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation. Specifically, as seen in Figure 3, service employees who have high extraversion are more likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are low in extraversion are less likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Hence, Hypothesis 5a was supported.

Hypothesis 5b predicted that extraversion moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation when extraversion was low. As seen in Table 14, this hypothesis was not supported (B = .03, S.E. = .03, ns).

Hypotheses 6a and 6b. Hypothesis 6a predicted that conscientiousness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when conscientiousness was low. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between desire for revenge and conscientiousness had a significant effect on

overt retaliation against customers (B = -.07, S.E. = .03, p < .05; see Table 10), which means that conscientiousness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliaion. Specifically, as seen in Figure 5, service employees who have low conscientiousness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are high in conscientiousness are less likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Thus, Hypothesis 6a was supported.

Hypothesis 6b predicted that conscientiousness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation when conscientiousness is high. Unexpectedly, the regression analysis found the opposite (B = -.11, S.E. = .04, p < .01; see Table 15). Specifically, as seen in Figure 6, service employees who have low conscientiousness are more likely to engage in covert retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are high in conscientiousness are less likely to engage in covert retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Hence, Hypothesis 6b was not supported.

Hypotheses 7a and 7b. Hypothesis 7a predicted that neuroticism moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when neuroticism was high. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between desire for revenge and neuroticism had a significant effect on overt retaliation against customers (B = .14, S.E. = .02, p < .001; see Table 11), which means that neuroticism moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliaion. Specifically, as

seen in Figure 7, service employees who have high neuroticism are more likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are low in neuroticism are less likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Hence, Hypothesis 7a was supported.

Hypothesis 7b predicted that neuroticism moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation when neuroticism was low. As seen in Table 16, this hypothesis was not supported (B = -.06, S.E. = .03, ns).

Hypotheses 8a and 8b. Hypothesis 8a predicted that openness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation when openness was low. This hypothesis was tested with a regression analysis, which showed that the interaction term between desire for revenge and openness had a significant effect on overt retaliation against customers (B = -.17, S.E. = .03, p < .001; see Table 12), which means that openness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and overt retaliation. Specifically, as seen in Figure 8, service employees who have low openness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high, and service employees who are high in openness are less likely to engage in overt retaliation against customers when their desire for revenge on customers is high. Hence, Hypothesis 8a was supported.

Hypothesis 8b predicted that openness moderated the relationship between the desire for revenge and covert retaliation such that there was a stronger positive relationship between the

desire for revenge and covert retaliation when openness was high. As seen in Table 17, this hypothesis was not supported (B = -.07, S.E. = .04, ns).

Additional Analyses

Desire for Revenge as a Mediator. Table 18 shows the bootstrapped estimates for the indirect effects with 95% confidence intervals (CIs). Desire for revenge significantly mediated the relationship between perceived mistreatment from customers and overt retaliation as well as covert retaliation as the bootstrap confidence intervals excluded a zero. The direct effect from perceived mistreatment on overt retaliation was significant (c' = .13, S.E. = .04, p < .001). The indirect effect of perceived mistreatment on overt retaliation via desire for revenge was also significant (ab = .05, S.E. = .02, CI (95%): LL = .02, UL = .10, k^2 = .08). It is important to note that these results were the same with or without climate for service as a covariate (as the coefficient for climate for service was not significant). Following the recommendations of Preacher and Kelley (2011), I have also examined k^2 (Kappa-squared) as a mediation effect size. The k^2 is not sensitive to sample size, as it is calculated as the ratio of the indirect effect to the maximum possible size the indirect effect given the constraints of the data (Hayes, 2013). Based on Cohen's guidelines, the magnitude of an effect size is small (if equal or larger than .01), medium (if equal or larger than .09), or large (if equal or larger than .25) (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). Hence, the effect size (k^2 = .08) is small, although it is approaching medium.

The direct effect from perceived mistreatment to covert retaliation was significant (c' = .11, S.E. = .04, p < .01). The indirect effect of perceived mistreatment on covert retaliation via desire for revenge was also significant (ab = .06, S.E. = .02, CI (95%): LL = .03, UL = .12, k^2 = .09). It is important to note that these results were the same with or without climate for service as a covariate (as the coefficient for climate for service was not significant). Following the

recommendations of Preacher and Kelley (2011), I have also examined k^2 (Kappa-squared) as a mediation effect size. The effect size ($k^2 = .09$) is medium.

Conditional Indirect Effects. I have also tested the entire model (separately for overt and covert retaliation) by examining the magnitude of the conditional indirect effects of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt or covert retaliation via desire for revenge across low and high levels of both negative reciprocity belief and personality variables (one personality variable tested at a time). It is important to note that I first ran these ananlyses with climate for service as a covariate. However, the coefficients for climate for service were not significant in any of the analyses, and the coefficients for other variables were similar; hence I have reported results without climate for service as a control variable. Only significant findings are presented below.

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and extraversion was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 19a for details). As seen in Table 19b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as both negative reciprocity and extraversion were increasing, and it was maximum (B = .14, S.E. = .04, CI (95%): LL = .07, UL = .25) when both negative reciprocity and extraversion were high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or low values of extraversion (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and

agreeableness was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 20a for details). As seen in Table 20b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as negative reciprocity was increasing and agreeableness was decreasing, and it was maximum (B = .10, S.E. = .03, CI (95%): LL = .04, UL = .17) when negative reciprocity was high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) and agreeableness was low (i.e., 1 SD below the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or high values of agreeableness (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and conscientiousness was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 21a for details). As seen in Table 21b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as negative reciprocity was increasing and conscientiousness was decreasing, and it was maximum (B = .10, S.E. = .04, CI (95%): LL = .04, UL = .18) when negative reciprocity was high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) and conscientiousness was low (i.e., 1 SD below the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or high values of conscientiousness (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and neuroticism was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 22a for details).

As seen in Table 22b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as both negative reciprocity and neuroticism were increasing, and it was maximum (B = .13, S.E. = .03, CI (95%): LL = .06, UL = .20) when both negative reciprocity and neuroticism were high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or low values of neuroticism (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and openness was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 23a for details). As seen in Table 23b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on overt retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as negative reciprocity was increasing and openness was decreasing, and it was maximum (B = .13, S.E. = .04, CI (95%): LL = .06, UL = .21) when negative reciprocity was high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) and openness was low (i.e., 1 SD below the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or high values of openness (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

The conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on covert retaliation against customers via desire for revenge moderated by negative reciprocity belief and conscientiousness was significant as both interaction terms were significant (see Table 26a for details). As seen in Table 26b, overall the conditional indirect effect of perceived mistreatment from customers on covert retaliation against customers via desire for revenge was stronger as

negative reciprocity was increasing and conscientiousness was decreasing, and it was maximum (B = .13, S.E. = .04, CI (95%): LL = .06, UL = .22) when negative reciprocity was high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) and conscientiousness was low (i.e., 1 SD below the mean). The effect was not significant at either low value of negative reciprocity (i.e., 1 SD below the mean) or high values of conscientiousness (i.e., 1 SD above the mean) when negative reciprocity was medium (at the mean) or high (i.e., 1 SD above the mean).

None of the other results were significant when I analyzed the entire model for covert retaliation and the remaining personality variables (see Tables 24, 25, 27, and 28).

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

Overview and Key Findings

Mistreatment of service employees by customers who are demanding and aggressive is something service employees deal with on an everyday basis (e.g., Wang et al., 2011). However, the effects of such mistreatment on service employees have been the subject of very little research in the organizational behavior literature (Bedi & Schat, 2007). The few studies that have examined service employees' reactions to such mistreatment (e.g., Dorman & Zapf, 2004, Grandey et al., 2004; Skarlicki et al., 2008; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2011 Yagil, 2008) found that when service employees perceive being demeaned, they reciprocate the unfair treatment in order to punish unpleasant customers. Past research examined such reciprocation as incivility, sabotage, and customer-directed counterproductive work behaviors, even though the scales that measure these behaviors tend to overlap. Such focus on minor differences and the lack of a broad measure approach stifles research progress in the area of retaliation against customers. Additionally, past research uses scales that measure behaviors, which are very specific to a certain service setting (e.g., "Hang up on the customer"; Skarlicki et al., 2008), which limits generalizability of the findings. Further, past research treats retaliation, whether conceptualized as sabotage, incivility, or customer-directed counterproductive work behaviors, as a unidimensional construct despite the past suggestions that these constructs can be split into overt and covert (e.g., Harris and Ogbonna, 2002; Tarraf, 2012; and Robinson & Bennett, 1995, respectively). Hence the overall research question was whether retaliation against customers examined with a broad measure (i.e., applicable in a variety of service settings) could be split into overt and covert dimensions. I was also interested in examining how personality of service employees who desire a revenge on customers that mistreat them affects overt and covert

retaliation and whether the desire for revenge was an underlying mechanism for retaliation. As mentioned in the introduction, while past research assumed that desire for revenge precedes the actual behavior, none of the past studies on service employees have examined the desire for revenge as an underlying mechanism in the relationships between mistreatment of service employees by customers and retaliation against such customers by service employees who experience mistreatment.

