

The Role of Reflection in Predicting Stress Coping, Turnover, Absenteeism and Lateness: A Study of the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Occupational stress is a problem in the hospitality industry, and stress coping strategies are worthwhile to understand. To the extent that employees constructively reflect on work challenges and gain insight into ways to deal with them, they may experience less withdrawal. This research assesses employee reflection on work challenges as predictors of stress coping and employee withdrawal. Two underlying dimensions of reflection are considered: causal analysis (CA) and future improvement (FI). A survey of 193 front-line employees in the hospitality industry explores the relationship between dimensions of the reflection process and three withdrawal behaviors. Results show that future improvement was related to more positive stress coping but also, unexpectedly, to more negative stress coping. Further, negative stress coping was related to more withdrawal in the form of absenteeism and turnover. Results of the study are discussed in terms of contributions to research and practice.

Keywords: occupational stress, reflection, stress coping strategies, withdrawal behaviors, hospitality industry, partial least squares equation modelling

1. Introduction

Work-related stress has been considered one of the most important issues facing managers in the hospitality industry (Ross, 1995). Employees in the hotel business suffer from stress for several reasons, including employment conditions, shift work, demanding work roles, emotional labor, and legal responsibilities (Tiyce et al. 2013). According to Kao et al. (2014), front-line hospitality employees encounter stressful interactions with customers and, organizational members while performing daily work. Moncrief et al. (2000) cite productivity pressures, workplace culture, corporate restructuring, and the volume and complexity of workload as workplace stressors. Employees in the hospitality industry reported stressors on 40-62 percent of days compared to a national U.S. sample who reported stressors on only 25-44% of days (Almeida & Horn, 2004). The hospitality industry is known for its low-skilled employees, lack of career development programs, and insufficient training (Choi, Woods, & Murrman, 2000; Iverson & Deery, 1997; McPhail & Fisher, 2008). Consequently, employee turnover in the hospitality industry is among the highest among service industries. This industry profile suggests a strong need to examine employee stress, coping strategies, and consequent withdrawal behaviors.

The development of positive coping strategies by an organization is instrumental in reducing such withdrawal behaviors as turnover, absenteeism, and lateness (Raheel, 2014). Increased efficacy of stress coping strategies is expected to result in positive outcomes, such as decreased employee withdrawal behaviors, whereas inappropriate coping strategies are expected to have a negative impact. Turnover, or permanent withdrawal from a workplace,

is one of three negative outcomes linked to an employee's lack of stress-coping strategies (Dwyer & Ganster, 1991; McKenna, Orit, and Wolf, 1981). Absenteeism and tardiness are two alternatives to permanent withdrawal that are also associated with stressful work conditions (Adler and Golan, 1981; Blau, 1987).

Moreover, Rosse (1988) found support for a lateness-to-absence progression. Lateness is the first link of a connected chain of employee withdrawal behaviors. When challenging organizational concerns are not addressed by management or when employees fail to cope, lateness progresses to absenteeism - in the form of call-off and avoidance - and then quitting the organization as an ultimate resort. In their study of employee punctuality, Berkovits and Koslowsky (2002) found that employees first attempt a low level of withdrawal (lateness) and then move on to a more severe type of withdrawal (absenteeism or turnover) when circumstances "stay the same or get worse" (p. 727).

This study examines employee reflection on challenging work experiences as a possible way to deal with workplace stress. Drawing from Maurer, Dimotakis, and Hardt (2018), reflection is conceptualized in terms of two underlying components. The first, causal analysis reflection (CA) consists of evaluating a stressful experience in terms of causes that might be controllable by the employee. The second component of reflection, future improvement (FI) consists of planned behavioral changes resulting from CA reflection. Both CA and FI are expected to lead to the development of improved stress coping strategies, which in turn are expected to reduce workplace stress and its negative consequences, i.e., turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness.