The first goal of this dissertation was to assess the dimensionality of measures of retaliation against customers. After subject matter experts examined behaviors from various scales measuring retaliation against aggressive or demanding customers and determined which behaviors apply to a majority of service employees, they were able to classify many of them as overt or covert. While both forms of retaliation involve punishing aggressive or demanding customers, overt behaviors include behaviors that are public, consist of verbal confrontations, are easily recognized by others as rude or aggressive, and violate proper display rules, and as such they may result in counter-retaliation as well as escalation of conflict (Aquino et al., 2001). These behaviors may include arguing with, insulting, or threatening customers. On the other hand, covert retaliation involves behaviors that are more private, whose intent is ambiguous (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002), that do not necessarily violate the display rules, and that can be explained as a human error or equipment malfunction (Skarlicki et al., 2008). These behaviors may include purposefully making a customer wait longer than necessary, pretending to not see or hear a customer, lying to customers, or corrupting services and products without customers knowing about it. Hence, there appears to be some evidence for the content validity of the overt and covert dimensions of retaliation.

Further, past research focused on a narrow range of service employees, as their samples

were limited to employees working at call centers (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008) as well as in hospitality (e.g., Hunter & Penney, 2014) and retail employees (e.g., Grandey et al., 2007), or used scales that were very context specific (e.g., only appropriate for employees who interact with customers on the phone; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011). This limited the generalizability of the results and implications. In the current study the SMEs indicated which behaviors would apply to the majority of employees performing service work. Also, after the measure has been used to collect responses from study subjects working in various service industries, none of them have indicated that any of the behaviors selected by SMEs would not apply to them. This renders the measure of overt and covert retaliation generalizable in multiple service settings. Such settings include retail, hospitality, health care, education, public services, religious services, construction, transportation, banking, real estate services, postal services, consulting, and legal services.

In addition, I found that when employees are mistreated, they desire to take revenge to punish those who mistreat them, and that desire for revenge is stronger when mistreated service employees are high in negative reciprocity belief. On the other hand, when this belief is low, service employees are less likely to desire revenge on those who mistreat them. This finding is consistent with the past research on mistreatment and negative reciprocation. For example, Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) found that employees with stronger negative reciprocity endorsement, who had abusive supervisors, were more likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors against abusive supervisors than those who were low in negative reciprocity endorsement. I also found that when those who are mistreated desire revenge, they are more likely to engage in overt or covert retaliation. This is consistent with the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977), which states that intentions are the most direct precursor or are

a motivational force of a behavior, and that the stronger the intentions, the more effort people exert to perform the behavior. In addition, although not hypothesized, after performing additional analyses, I found that desire for revenge partially mediated the relationships between mistreatment from customers and overt retaliation as well as mistreatment from customers and covert retaliation. Hence, desire for revenge is one mechanism that explains why those who perceive mistreatment engage in overt or covert retaliation. Based on the model of revenge in the workplace, mistreatment is an act of injustice, which damages the victim's ego and which violates moral norms and rules of conduct (Bies & Tripp, 1998). Hence, service employees who are mistreated desire revenge on aggressive customers in order to protect their egos (Bies & Tripp, 1996) as well as norms of moral conduct where everyone is expected to treat others with respect and dignity (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998), and this results in punishing aggressive customers overtly or covertly. Although researchers often assume that desire for revenge underlies the relationship between mistreatment from customers and customer-centered CWBs (e.g., Skarlicki et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011), this was the first study to test it. Further, this mechanism is stronger for mistreated service employees who have a high negative reciprocity endorsement than for those with a low negative reciprocity endorsement. Past research claims that not everyone desires to retaliate (e.g., Turillo et al., 2002) and that while some individuals desire retaliation, as they feel they need to punish others because not punishing them would be immoral (Folger et al., 2005), others prefer to avoid the perpetrators or even to forgive them (Rupp & Bell, 2010; Tripp, Bies, & Aquino, 2007). Hence, it may be immoral to not punish perpetrators only to those mistreated service employees who endorse the negative reciprocity belief of "an eye for an eye," but not to those who do not endorse such belief. Additional studies are needed to explore this possibility.

With respect to personality moderating the relationship between desire for revenge and overt retaliation, all hypotheses were supported. I found that service employees who are high in extraversion are more likely to engage in overt retaliation after they have been mistreated by customers than service employees who are low in extraversion. I also found that service employees who are low in agreeableness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation after they have been mistreated by customers than service employees who are high in agreeableness. Similar results were obtained for service employees depending on their level of conscientiousness and openness to experience. Specifically, service employees who are low in conscientiousness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation after they have been mistreated by customers than service employees who are high in conscientiousness. Also, service employees who are low in openness are more likely to engage in overt retaliation after they have been mistreated by customers than service employees who are high in openness. In addition, service employees who are high in neuroticism are more likely to engage in overt retaliation after they have been mistreated by customers than service employees who are low in neuroticism. On the other hand, with respect to personality moderating the relationship between desire for revenge and covert retaliation, none of the hypotheses were supported, as none of the interaction terms were not significant, except for one finding that was unexpected, as it was contrary to what was hypothesized. Specifically, I expected that service employees who desire revenge and are high in conscientiousness would be more likely to engage in covert retaliation than those who are low in conscientiousness. However, based on the results, service employees who are low in conscientiousness are more likely to engage in covert retaliation than service employees who are high in conscientiousness. Because most of the hypotheses concerning covert retaliation were not supported, it appears that regardless of their personality, service employees who have a strong

desire for revenge due to mistreatment will engage in covert retaliation. With respect to overt retaliation, the findings regarding agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism seem consistent with the results of meta-analyses on counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., Berry et al., 2012; Salgado, 2002). It is important to note that many studies, to avoid common rater bias, rely on other-raters, such as supervisors, when measuring counterproductive work behaviors. Because supervisors are not aware of all behaviors that their subordinates engage in (as evidenced by the differences in reporting CWBs between self and other-raters; see Berry et al., 2012), it is likely that the results of these meta-analyses mainly reflect the relationship between personality and overt CWBs. My findings regarding overt retaliation are also consistent with Bowling and Eschleman's (2010) research, as they found that the relationship between role stressors at the workplace and counterproductive work behaviors directed at other individuals was stronger for employees with low agreeableness, and low conscientiousness, or for individuals who have a negative affect (which is very similar to the neuroticism dimension from the Five Factor Model of Personality; Watson & Clark, 1984; Bowling & Eschleman, 2010). Interestingly, although Bowling and Eschleman collected data on counterproductive work behaviors toward other individuals from respondents themselves, it appears that these responses were more reflective of overt, not covert, behaviors, as the scale consisted mainly of items such as "Said something hurtful to someone at work," "Made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work," "Cursed at someone at work," or "Publicly embarrassed someone at work" (the scale also includes two other items, "Made fun of someone at work" and "Played a mean prank on someone at work," but such behaviors could be either overt or covert). In terms of extraversion and openness, most research reported no significant effect of these dimensions on counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Mount et al., 2006; Salgado, 2002).

However, Lee et al. (2005), who used the same scale of counterproductive work behaviors toward other individuals as Bowling and Eschleman (2010), found that individuals higher in extraversion or lower in openness were more likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors toward other individuals (r = .23, r = -.25, respectively). Also, Mount et al. (2006), who used the same scale, found that there was a significant negative relationship between openness and CWBs directed at other coworkers. They explained it by noting that people who are low in openness are "creatures of habit" who are narrow-minded and lack flexibility when they respond to an injustice.

Further, it appears that when employees desire revenge on customers who mistreat them, they are more likely to engage in overt retaliation when they are low in agreeableness, conscientiousness, or openness, or high in extraversion or neuroticism than when they are high in agreeableness, conscientiousness, or openness, or low in extraversion or neuroticism regardless of the level of climate for service in their companies (climate for service as a control was not significant). This indicates that the desire to punish rude customers is more important than following company rules of service with a smile when dealing with such customers. Such finding is consistent with past research, which shows that retaliation may occur even when service quality is being monitored (Holman, 2002), which suggests that the context of service interactions is a weak situation that allows for expression of employee personality (Mischel, 1976). It makes sense, then, that if a high climate for service does not prevent employees from retaliation, they will punish rude customers in concordance with their personalities, which predetermine how individuals interact in various situations (Kleinmuntz, 1967). For example, since agreeableness and extraversion have to do with interacting with others in terms of getting along with them (agreeableness) and socially dominating them (extraversion; Barrick et al.,

2003; Penney et al., 2011), these characteristics determine how individuals behave in situations that require confrontations with others. Specifically, service employees with tendencies to be rude and socially dominant (low in agreeableness or high in extraversion, respectively) are more assertive and more comfortable arguing with others; hence they are more inclined to retaliate against demeaning customers overtly.

On the other hand, mistreated service employees who punish rude customers covertly do so regardless of their personalities as long as they have a strong desire for revenge, which again tends to be stronger when negative reciprocity belief is strong. The only exception, based on the results of this study, was that individuals who are high in conscientiousness are less likely to engage in covert retaliation. Hence, service employees who are high in conscientiousness are less likely to retaliate against customers either overtly or covertly when they experience mistreatment. While this finding was unexpected, perhaps the reason behind it is that unlike openness and neuroticism that determine one's repertoire of behaviors across situations (i.e., whether they are related to working on a task or interacting with others) and unlike agreeableness and extraversion, conscientiousness has little to do with determining patterns of interactions with others and more so with determining one's work ethics or performing well on the job. Hence, when faced with mistreatment, conscientious individuals may punish rude customers in ways that still allow them to perform their tasks well (e.g., asking a supervisor for help). Another possibility is an explanation offered by Bowling and Eschleman (2010), who suggest that employees who are high in conscientiousness either engage in counterproductive work behaviors only after they have not been successful using more effective coping responses or they have a high threshold for engaging in counterproductive work behaviors, while employees who are low in conscientiousness either automatically engage in counterproductive work behaviors before

even trying other coping strategies when faced with a stressful event or just have a low threshold for engaging in counterproductive work behaviors.

Contributions and Implications for Future Research and Practice

The first contribution of this study is administering a broad measure of retaliation to a variety of service workers and dividing the measure into overt and covert dimensions. By doing that I was able to produce findings that generalize to various groups of service workers, and that can be used in studies of customer-centered CWBs, incivility, or sabotage. The broad measure of retaliation seems to be applicable to service employees in different industries, as indicated by both subject matter experts and the respondents themselves. Some of the services the measure can be applied to include retail, hospitality, health care, education, public services, religious services, construction, transportation, banking, real estate services, postal services, consulting, and legal services. Also, as Bennett and Robinson (2000) indicated, broad measures are more reliable and valid; hence they improve our ability to predict retaliation. I encourage researchers to rely on this measure to introduce parsimony into research on retaliation against customers in order to avoid proliferation of similar findings and to produce results that can be applied to many different groups of service employees, which would lead to a more unifying framework to study customer-centered retaliation.

I have also performed content validation of the global measure of retaliation, and the findings provided initial evidence that retaliation against customers can be divided into overt and covert. First, the subject matter experts were able to classify many of the behaviors of the broad measure of retaliation into overt and covert dimensions. Second, it appears that the dimensions have different correlations with different personality variables. For example, while extraversion is positively correlated with overt retaliation, it is negatively correlated with covert retaliation. It

may be worthwhile for future research to examine differential relationships that overt and covert dimensions have with other constructs to provide evidence for convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity of these different dimensions. For example, overt and covert dimensions may have different predictive validity with respect to consequences for service employees who perform them or for the company they work for. While service employees who engage in overt retaliation may be reprimanded by their supervisors or fired from their jobs, service employees who engage in covert retaliation may be sent for additional training, if supervisors attribute the reason for the behavior to be lack of job-related knowledge.

Another contribution is examining a mechanism behind retaliation against customers by service employees. While past research assumes desire for revenge precedes the actual behavior, this was the first study to examine desire for revenge as a mediator in the relationship between mistreatment from customers and overt or covert retaliation against them. It is important to note that it is a partial mediator; hence there may be other mediators in this relationship. This is especially true as this mechanism works mostly for people who believe in the negative reciprocity norm but not for those who do not believe in it. Hence negative reciprocity belief is a boundary condition for when this mechanism applies. Future studies may want to look for other moderators of this mediation as well. For example, one variable that may be worth studying is a belief in a just world. Also, if overt and covert retaliation represent separate dimensions, there may be different mechanisms underlying their unique relationships with perceived mistreatment from customers, which is something future research should explore.

The final contribution is examining how personality of service employees, who desire revenge on customers, affects the relationship between mistreatment from customers with overt and covert retaliation and showing when overt or covert retaliation is more likely to be used as a

strategy to deal with aggressive customers. With respect to overt retaliation, personality appears to act as a boundary condition. Specifically, employees who have a strong desire for revenge will likely overtly punish customers who mistreated them if they are low in agreeableness, low in conscientiousness, low in openness, high in extraversion, or high in neuroticism. However, if they are high in agreeableness, conscientiousness, or openness, or low in extraversion or neuroticism, they will be less likely to overtly retaliate against customers who mistreat them. On the other hand, employees will covertly punish customers who mistreated them regardless of their personalities (except conscientiousness), as long as they have a strong desire for revenge against those customers. Since personality does not appear to mitigate the effect of desire for revenge on covert retaliation as much as it mitigates the effect of desire for revenge on overt retaliation, there may be other variables worth exploring by future studies. It could be that employees with, for example, low agreeableness express their personalities by being more likely to engage in overt retaliation when they are not risk averse and do not worry about losing their jobs. However, when they are risk averse and worry about losing their jobs for retaliating overtly, they may be more likely to choose covert retaliation to punish customers. This would explain why both those who are low and those who are high in agreeableness engage in covert retaliation when punishing aggressive customers.

Learning how personality acts as a boundary condition with respect to overt retaliation allows us to increase the precision of prediction in terms of when service employees who desire retaliation against mistreating customers will punish them overtly. This has important practical implications, as employees who retaliate against customers contribute to customer turnover and affect the company's performance (van Jaarsveld et al., 2010). Past research on personality and counterproductive work behaviors suggests that employees who are low in agreeableness, low in

conscientiousness (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Mount et al., 2006; Salgado 2002), or high in neuroticism (e.g., Berry et al., 2007) are less likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, in order to limit the number of counterproductive work behaviors in the workplace, organizations should hire employees who are high in conscientiousness, high in agreeableness, and low in neuroticism. However, based on my research, it appears that such practices would limit only the number of overt retaliation but not covert retaliation (with the exception of high conscientiousness). While covert retaliation has an intent that is more ambiguous in nature, customers may still interpret it as hostile and the effect of it could be even more profound than the effect of overt retaliation. This is because when employees retaliate overtly in front of others, customers have more credibility when complaining to the company about an employee. However, when retaliation can be explained as a mistake or equipment malfunction, as would be the case with covert retaliation, that credibility diminishes. Not being able to change the employee's behavior by venting about it to the company, customers may just want to exit the relationship with the company to prevent future retaliation from service employees. It appears that other than conscientiousness, high agreeableness or low neuroticism is not likely to limit covert retaliation because as long as service employees desire revenge on aggressive and demanding customers, they engage in covert retaliation.

In addition, it appears that climate for service does not prevent retaliation against customers either. If customers are unpleasant to service employees, the desire for revenge is more important to mistreated service employees than is climate for service as mistreated service employees engage in retaliation regardless of climate for service. Climate for service is the shared perceptions that service employees in an organization have with respect to organizational practices that promote high service quality, such as increasing customer satisfaction (Schneider,

Macey, & Young, 2006). For this reason, climate for service is considered one of the most important predictors of high performance in service organizations (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Despite its importance, research on retaliation against customers has neglected measuring the quality of service climate as a predictor of retaliation. The one exception is the study done by Wang and his colleagues (2011), who measured service rule commitment of respondents in their study and found that service rule commitment diminished the effects of mistreatment on retaliation. This would suggest that having a climate for service is not enough to prevent retaliation and that for climate for service to have an effect on retaliation, organizations need to make sure their service rules are internalized by employees. Such commitment to service rules could be achieved through employee training and development in organizations' service rules as well as through creating a performance management system where following an organization's service rules is rewarded. However, there is a possibility that service rule commitment may not prevent retaliation in those mistreated service employees who are high in negative reciprocity belief. Future studies should explore this.

While employing individuals high in agreeableness, or high in openness, or low in neuroticism, or low in extraversion may help prevent overt retaliation, employees may still retaliate against customers covertly if their desire for revenge is high. However, it appears that the tendencies to take revenge are lower for those with low negative reciprocity belief. In other words, lower negative reciprocity beliefs attenuate the effect of mistreatment on retaliation. Hence, service organizations may want to employ job incumbents who score low on a negative reciprocity belief scale in addition to scoring high on a scale that measures conscientiousness. Alternatively, service organizations may want to train employees who are high in negative reciprocity belief to find other avenues to deal with their desire for revenge, such as discussing it

with supervisors. Also, perhaps service employees would feel less compelled to punish their perpetrators themselves when seeking justice if there were formal organizational policies that protect employees from customer mistreatment, since customers are not organizational insiders (such as coworkers) who face sanctions from organizations based on workplace bullying policies. Future research should examine whether having clear policies on how organizations handle misbehaving customers mitigates the desire to take revenge on unpleasant customers.

Limitations

This study has some limitations. The sample was restricted only to participants who were working in the United States at least 20 hours a week and who held their job for at least six months. Hence, the results may not generalize to employees in other areas of the world, employees who work less than 20 hours a week, or employees who held their jobs for less than six months. Future studies should examine whether the results of this study can be replicated in other cultures and whether they apply to service employees who work less than 20 hours a week or held their jobs for less than six months.

The second limitation is using cross-sectional and correlational data from a single source. Although the data were collected at two different points in time, using a two-week lag, and common method variance was not likely in this study, the results do not warrant strong causal inferences regarding the relations among the variables. Future studies should employ longitudinal, experimental, or diary study designs to be able to draw causal inferences.

Further, because I have relied on self-reports, it is possible that participants might have underreported the extent to which they perform retaliation against customers and instead provided responses that are more socially desirable (i.e., not engaging in retaliation). Although some researchers recommend collecting data on retaliation from sources other than study

subjects, such as supervisors, to avoid common source bias (e.g., Sackett, Burris, & Callahan, 1989), these other sources may also not provide accurate data. This is because others may not have the opportunity to observe covert retaliation, which in the case of this particular study would make other-reported ratings of retaliation less accurate then self-reported ratings. In order to mitigate the problem of social desirability confounding the study results, all research subjects were informed, prior to collecting the data, that their participation would be anonymous. However, future studies may want to explicitly control for the social desirability bias.

Lastly, this study only performed a content validation of overt and covert retaliation scale, where 10 graduate students served as subject matter experts, who sorted retaliatory behaviors into overt and covert dimensions. While this technique is common with formative measures (e.g., see Spector et al., 2006), future studies may attempt to further validate the scales by providing more evidence that these measures are appropriate for assessing overt and covert retaliation against customers.