In the next section we review previous research about the key concepts in the study. Following, we explain the research method, findings, and discuss the contributions of the study to practice and future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reflection

Reflection is an individual cognitive process that constructs knowledge from experience. Schon (1983) describes reflection as a spontaneous and natural process that occurs when an individual experiences confusion, ambiguity, discomfort, or a gap in knowledge or skills. The crux of reflection lies in meaning-making (Chan, 2010), which improves the understanding of a concrete experience and enables employees to derive implications, conclusions, and lessons applicable to future situations (Boud, 2001; Mann, Gordon, and Macleod, 2009; Nilsen, Nordstrom, G., & Ellstrom, P.E., 2012; Raelin, 2001). As an organizational learning tool, reflection contributes to the co-evolution of individual and collective knowledge (Kimmerle, Wodzicki, & Cress, 2008). Hetzner, Heid, and Gruber (2012; 2013) argue that the most important sources of learning in the workplace are ambiguous situations, and that reflection helps employees to gain knowledge and devise methods of action that may reduce stress.

The main feature of reflection engagement is effortful, controlled, and intentional focus on one's prior performance, behavior, and traits with a goal of future improvement (Maurer et al. 2014). Maurer et al. (2014) posit two aspects of reflection: causal analysis (CA) and future implications (FI). CA focuses on understanding the influences causing a specific outcome under the actor's control. FI is the development of plans to generate change related to the causes identified by CA.

As Maurer et al. (2014) observe, "Reflection after challenging experiences is promising as a key predictor of development and success" (p. 6). Reflection is expected to help workers develop stress coping strategies by examining concerns triggered by specific experiences. While reflecting, workers record details of a specific experience that took place and create knowledge to use during the decision-making process. This may lead employees to develop stronger emotional defenses, allowing them to cope with future stressful events (Den Hartog

& Belschak, 2007). Thus, reflection is a thought process that guides continuous learning and improvement, or what Hoyrup and Elkjaer (2006) consider to be “everyday learning processes” (p. 29). When employees do not reflect productively, they are likely to remain vulnerable to pressures that could lead to withdrawal from their workplaces.

Not all individuals reflect in the same way. Some people reflect constructively for understanding and insight; others may simply “ruminate” by replaying a stressful event in their minds. According to Trapnell and Campbell (1999), rumination summarizes perceived threats, losses, or injustices, which might amplify negative experiences and hinder learning. By contrast, structured reflection can foster critical thinking about specific experiences and develop effective coping mechanisms.

2.2 Stress Coping Strategies

Stress coping is an intentional, cognitive analysis of the conditions in an employee’s environment that are associated with stress (Law, Pierce & Woods, 1995). Coping strategies allow employees to use challenging situations as opportunities to learn how to deal with future stressful situations. Constructive coping strategies promote development and productivity, whereas destructive coping behaviors promote avoidance and withdrawal (Law et al., 1995). Law et al. (1995) empirically identified several stressors such as management, arrogant employees and guests, and the busy nature of the hospitality and tourism business. Their study described behaviors used by some workers to cope with stress: talking to a co-worker, discussing the problem with a supervisor, and working even harder. Other workers chose to cope with stress by “switching off,” performing a different activity, and thinking about non-work scenarios. Winnubst and Schafer (1984) described employees who opt for these behaviors as “avoiders” rather than “copers.” The coper seeks out stress situations in order to cope with them, whereas the avoider denies stress.

In a study analyzing 100 coping assessments, Skinner et al. (2003) identified several core families of coping. *Problem-solving* included actions like active coping and cognitive decision-making types of coping such as planning. *Positive cognitive restructuring* involved focusing on adjusting one’s view or perspective regarding a stressful event and might include actions such as acceptance. *Avoidance coping* involves escaping from or disengaging, either emotionally or behaviorally, from a stressful event or experience. *Support-seeking* involves problem-focused and emotion-focused support seeking from others. Aligned with these findings, Lazarus, and Folkman (1984) identified two main types of coping strategies: *emotion-focused* strategies that aim to lessen emotional distress, and *problem-focused* strategies that are directed at problem definition, alternative solutions, and action.