Figure 1

The Model of Overt and Covert Retaliation
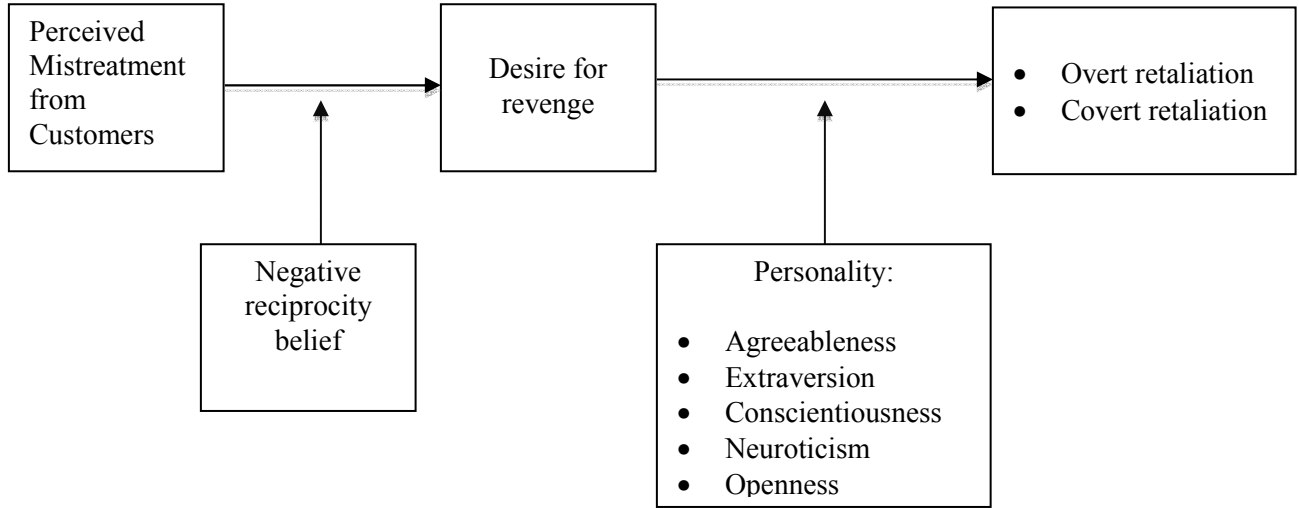
Figure 2

The Effect of Mistreatment from Customers and Negative Reciprocity Belief on Desire for Revenge
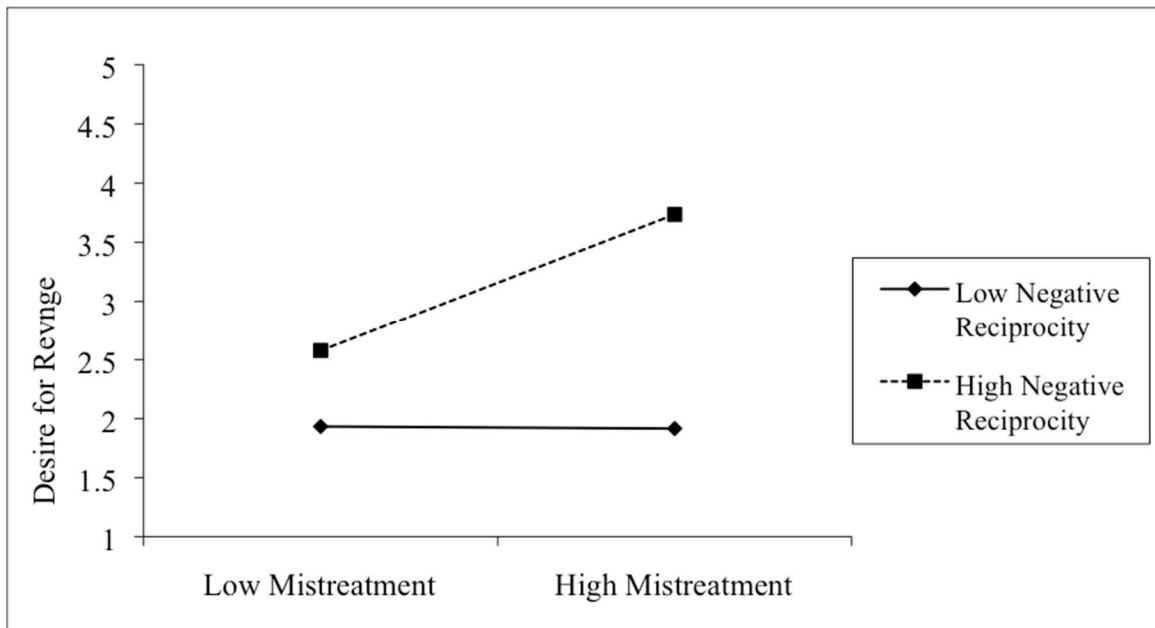
Figure 3

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Extraversion on Overt Retaliation
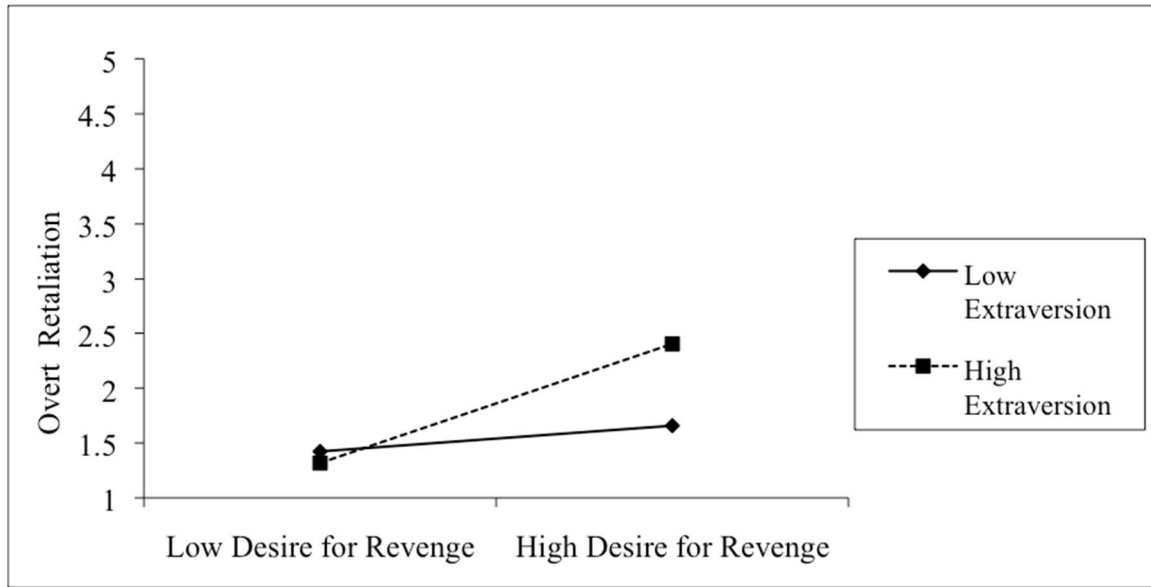
Figure 4

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Agreeableness on Overt Retaliation
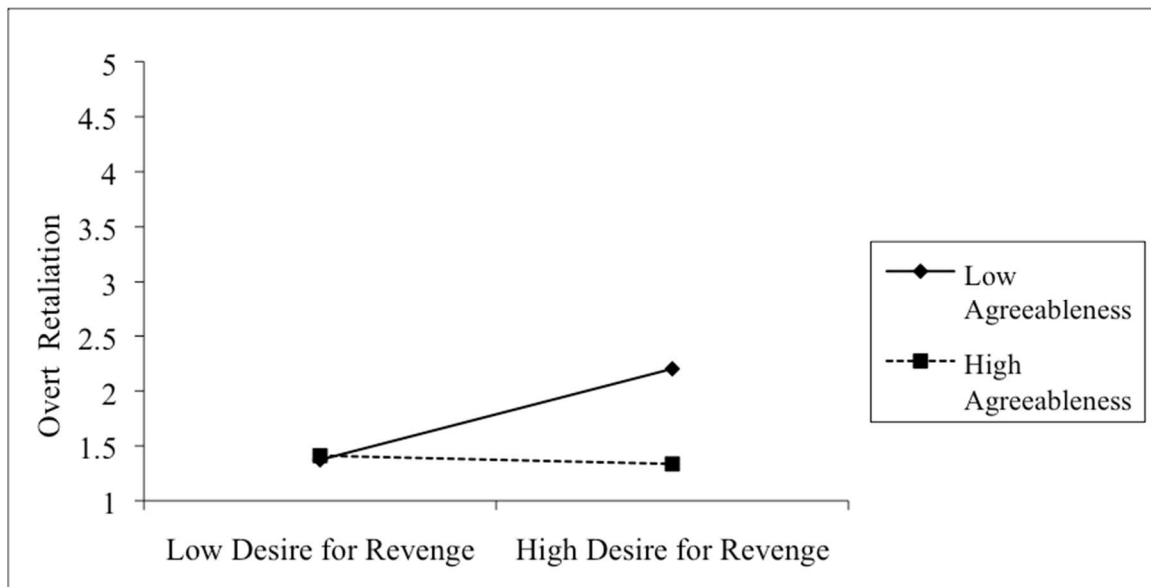
Figure 5

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Conscientiousness on Overt Retaliation
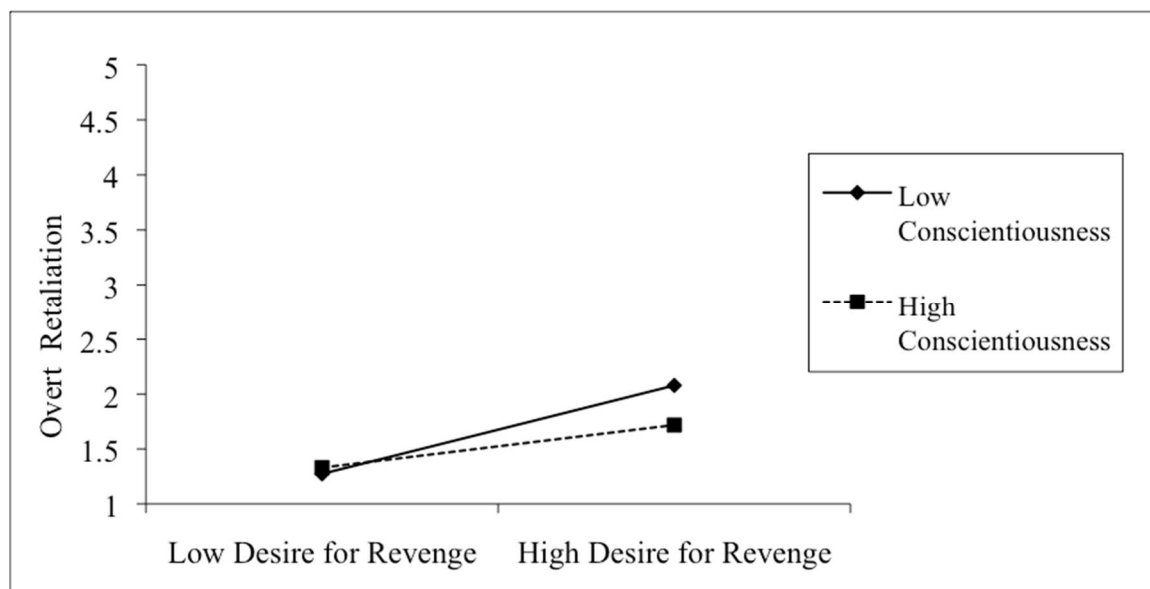
Figure 6

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Conscientiousness on Covert Retaliation
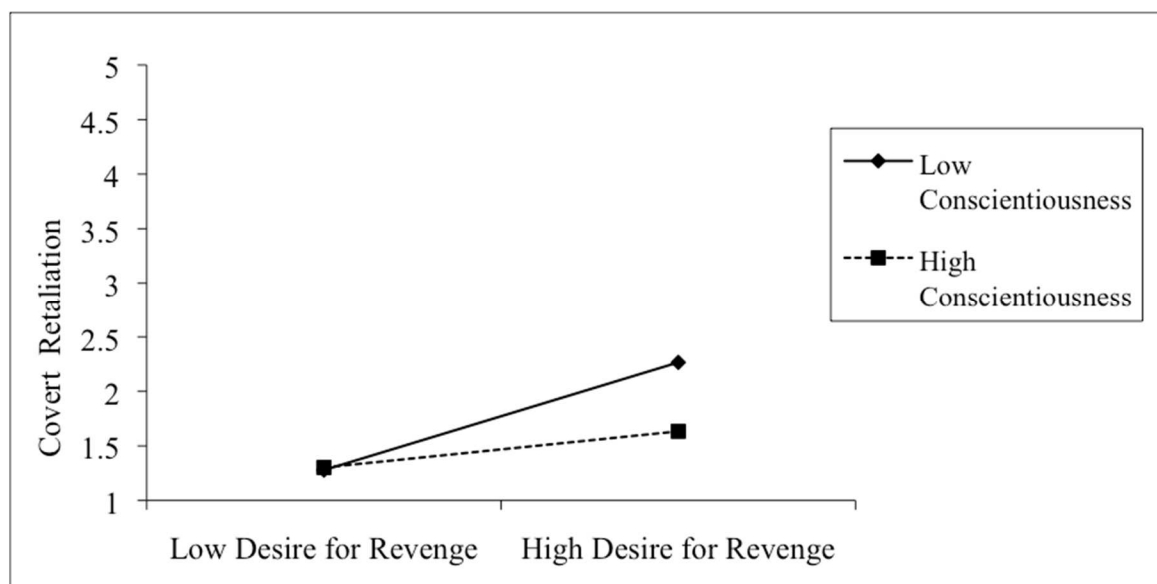
Figure 7

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Neuroticism on Overt Retaliation
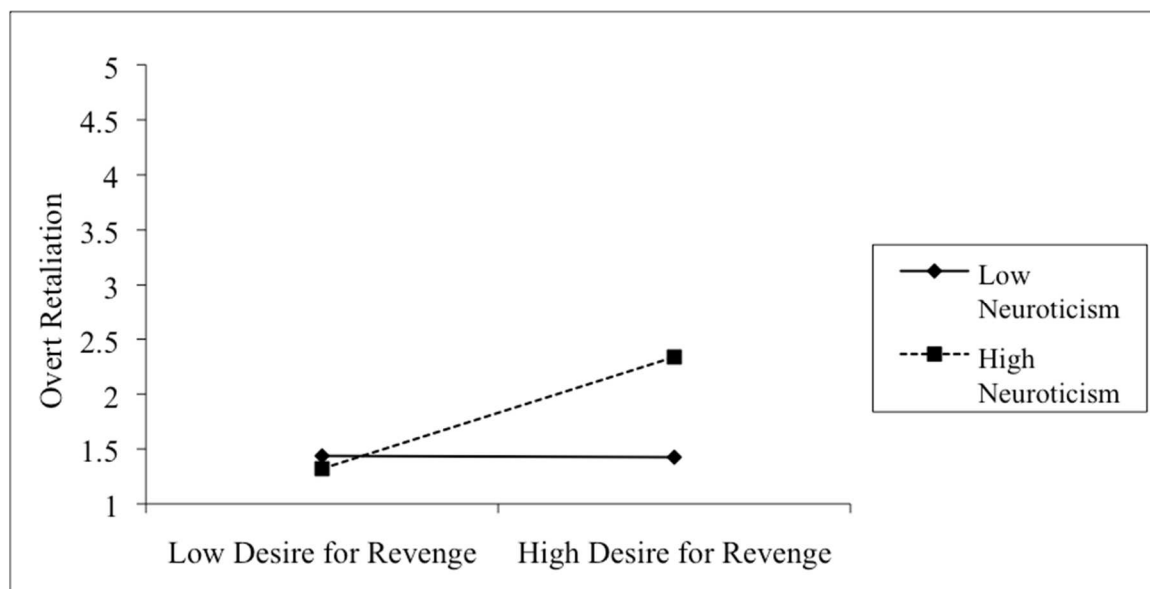
Figure 8

The Effect of Desire for Revenge and Openness on Overt Retaliation
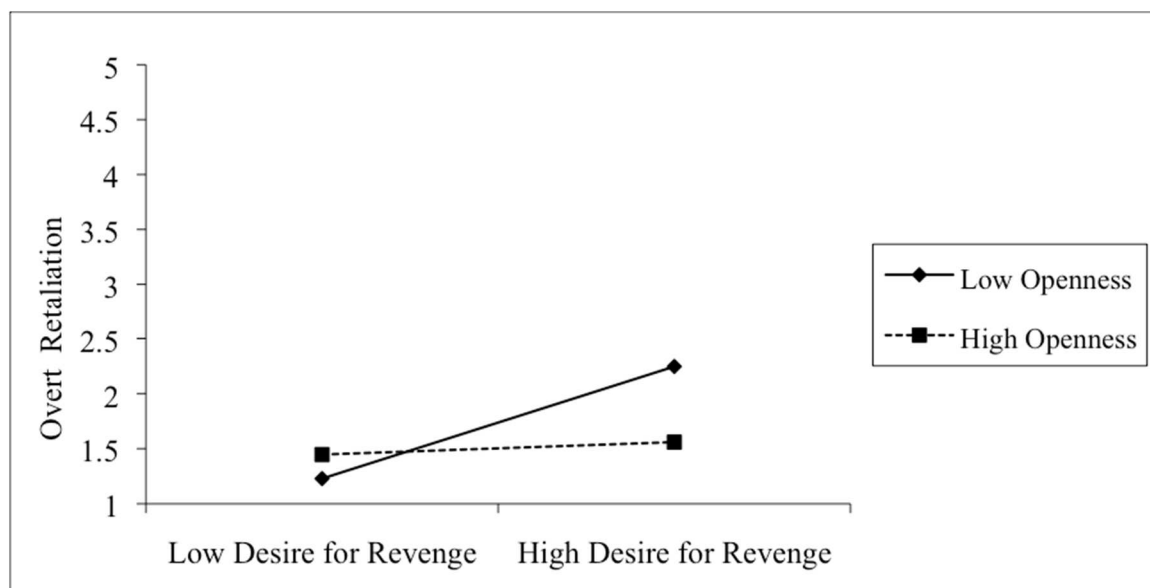
Table 1

Q-Sort Results for Splitting Items Measuring Retaliation into Overt and Covert Dimensions

Item	Overt Retaliation Correct Q-Sort % [1]	Covert Retaliation Correct Q-Sort %	Neither/Not Sure Correct Q-Sort %	Does not Apply to Most Correct Q-Sort %
1. Made fun of a customer	30	70	0	0
2. Lied to a customer	20	**80**	0	0
3. Made a customer wait longer than necessary	10	**90**	0	0
4. Ignored a customer and pretended you did not see or hear him or her	20	**80**	0	0
5. Acted rudely toward a customer	**100**	0	0	0
6. Argued with a customer	**100**	0	0	0
7. Raised your voice to a customer	**100**	0	0	0
8. Refused a reasonable customer request	**100**	0	0	0
9. Confronted a customer about a tip	100	0	0	80
10. Insulted a customer	**100**	0	0	0
11. Increased your tip or charged extra without customer permission	20	80	0	80
12. Corrupted service or product without the customer knowing about it	10	**90**	0	0
13. Threatened a customer	**90**	10	0	0
14. Failed to verify the accuracy of a guest's order	0	**100**	0	0
15. Told a customer that you fixed something but didn't fix it.	10	**90**	0	0

Note. Items with a bold correct Q-Sort % were used to measure overt or covert retaliation.
[1] Percentages for each item were calculated by dividing the number of subject matter experts who correctly sorted the item into each dimension by the total number of subject matter experts ($N = 10$). Items with Q-Sort % ≥ 80 were considered sorted correctly.