Studies of stress coping in the hospitality industry mostly confirm these strategies. Brymer, Perrewé, and Johns (1991) found that among the positive coping mechanisms used by employees in the hotel industry are physical exercise and spending time with friends. Negative coping mechanisms were alcohol consumption and overeating. Law et al. (1995) found that 45 percent of hospitality employees talked to their co-workers as a coping strategy, 36 percent reported stressful situations to their supervisors, 33 percent tried to enjoy themselves and make the most of the situation, and 28 percent used self-discipline to cope with stress.

2.3 Turnover, Absenteeism, and Lateness

With the high level of stress in the hotel industry, employees who fail to cope positively with stress may avoid pressure by leaving the organization. The first stages of withdrawal that workers may display are calling in sick, taking a leave of absence, and absenteeism. When stress levels become intolerable, mechanisms such as vacating the job, taking annual time off, sick leave, or leave without pay are common. Although staff turnover is a common

phenomenon in any industry, it has been noted to be exceptionally high in the hotel field (Birdir, 2002; Deery & Shaw, 1999; Kennedy & Berger, 1994; Tanke, 1990; Woods, 1992; Yang, 2010; Yang et al., 2012). Hinkin and Tracey (2000) argue that hospitality employees often perform repetitive routine tasks, are given little job autonomy, receive poor supervision, and are compensated poorly.

In addition to the emotional cost manifested exacted by stress for employees, supervisors, and customers (Brymer et al., 1991; Hinkin & Tracey, 2000), turnover is costly to organizations. The cost of turnover includes the expense incurred in recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining the employee. For example, Marriott Hotels International estimated that with each one percent increase in its employee turnover rate, the company lost between \$5 and \$15 million in profit (Schlesinger & Heskett, 1991). Hotels with high turnover also suffer from service image and loss of customer base.

Absenteeism is another withdrawal and avoidance behavior expressed by employees when facing challenging situations (Willert, Thulstrup, & Bonde, 2011). Work-related stress is associated with increased absenteeism from work, which is a significant problem in hospitality (Belita, Mbindyo, & English, 2013). The absent employee must be replaced by either hiring an extra worker or requiring staff to work overtime. Navarro and Bass (2006) estimate that absenteeism costs U.S. organizations 15 percent of payroll.

Lateness is a third withdrawal behavior exhibited by employees who fail to develop effective stress coping strategies. Along with absenteeism and turnover, lateness impacts employee productivity and organizational efficiency. The ramifications of lateness include loss of productivity, the administrative time spent on counseling and discipline and impacts on employees who must bear the burden of coworkers' lateness (Blau, 1994; Jamal, 2007). While absenteeism and turnover have been studied extensively, there is little research that has specifically examined employee lateness (Bardsley & Rhodes, 1996).

2.4 Research Model and Hypotheses

Following Maurer et al. (2014), we suggest that reflection helps employees develop effective stress coping behavior when faced with difficult situations at work. Treating workplace reflection as an individual behavioral construct means that differences in reflection can be used as a predictor of differences in coping strategies, turnover, absenteeism, and lateness. The research model incorporates the two dimensions of reflection (CA and FI) and makes a distinction between Positive Stress Coping (PSC) and Negative Stress Coping (NSC).

Figure 1 presents the full research model with the expected findings shown as alternative hypotheses to those that are stated in null form to allow for statistical testing.

Reflection with high CA enables individuals to invest time in cognitive efforts to understand a specific situation and change their mental approach. Proactively trying to understand the causes of a stressor is part of active problem-solving to deal with stress positively. This leads to the first set of Causal Analyses hypotheses, stated here in null form:

H1a_{null}: Causal Analysis Reflection is not correlated with Positive Stress Coping.

H1b_{null}: Causal Analysis Reflection is not correlated with Negative Stress Coping.