Table 2

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Service climate	6.13	.98	*.78*									
2. Mistreatment from Customers	3.44	1.44	-.03	-								
3. Desire for Revenge	2.58	1.57	-.21	.25	*.91*							
4. Negative Reciprocity	2.80	1.59	-.21	.13	.55	*.95*						
5. Extraversion	4.43	1.23	-.01	.08	-.05	-.10	*.92*					
6. Agreeableness	5.52	.90	.33	-.09	-.37	-.46	.20	*.88*				
7. Conscientiousness	5.48	.95	.29	-.01	-.24	-.27	.00	.26	*.87*			
8. Neuroticism	3.25	1.17	-.13	.04	.17	.25	-.22	-.37	-.30	*.92*		
9. Openness	5.17	.90	.30	.01	-.21	-.26	.13	.45	.31	-.24	*.86*	
10. Overt Retaliation	1.67	.90	-.15	.29	.37	.41	.19	-.43	-.19	.25	-.23	-
11. Covert Retaliation	1.66	.99	-.17	.25	.40	.46	-.14	-.21	-.27	.13	-.16	.56

Note. N = 255
Correlations |.12| and above are significant at *p* < .05.
Correlations |.17| and above are significant at *p* < .01.
Coefficient alphas for reflective (but not formative) measures are represented on the diagonal. Formative measures include Mistreatment from Customers, Overt Retaliation, and Covert Retaliation.

Table 3

Goodness-of-Fit Indices of CFA Analyses

Model	df	χ^2	$\Delta \chi^2$	CFI	Δ CFI	NFI	Δ NFI
Three factor [a]	74	310.327***	-	.92	-	.90	-
Three factor [b]	101	373.840***	-	.89	-	.87	-
Single factor [c]	77	932.500***	622.173***	.72	.20	.70	.20

Note. ***p < .001.

[a] Three factor solution where the construct negative reciprocity was measured with 8 items, excluding the two reversely coded ones.

[b] Three factor solution where the construct negative reciprocity was measured with all 10 items, including the two reversely coded ones.

[c] The single factor model was compared with the three factor solution where the construct negative reciprocity was measured with eight items, excluding the two reversely coded ones.

$\Delta \chi^2 = 622.173 > \chi^2$ crit. ($\alpha = .001$, Δ df = 3) = 16.27.

Δ CFI = .20, which is higher than the cutoff of .01.

Δ NFI = .20, which is higher than the cutoff of .01.

Table 4

Unstandardized Loadings (Standard Errors), Standardized Loadings and Squared Multiple Correlations for Three-Factor Confirmatory Model Where Negative Reciprocity Was Measured with 10 Items

Item	Service Climate			Negative Reciprocity			Desire for Revenge		
	Un-standardized (S.E.)	Standar-dized	r^2	Un-standardized (S.E.)	Standar-dized	r^2	Un-Standardized (S.E.)	Standar-dized	r^2
1	.79 (.06)	.79	.62	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	.85 (.08)	.63	.40	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	.96 (.07)	.85	.71	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	1.54 (.08)	.90	.80	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	1.62 (.08)	.91	.84	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	1.63 (.09)	.89	.79	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	1.56 (.08)	.90	.80	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	1.52 (.09)	.82	.67	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	1.59 (.09)	.83	.69	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	1.52 (.10)	.79	.62	-	-	-
11	-	-	-	1.36 (.09)	.75	.56	-	-	-
12	-	-	-	.37 (.12)	.19	.26	-	-	-
13	-	-	-	.74 (.09)	.51	.04	-	-	-
14	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.60 (.09)	.94	.89
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.47 (.08)	.82	.67
16	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.42 (.09)	.88	.77

Note. All loadings are significant (p < .01). The items are 1 = In my organization consistent service performance is important. 2 = In my organization prompt service from its employees is stressed. 3 = In my organization a reputation for good service is emphasized. 4 = If someone dislikes you, you should dislike them. 5 = If a person despises you, you should despise them. 6 = If someone says something nasty to you, you should say something nasty back. 7 = If someone important to you does something negative to you, you should do something even more negative to them. 8 = A person who has contempt for you deserves your contempt. 9 = If someone treats you like an enemy, they deserve your resentment. 10 = You should not give help to those who treat you badly. 11 = If someone distrusts you, you should distrust them. 12 = If someone has treated you poorly, you should not return the poor treatment. 13 = When someone treats me badly, I still act nicely to them. 14 = I want to settle the score with customers/clients/patients who mistreat me. 15 = If I were mistreated by customers/clients/patients, it would feel good to get back in some way. 16 = I plan on getting even with customers/clients/patients who mistreat me.

Table 5

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Desire for Revenge

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	2.58***	.09	2.58***	.08	2.54***	.08
Climate for Service	-.34**	.09	-.16	.08	-.08	.08
Mistreatment from Customers	-	-	.20**	.05	.19***	.05
Negative Reciprocity	-	-	.51***	.05	.44***	.05
Mistreatment from Customers X Negative Reciprocity	-	-	-	-	.15***	.04
Adjusted R^2	.04		.35		.39	
ΔR^2	.05		.31		.04	
F	12.05**		45.64***		40.77***	
ΔF	12.05**		59.64***		17.29***	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 6

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation

	Step 1		Step 2	
	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	-.07	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.20***	.03
Adjusted R^2	.02		.13	
ΔR^2	.02		.12	
F	6.07*		20.48***	
ΔF	6.07*		30.09***	

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 7

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation

	Step 1		Step 2	
	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.09	.06
Desire for revenge	-	-	.24***	.04
Adjusted R^2	.02		.16	
ΔR^2	.02		.14	
F	7.44**		25.57***	
ΔF	7.44**		42.49***	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 8

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation (Agreeableness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05	1.58***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	.01	.05	.03	.05
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.14***	.03	.12***	.03
Agreeableness	-	-	-.35***	.06	-.23***	.06
Desire for Revenge X Agreeableness	-	-	-	-	-.16***	.03
Adjusted R^2	.02		.23		.32	
ΔR^2	.02		.21		.09	
F	6.07*		25.84***		30.17***	
ΔF	6.07*		34.91***		33.21***	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 9

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation (Extraversion as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05	1.68***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	-.07	.05	-.06	.05
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.21***	.03	.21***	.03
Extraversion	-	-	.15**	.04	.13**	.04
Desire for Revenge X Extraversion	-	-	-	-	.11***	.02
Adjusted R^2	.02		.17		.23	
ΔR^2	.02		.16		.07	
F	6.07*		18.33***		20.29***	
ΔF	6.07*		23.92***		21.63***	

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 10

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation (Conscientiousness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05	1.64***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	-.05	.06	-.05	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.19***	.04	.18***	.04
Conscientious-ness	-	-	-.08	.06	-.07	.06
Desire for Revenge X Conscientious-ness	-	-	-	-	-.07*	.03
Adjusted R^2	.02		.14		.15	
ΔR^2	.02		.12		.02	
F	6.07*		14.40***		12.12*	
ΔF	6.07*		18.15***		4.67*	

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 11

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation (Neuroticism as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05	1.63***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	-.06	.05	-.04	.05
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.18***	.03	.16***	.03
Neuroticism	-	-	.14**	.04	.16***	.04
Desire for Revenge X Neuroticism	-	-	-	-	.14***	.02
Adjusted R²	.02		.16		.24	
ΔR²	.02		.15		.08	
F	6.07*		17.50***		21.12***	
ΔF	6.07*		22.70***		26.60***	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 12

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Overt Retaliation (Openness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.67***	.06	1.67***	.05	1.62***	.05
Climate for Service	-.14*	.06	-.04	.06	.02	.05
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.19***	.03	.18***	.03
Openness	-	-	-.15*	.06	-.12*	.06
Desire for Revenge X Openness	-	-	-	-	-.17***	.03
Adjusted R^2	.02		.15		.24	
ΔR^2	.02		.14		.09	
F	6.07*		16.02***		21.26***	
ΔF	6.07*		20.53***		31.19***	

$^*p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$.

Table 13

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation (Agreeableness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06	1.65***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.08	.06	-.07	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.24***	.04	.23***	.04
Agreeableness	-	-	-.05	.07	-.03	.08
Desire for Revenge X Agreeableness	-	-	-	-	-.02	.04
Adjusted R^2	.03		.16		.16	
ΔR^2	.03		.14		.00	
F	7.44**		17.17***		12.95***	
ΔF	7.44**		21.43***		.43	

$^*p < .05,$ $^{**}p < .01,$ $^{***}p < .001.$

Table 14

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation (Extraversion as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.09	.06	-.10	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.24***	.04	.24***	.04
Extraversion	-	-	-.10*	.05	- .09*	.05
Desire for Revenge X Extraversion	-	-	-	-	.03	.03
Adjusted R^2	.03		.17		.17	
ΔR^2	.03		.15		.00	
F	7.44**		18.75***		14.39***	
ΔF	7.44**		23.73***		1.26	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 15

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation (Conscientiousness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06	1.62***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.05	.06	-.04	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.22***	.04	.21***	.04
Conscientious-ness	-	-	-.18**	.06	-.16*	.06
Desire for Revenge X Conscientious-ness	-	-	-	-	-.11**	.04
Adjusted R^2	.03		.19		.21	
ΔR^2	.03		.17		.03	
F	7.44**		20.33***		18.31**	
ΔF	7.44**		26.04***		10.05**	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 16

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation (Neuroticism as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06	1.68***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.08	.06	-.09	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.24***	.04	.25***	.04
Neuroticism	-	-	.05	.05	.04	.05
Desire for Revenge X Neuroticism	-	-	-	-	-.06	.03
Adjusted R^2	.03		.16		.17	
ΔR^2	.03		.14		.01	
F	7.44**		17.32***		13.91***	
ΔF	7.44**		21.66***		3.22	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 17

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Covert Retaliation (Openness as Moderator)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	1.66***	.06	1.66***	.06	1.64***	.06
Climate for Service	-.17**	.06	-.07	.06	-.05	.06
Desire for Revenge	-	-	.24***	.04	.23***	.04
Openness	-	-	-.07	.07	-.06	.07
Desire for Revenge X Openness	-	-	-	-	-.07	.04
Adjusted R^2	.03		.16		.17	
ΔR^2	.03		.14		.01	
F	7.44**		17.40***		14.11***	
ΔF	7.44**		21.77***		3.70	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 18

Direct and Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Criteria through Desire for Revenge

Predictor	Mediator	Criterion	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect				
			c' (p)	ab	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	k^2
Customer Mistreatment	Desire for Revenge	Overt Retaliation	.13 (.0004)	.05	.02	.02	.10	.08
Customer Mistreatment	Desire for Revenge	Covert Retaliation	.11 (.007)	.06	.02	.03	.12	.09

Note. N = 255, results of the indirect effects were obtained from 10,000 bootstrap samples, c' = direct effect, ab = indirect effect, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower lever confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper level confidence interval, k^2 = Kappa squared.

Table 19a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Extraversion

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Overt Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					1.57	.36	.86	2.28
Desire for Revenge					-.32	.11	-.53	-.10
Mistreatment					.12	.04	.05	.19
Extraversion					-.18	.08	-.33	-.03
Desire x Extraversion					.12	.02	.07	.16
R2	.39	***			.28	***		
F	54.06	***			23.80	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 19b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Extraversion

Negative Reciprocity	Extraversion	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	3.20	.00	.00	-.02	.01
	4.43	-.01	.02	-.05	.02
	5.65	-.02	.03	-.08	.04
2.80	3.20	.01	.01	-.01	.03
	4.43	.04	.01	.02	.07
	5.65	.06	.03	.03	.13
4.39	3.20	.02	.02	-.01	.06
	4.43	.08	.02	.04	.14
	5.65	.14	.04	.07	.25

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean. B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 20a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Agreeableness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Overt Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.18	.62	-1.05	1.40
Desire for Revenge					.90	.16	.61	1.22
Mistreatment					.10	.03	.03	.17
Agreeableness					.15	.11	-.06	.36
Desire x Agreeableness					-.15	.03	-.20	-.09
R2	.39	***			.35	***		
F	54.06	***			33.39	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 20b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Agreeableness

Negative Reciprocity	Agreeableness	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	4.61	-.01	.02	-.05	.03
	5.52	.00	.01	-.02	.01
	6.42	.00	.01	-.01	.03
2.80	4.61	.04	.02	.01	.09
	5.52	.02	.01	.01	.04
	6.42	.00	.01	-.03	.01
4.39	4.61	.10	.03	.04	.17
	5.52	.04	.02	.02	.07
	6.42	-.02	.02	-.06	.03

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean.
B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 21a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Conscientiousness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Overt Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.39	.61	-.81	1.58
Desire for Revenge					.51	.18	.16	.86
Mistreatment					.13	.04	.06	.20
Conscientiousness					.07	.11	-.14	.29
Desire x Conscientiousness					-.07	.03	-.13	-.01
R2	.39	***			.20	***		
F	54.06	***			15.73	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 21b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Conscientiousness

Negative Reciprocity	Conscientiousness	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	4.52	-.01	.02	-.06	.02
	5.48	-.01	.01	-.04	.02
	6.43	-.01	.01	-.04	.01
2.80	4.52	.04	.02	.02	.10
	5.48	.03	.01	.01	.06
	6.43	.02	.01	.00	.05
4.39	4.52	.10	.04	.04	.18
	5.48	.07	.02	.03	.12
	6.43	.04	.03	-.01	.11

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean.
B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 22a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Neuroticism

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Overt Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					1.44	.28	.88	1.99
Desire for Revenge					-.30	.09	-.48	-.11
Mistreatment					.13	.04	.06	.19
Neuroticism					-.18	.08	-.34	-.03
Desire x Neuroticism					.13	.03	.08	.19
R2	.39	***			.29	***		
F	54.06	***			25.28	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 22b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Neuroticism

Negative Reciprocity	Neuroticism	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	2.08	.00	.01	-.01	.02
	3.25	-.01	.01	-.03	.01
	4.42	-.02	.03	-.07	.03
2.80	2.08	.00	.01	-.03	.02
	3.25	.03	.01	.01	.05
	4.42	.06	.02	.02	.11
4.39	2.08	.00	.02	-.05	.04
	3.25	.06	.02	.03	.10
	4.42	.13	.03	.06	.20

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean.
B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 23a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Openness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Overt Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					-.50	.55	-1.59	.58
Desire for Revenge					.94	.16	.63	1.26
Mistreatment					.10	.04	.04	.17
Openness					.28	.11	.06	.47
Desire x Openness					-.15	.03	-.21	-.09
R2	.39	***			.28	***		
F	54.06	***			24.09	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 23b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Overt Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Openness

Negative Reciprocity	Openness	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	4.27	-.02	.02	-.07	.03
	5.17	.00	.01	-.03	.02
	6.07	.00	.01	-.02	.01
2.80	4.27	.06	.02	.02	.11
	5.17	.03	.01	.01	.06
	6.07	.00	.01	-.02	.02
4.39	4.27	.13	.04	.06	.21
	5.17	.07	.02	.03	.11
	6.07	.01	.02	-.04	.05

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean.
B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 24

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Extraversion

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Covert Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.81	.42	-.02	1.62
Desire for Revenge					.35	.13	.10	.60
Mistreatment					.12	.04	.04	.20
Extraversion					-.03	.09	-.20	.14
Desire x Extraversion					-.03	.03	-.08	.03
R2	.39	***			.21	***		
F	54.06	***			16.30	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 25

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Agreeableness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Covert Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.94	.77	-.57	2.45
Desire for Revenge					.27	.19	-.11	.65
Mistreatment					.11	.04	.03	.19
Agreeableness					-.04	.13	-.30	.23
Desire x Agreeableness					-.01	.03	-.08	.06
R2	.39	***			.19	***		
F	54.06	***			14.60	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 26a

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Conscientiousness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Covert Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.24	.65	-1.04	1.52
Desire for Revenge					.76	.19	.39	1.14
Mistreatment					.11	.04	.03	.19
Conscientiousness					.10	.12	-.13	.32
Desire x Conscientiousness					-.11	.03	-.17	-.04
R2	.39	***			.25	***		
F	54.06	***			20.76	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 26b

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge at Different Levels of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Conscientiousness

Negative Reciprocity	Conscientiousness	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
1.22	4.52	-.02	.03	-.07	.04
	5.48	-.01	.02	-.04	.03
	6.43	-.01	.01	-.04	.01
2.80	4.52	.05	.02	.02	.12
	5.48	.04	.01	.02	.07
	6.43	.02	.01	-.01	.06
4.39	4.52	.13	.04	.06	.22
	5.48	.08	.02	.05	.13
	6.43	.04	.03	-.02	.11

Note. N = 255. Values for moderators are the mean (medium value) and plus (high value) /minus (low value) one standard deviation from mean.
B = point estimate, S.E. = bootstrap standard error, LLCI = bootstrap lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = bootstrap upper-level confidence interval.