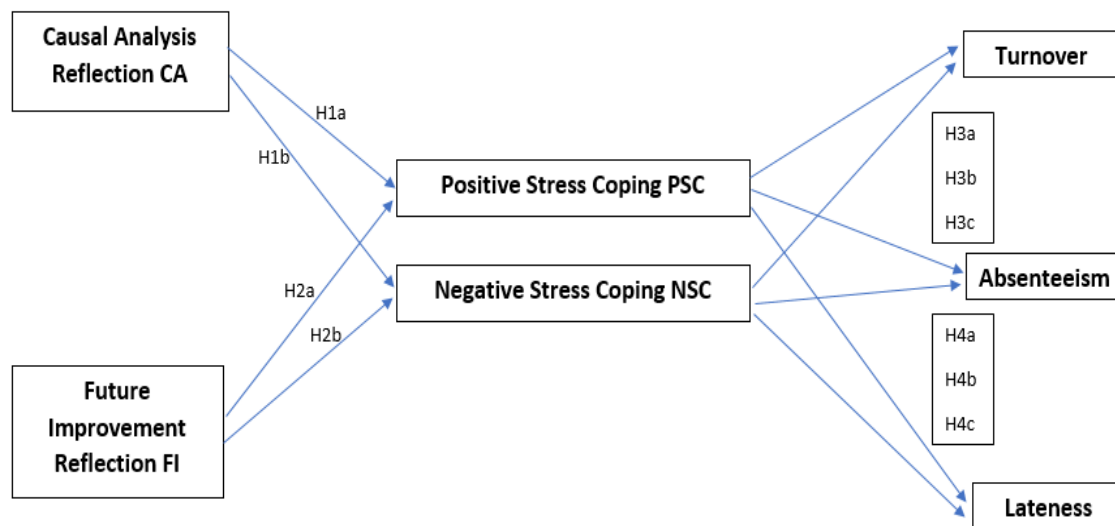
FI reflection describes the development of internal commitments to pursue future actions and improve behavioral responses over prior actions (Maurer et al. 2014). The purpose of FI reflection is self-improvement based on the causes identified in the CA. While CA may identify specific causes of challenges and stress, FI identifies paths toward improvement upon those specific causes. As such, FI focuses on bridging the gap between learning and

future actions and helping employees develop stress coping strategies. The following relationships, also stated in null form, are hypothesized:

H2a_{null}: Future Improvement Reflection is not correlated with Positive Stress Coping.

H2b_{null}: Future Improvement Reflection is not correlated with Negative Stress Coping.

Figure 1. Research Model and Hypotheses presents the full research model with the expected research findings



Learning how to cope with critical situations in the work environment and use the resources available has the potential to reduce withdrawal behaviors. The exercise of stress coping techniques enables employees to position themselves to effectively cope with stressful situations and to avoid withdrawal. Thus, the following set of null hypotheses are proposed:

H3a_{null}: Positive Stress Coping is not associated with Turnover.

H3b_{null}: Positive Stress Coping is not associated with Absenteeism.

H3c_{null}: Positive Stress Coping is not associated with Lateness.

When employees apply negative coping strategies, stress is not dealt with productively and the situation may wear individuals down and lead to withdrawal. The following null hypotheses are proposed regarding the association between NSC and withdrawal:

H4a_{null}: Negative Stress Coping is not associated with Turnover.

H4b_{null}: Negative Stress Coping is not associated with Absenteeism.

H4c_{null}: Negative Stress Coping is not associated with Lateness.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

An internet-based, self-administered survey questionnaire was used to collect data from active, U.S.-based hospitality workers via Qualtrics. A 39-question survey was made available to participants characterized as part of the online labor market. Most online markets provide a convenient way to access a reliable and diverse population (Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). Only individuals who reported being active, non-managerial, hourly front-line, full-time hospitality employees of U.S.-based hospitality organizations were selected. The rationale for focusing on hourly, front-line employees is their exposure to stressors that differ from managerial stressors. These include physical environment, work overload, relationship with other co-workers, and demanding and unpredictable guests. A final sample of 193 responses was used in the analysis.