Table 27

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Neuroticism

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Covert Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.06	.33	-.60	.71
Desire for Revenge					.42	.11	.20	.63
Mistreatment					.11	.04	.03	.19
Neuroticism					.19	.09	.02	.37
Desire x Neuroticism					-.06	.03	-.12	.01
R2	.39	***			.20	***		
F	54.06	***			15.66	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

Table 28

Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Mistreatment from Customers on Covert Retaliation through Desire for Revenge Moderated by Negative Reciprocity Beliefs and Openness

Predictor	Criterion							
	Desire for Revenge				Covert Retaliation			
	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI	B	S.E.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.10	.44	1.24	2.97				
Mistreatment	-.24	.11	-.46	-.02				
Negative Reciprocity	-.08	.15	-.36	.21				
Mistreatment x Neg. Reciprocity	.15	.03	.09	.22				
Constant					.41	.64	-.85	1.67
Desire for Revenge					.51	.19	.14	.88
Mistreatment					.10	.04	.02	.18
Openness					.06	.12	-.18	.30
Desire x Openness					-.06	.03	-.13	.01
R^2	.39	***			.20	***		
F	54.06	***			15.80	***		

Note. N = 255, B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S. E. = standard error, LLCI = lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval.

APPENDIX: SCALES USED

1) MISTREATMENT FROM CUSTOMERS (from Wang et al., 2011)

Instruction: The following statements describe many situations that may occur in your interaction with customers. Please think over your work over the past 6 months and indicate how often your customers/clients/patients treated you in the following ways:

1. Demanded special treatment.

2. Thought they were more important than others.

3. Asked you to do things they could do by themselves.

4. Vented their bad mood out on you.

5. Did not understand that you had to comply with

certain rules.

6. Complained without reason.

7. Made exorbitant demands.

8. Were impatient.

9. Yelled at you.

10. Spoke aggressively to you.

11. Got angry at you even over minor matters.

12. Argued with you the whole time throughout the interaction.*

13. Refused to listen to you.

14. Cut you off midsentence.

15. Made demands that you could not deliver.

16. Insisted on demands that are irrelevant to your

service.

17. Doubted your ability.

18. Used condescending language to you (e.g., "you are an idiot")

* The original scale uses the word "call." However, my participants will have interaction with customers face-to-face; hence I have changed it into "interaction."

2) DESIRE FOR REVENGE (from Jones, 2009

Instruction: Please, read the following statements and indicate on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) what you think when customers/clients/patients are unpleasant to you:

1. I intend to settle the score with customers/clients/patients who mistreat me

2. If I were mistreated by customers/clients/patients, it would feel good to get back in some way

3. I plan on getting even with customers/clients/patients who mistreat me *

* Here I deleted "in the near future."
Also, in the original scale the items were asking about employee or supervisor. I have replaced it with "customers/clients/patients who mistreat me."

3) NEGATIVE RECIPROCITY BELIEF (from Eisenberger et al., 2004).

Instruction: Following is a list of phrases that describe people's beliefs. Please, read the following statements and indicate on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) to what degree you agree with these statements:

1. If someone dislikes you, you should dislike them.

2. If a person despises you, you should despise them.

3. If someone says something nasty to you, you should say something nasty back.

4. If someone has treated you poorly, you should not return the poor treatment. (R)*

5. If someone important to you does something negative to you, you should do something even

more negative to them.

6. A person who has contempt for you deserves your contempt.

7. If someone treats you like an enemy, they deserve your resentment.

8. You should not give help to those who treat you badly.

9. When someone treats me badly, I still act nicely to them. (R) *

10. If someone distrusts you, you should distrust them.

* These items have been removed based on the CFA results.

4) PERSONALITY (from Goldberg, 1992)

Instructions: Following is a list of phrases that describe people's behaviors. Using a rating scale below, please, describe yourself as honestly as you can.

Extraversion:

1. Am the life of the party.

2. Feel comfortable around people.

3. Start conversations.

4. Talk to a lot of different people at parties.

5. Don't mind being the center of attention.

6. Don't talk a lot.*

7. Keep in the background.*

8. Have little to say.*

9. Don't like to draw attention to myself.*

10. Am quiet around strangers.*

　　　* indicates a reversely coded item.

Agreeableness:

1. Am interested in people.

2. Sympathize with others' feelings.

3. Have a soft heart.

4. Take time out for others.

5. Feel others' emotions.

6. Make people feel at ease.

7. Am not really interested in others.*

8. Insult people.*

9. Am not interested in other people's problems.*

10. Feel little concern for others.*

      * indicates a reversely coded item.

Conscientiousness

1. Am always prepared.

2. Pay attention to details.

3. Get chores done right away.

4. Like order.

5. Follow a schedule.

6. Am exacting in my work.

7. Leave my belongings around.*

8. Make a mess of things.*

9. Often forget to put things back in their proper place.*

10. Shirk my duties.*

      * indicates a reversely coded item.

Neuroticism

1. Am relaxed most of the time.*

2. Seldom feel blue.*

3. Get stressed out easily.

4. Worry about things.

5. Am easily disturbed.

6. Get upset easily.

7. Change my mood a lot.

8. Have frequent mood swings.

9. Get irritated easily.

10. Often feel blue.

> * indicates a reversely coded item.

Openness

1. Have a rich vocabulary.

2. Have a vivid imagination.

3. Have excellent ideas.

4. Am quick to understand things.

5. Use difficult words.

6. Spend time reflecting on things.

7. Am full of ideas.

8. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.*

9. Am not interested in abstract ideas.*

10. Do not have a good imagination.*

> * indicates a reversely coded item.

5) RETALIATION AGAINST CUSTOMERS

Instructions: The following items describe behaviors that employees perform at work in order to get even with customers who are rude, aggressive or demeaning. How often have you done each of the following things on your present job in the past 6 months? Please read each question carefully and mark the number that corresponds to your answer.

1. Made fun of a customer to someone else

2. Lied to a customer

3. Made a customer wait longer than necessary

4. Ignored a customer and pretended you did not see or hear him or her*

5. Acted rudely toward a customer

6. Argued with a customer

7. Raised your voice to a customer

8. Refused a reasonable customer request

9. Confronted a customer about a tip

10. Insulted a customer

11. Increased your tip or charged extra * without customer permission

12. Corrupted service or product without the customer knowing about it *

13. Threatened a customer

14. Told a customer that you fixed something but didn't fix it

15. Failed to verify the accuracy of a guest's order

* 4. "and pretended you did not see him" is my modification of the item to make it obvious covert; 11. "or charged extra" is my modification so the item can be answered by those who do not receive tips; 12. I have altered this item so it could be answered by those who do not serve food. The original item was "contaminated a customer's food"; 14. is from Wang et al. (2011); 15. is from Hunter and Penney (2007). Items 1–13 are from Hunter and Penney (2014).

6) DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND CUTOFF CRITERIA:

Please complete the following set of questions about yourself:

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?
    a. Male
    b. Female

4. Are you currently employed?
    a. Yes, hours per week _____
    b. No

5. What is your job title? _____

6. Are you a personal care or service worker (e.g., work with clients, patients, customers, etc.)?
    a. Yes
    b. No

9. Do you interact with clients/patients/customers face-to-face?
    a. Yes
    b. No

10.   Do you have an opportunity to get back at clients/patients/customers if they are rude to you at your work?
    a. Yes
    b. No

11. Have you been employed in your current position for at least 6 months?
    a. Yes
    b. No

7) CONTROL VARIABLE – SERVICE CLIMATE

<u>Instruction:</u> Following is a list of phrases that describe service quality in your organization. Please, read the following statements and indicate on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) to what degree you agree with these statements:

1. In my organization consistent service performance is important.

2. In my organization prompt service from its employees is stressed.

3. In my organization a reputation for good service is emphasized.

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ABSTRACT

OVERT AND COVERT RETALIATION OF SERVICE EMPLOYEES AGAINST CUSTOMERS WHO MISTREAT THEM

by

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Advisor: Dr. James Martin

Major: Business Administration (Management)

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Mistreatment of service employees by customers who are demanding and aggressive has become a problem for service organizations. However, it has been the subject of very little research in the organizational behavior literature (Bedi & Schat, 2007). The few studies that have examined service employees' reactions to such mistreatment (e.g., Dorman & Zapf, 2004; Grandey et al., 2004; Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, & Walker, 2008; Yagil, 2008; Wang et al., 2011) found that when service employees believe they have been mistreated, they become angry and upset, and reciprocate the unfair treatment in order to punish unpleasant customers. However, these researchers treat retaliation against customers as a unidimensional construct, even though there is some evidence that such retaliation can be overt or covert. In my dissertation I examine whether retaliation against customers can be split into overt and covert and how personality affects overt and covert retaliation.

Keywords: Customer mistreatment, retaliation, customer-centered CWBs

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Agnieszka K. Shepard is a doctoral student at the Mike Ilitch School of Business of Wayne State University. Prior to pursuing her Ph.D. she had obtained her M.A. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at Wayne State University. Agnieszka has been contributing to the field of Organizational Behavior through teaching, research, and service. As a graduate student she has taught organizational theory, organizational behavior, training and development, statistics, and research methods. Agnieszka's research interests include job attitudes, ethics, personality, and counterproductive work behaviors. She has published her work in journals such as *Group and Organization Management*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *American Journal of Business*, and *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. In addition to advancing the field of Organizational Behavior through her work in academia, Agnieszka has applied her experience with employee selection and statistics to help organizations such as Denison Consulting, St. John Hospital, the Detroit Yacht Club, Atlas Oil Company, and Valassis. Agnieszka has also been an active member of various professional associations including the Academy of Management, the Southern Management Association, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the Society for Human Resource Management, and the Teaching Society for Management Educators. She has collaborated with other professionals, presented her research, and served as a reviewer at the conferences sponsored by these associations. In addition, she has served on the board and as the president of the Michigan Association for Industrial-Organizational Psychology.