The survey was divided into three sections: 1) demographic information about the respondents, including age, gender, race, employment status, marital status, and education level; 2) explanations of the reflection and coping concepts and requests for the respondents to describe their experience with challenging events; and 3) 5-point scale statements to measure withdrawal behaviors (turnover, absenteeism, and lateness). The second section of the survey is included in the Appendix. The full survey questionnaire is available from the author on request.

Sample respondents' jobs include entry-level employees and hourly supervisors, who are 18 years of age and older, from the following departments: front desk, concierge, guest service, valet/bell person, fitness/spa, and F&B outlets. Participants were employees from several hotel brands (Marriott, Sheraton, Hilton, IHG, Hyatt) and independent hotels; segments (full-service, limited-service, Economy, and B&B); and all quality ranking (luxury, 4-diamond, 3-diamond, etc.). Respondents were assured confidentiality and anonymity and were advised of the academic nature of the survey.

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Reflection. The present study adopted a measure of reflection developed by Maurer et al. (2018) designed to measure constructive developmental reflection. There are two main dimensions measured: 1) the extent to which the person tends to do a causal analysis of factors that are under his/her control, and which are changeable or improvable; and 2) developmental action implications that relate to the causal analysis. To the extent that one reflects on challenging experiences by focusing on those aspects that one has control over, he/she can position the challenge as actionable on his/her part. The tendency to act toward improvement of the factors identified in the causal reflection can result in productive outcomes for future development.

3.2.2 Coping Strategies. Welbourne et al. (2007) adopted the Brief COPE framework developed by Carver (1997) to measure coping styles. The Brief COPE assesses the differences in coping and the individual's ability to balance coping strategies (Maran et al., 2015). The Brief COPE is an abbreviated form of the COPE inventory (Carver, Weintraub & Scheier, 1989). The Brief COPE framework consists of 16 items (12 positive and 4 negative) that measure behaviors and cognitive activities one might engage in to cope with stress. This includes one's planning, acceptance, emotional support, behavioral disengagement, denial and so forth (Welbourne et al., 2007).

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they have been engaged in certain positive coping activities using statements such as "I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I am in" and "I try to see it in different light, to make it seem more positive," or negative coping activities such as "I give up trying to deal with it" and "I refuse to believe that it has happened."

3.2.3 Turnover. Turnover was measured using established scales by Saeed, Waseem, and Sikander (2014) and originally developed by Dress & Shaw (2001) and Jeffrey (2007). The responses to all questions were measured by a five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Participants were asked questions such as “I often think about quitting” and “It is likely that I will actively look for a new job next year.”

3.2.4 Absenteeism. The Mayfield Absenteeism Scale developed by Mayfield and Mayfield (2009) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike International License. Overall, this scale is interpreted as higher scores reflecting lower absenteeism. Participants were asked to respond using a five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” to statements such as “I never miss work.” Five questions were reverse scored (e.g., “I don’t care if I have to miss work”).

3.2.5 Lateness. The lateness measure was adopted from Blau (2004) as used by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). Employees were asked to give numerical values to two questions about how many times they were late for work over the last 12 months, the most common absence aggregation period used by organizational psychology studies (Johns & Darr, 2008).

4. Results

Prior to analysis, data were inspected for missing values, deviation from normality and outliers. Eight responses were dropped, rendering a final sample of 193 with characteristics of a normal multivariate distribution (Kline, 2005).

4.1 Demographics

The respondents were primarily females (80.8%) versus males (19.2%). This finding is consistent with trends showing women becoming more likely to pursue hospitality careers (Jacobsen, Khamis, & Yuksel, 2015; Fernandez, 2013). The age group for 47.2 percent of the respondents was 25-34 years, which suggests mid-career status. Only 8.9 percent were older than 55 years. In terms of respondents’ ethnicity, 72.5 percent of the participants were White while 11.4 percent were Black/African, and 7.8 percent Hispanic. The employers included full-service hotels employees (42.5%), luxury hotels (20.2%), limited service (19.7%), and budget/economy hotels (10.4%). Type of work location was classified into resort, hotel, motel, casino hotel, bed & breakfast, and others. The majority of the respondents work in front desk/accommodation (46.6%) or food & beverages (43%). A total of 49.7 percent of respondents identified themselves as hotel workers while 28 percent were “Others.” which included country clubs, theme parks, and timeshare properties.

4.2 Measurement Model

Structural equation modeling was chosen as the primary method of analysis due to its ability to combine measurement analysis and hypothesis testing into one process. PLS-SEM utilizes algorithmic programming that maximizes the statistical variance of latent variables using sequential least squares regressions (Hair et al., 2013). Table 1 shows the indicators and constructs analyzed.

Table 1. Indicators and Constructs Used in the Model

Indicator Label	Indicator Description	Indicator Grouping	Construct Label
CABeh1	My behavior	CABeh-Behavior	CA

CABeh2	My actions		
CABeh3	Behavior performed		
CAEff4	How hard I was trying		CABeh-Effort
CAEff5	The amount of effort I was giving		
CAEff6	Situational effort		
CAKno7	What I knew		CABeh-Knowledge
CAKno8	My knowledge		
CAKno9	What I had knowledge of		
CASki10	What I had the skill to do		CABeh-Skills
CASki11	My skills		
CASki12	The skills that I possessed at the time		
CAEmo13	Feelings I had		CABeh-Emotions
CAEmo14	Emotions I experienced		
CAEmo15	My emotions or feelings experienced		
FIBeh1	My behavior		FIBeh-Behavior
FIBeh2	My actions		
FIBeh3	Behavior performed		
FIEff4	How hard I was trying	FIBeff-Effort	
FIEff5	The amount of effort I was giving		
FIEff6	Situational effort		
FIKno7	What I knew	FIKno-Knowledge	
FIKno8	My knowledge		
FIKno9	What I had knowledge of		
FISki10	What I had the skill to do	FISki-Skills	
FISki11	My skills		
FISki12	The skills that I possessed at the time		
FIEmo13	Feelings I had	FIEmo-Emotions	

FIEmo14	Emotions I experienced		
FIEmo15	My emotions or feelings experienced		
SCAct1	I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I am in	SCAct-Active	PSC
SCAct2	I take action to try to make the situation better		
SCPla3	I try to come up with a strategy about what to do	SCPla-Planning	
SCPla4	I think hard about what steps to take		
SCAcc5	I accept the reality of the fact that it happened	SCAcc-Acceptance	
SCAcc6	I learn to live with it		
SCRef7	I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive	SCRef-Reframing	
SCRef8	I look for something good in what is happening		
SCEmo9	I get emotional support from others	SCEmo-Emotional Support	
SCEmo10	I get comfort and understanding from someone		
SCIns11	I get help and advice from other people	SCIns-Instrumental Support	
SCIns12	I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do		
SCBeh13	I give up trying to deal with it	SCBeh-Behavioral Disengagement	NSC
SCBeh14	I give up the attempt to cope		
SCDen15	I say to myself “this isn’t real”	SCDen-Denial	
SCDen16	I refuse to believe that it has happened		
TO1	I often think about quitting	TO-Turnover	TO
TO2	It is likely that I will actively look for a new job near year	TO-Turnover	
TO3	I will probably look for a new job in the next year	TO-Turnover	

TO4	I often think of changing my job	TO-Turnover	
ABS2	I never miss work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS3	I miss work far more often than my co-workers	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS4	I would only miss work under very exceptional circumstances	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS5	I have been reprimanded for the number of my absences	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS6	I take pride in not missing work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS7	I am often absent from work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS8	I feel bad if I have to miss work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS9	I don't care if I have to miss work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS10	I feel like I have let my company down if I miss work	ABS-Absenteeism	
ABS11	I enjoy days when I am absent from work	ABS-Absenteeism	
LAT1	How many times were you late for scheduled work for any reason for the last twelve (12) months?	LAT-Lateness	LAT
LAT2	How many times were you late for scheduled work this past year due to either bad weather, traffic, car problems/accident, unreliable public transportation, child, or dependent care issues, or feeling sick?	LAT-Lateness	

Cronbach's alpha was used to check reliability of the scales measuring the study variables. For research purposes values above 0.7 are suggested by Nunnally (1970) and above 0.6 by Moss et al. (1998). The data indicate that all measures were internally consistent, ranging from 0.840 to 0.950.

The measurement model showed that PSC indicators had loadings ranging from 0.196 to 0.787. The indicators with the lowest loadings are SCAcc6- "I learn to live with it" (0.196), SCAcc9- "I get emotional support from others" (0.394), and SCAcc8- "I look for something good in what is happening" (0.462). All these indicators belong to the PSC grouping. Item retention/elimination from a scale should be based on theory and content as well as empirical results in analysis of the scale and items. Based on content/theory relevance (i.e., the item reflects a legitimate part of stress coping) and the fact that the items were deemed relevant in prior stress coping research, those items were retained despite their low loadings. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient reported earlier was also acceptable for this scale.

Review of the measurement model showed that NSC indicators had loadings ranging from 0.813 to 0.865. The indicator with the lowest loading is SCBen13- “I give up trying to deal with it” (0.813), and the indicator with the highest loading is SCBeh14- “I give up the attempt to cope” (0.865). All these indicators were included in the NSC measure.

Turnover indicators had loadings ranging from 0.832 to 0.893. The indicator with the lowest loading is TO1- “I often think about quitting” (0.832), and the indicator with the highest loading is TO3- “I will probably look for a new job in the next year” (0.893). All these indicators belong to the Turnover group.

Absenteeism indicators had loadings ranging from 0.292 to 0.820. The indicator with the lowest loading is ABS10- “I feel like I have let my company down if I miss work” (0.292), and the indicator with the highest loading is ABS7- “I am often absent from work” (0.820). All these indicators belong to the Absenteeism group. Lateness indicators had two loadings. LAT1- Late incidents for last twelve months (0.945), and LAT2- Late incidents for last twelve months due bad weather, traffic, and child dependent issues (0.958).

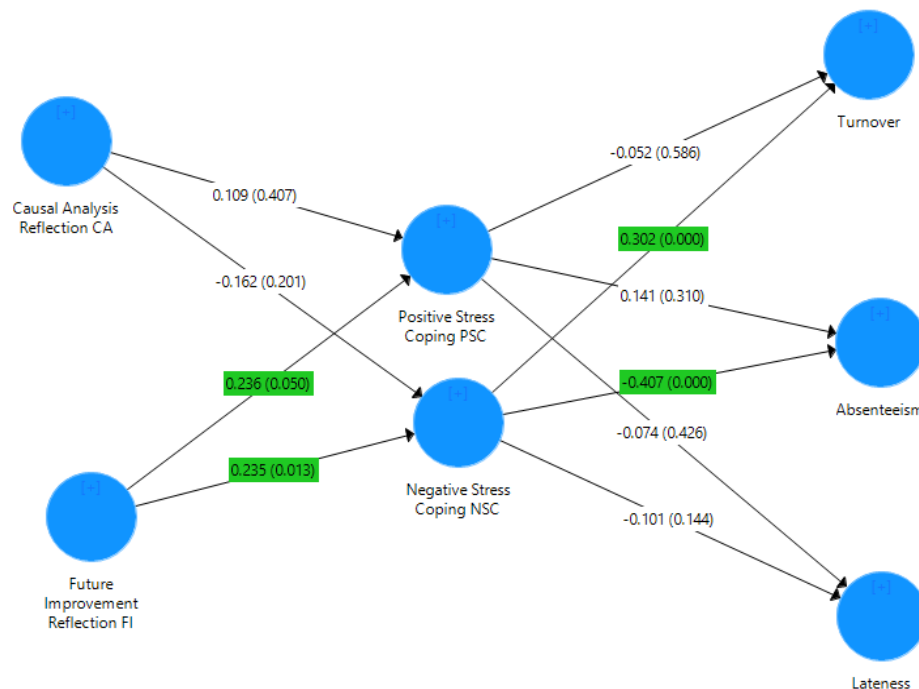
Discriminant validity tests whether concepts or measurements that are not supposed to be related are, in fact, unrelated. Recommended approach to test for discriminant validity on the construct level is Average Variance Extracted AVE-SE comparison (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These tests were conducted in SmartPLS, and results are reported below in Table 2.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Assessment

	Absenteeism	CA Reflection	FI Reflection	Lateness	NSC	PSC	Turnover
Absenteeism	0.603						
CA Reflection	0.083	0.733					
FI Reflection	-0.014	0.584	0.749				
Lateness	-0.089	0.145	0.009	0.951			
NSC	-0.408	-0.025	0.141	-0.100	0.837		
PSC	0.144	0.247	0.300	-0.074	-0.007	0.580	
Turnover	-0.287	0.016	0.102	0.113	0.303	-0.06	0.875

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Tests of hypotheses followed the classical tradition of positing hypotheses as null statements, which can either be rejected or fail to be rejected. Rejections of null hypotheses based on statistical estimates using observed measures suggests a non-zero relationship between the hypothesized variables, consistent with the alternative hypotheses comprising the research model (Figure 1). While a rejected null hypothesis does not prove the alternative hypothesis, it is evidence in support of the expected findings and the research model. The observed path model results are displayed in Figure 2. Causal Analysis (CA) had a non-significant positive influence (beta = 0.109, p-value = 0.407) on PSC and a non-significant negative influence on NSC (beta = -0.162, p-value = 0.201). Thus, for H1a and H1b, the null hypothesis of no relationship cannot be rejected.

Figure 2. Model with Path Coefficients

Future Improvement (FI) had a significant positive influence on PSC (beta = 0.236, p-value = 0.050) and a significant positive effect on NSC (beta = 0.236, p-value = 0.013). This means that as FI increases, both PSC and NSC increase. Thus, null hypotheses H2a and H2b are rejected. Although the positive effect for FI on PSC was predicted, the negative effect of FI on NSC is counter to the predicted negative relationship with NSC in H2b. The results of the model showed that more NSC relates to more turnover and absenteeism (although there is a negative coefficient, recall that higher scores on the absenteeism measure used here reflects less absenteeism).

PSC has a non-significant impact on turnover (beta = -0.052, p-value = 0.586), lateness (beta = -0.073, p-value = 0.409), and absenteeism (beta = 0.141, p-value = 0.318). Thus, H3a_{null}, H3b_{null}, and H3c_{null} failed to be rejected. NSC had a positive significant impact on turnover (beta = 0.302, p-value = 0.000), thus rejecting H4a_{null}. NSC had a significant negative impact on absenteeism (beta = -0.407, p-value = 0.000). It is important to again note that this absenteeism scale is interpreted as higher scores mean lower absenteeism. Therefore, rejecting H4c_{null} suggests that NSC is positively related to absenteeism. NSC had a nonsignificant relationship with lateness (beta = -0.102, p-value = 0.174), failing to reject H4c_{null}.

5. Discussions

5.1 Effect of Reflection Dimensions on Stress Coping

The results show that more FI reflection is likely to be related to more positive stress coping, given that the null hypothesis of no relationship was rejected. During the reflection process, as employees are focused on proactively improving the future, they are more likely to use PSC active strategies such as planning, reframing, and seeking support. This suggests that those who reflect in a way that focuses on causes that are under their control are likely

to pursue better stress coping mechanisms. This is the first study to specifically identify an underlying dimension of reflection that relates to positive approaches to stress coping within the hospitality industry. Therefore, these empirical linkages offer new insights into reflection, stress coping and hospitality employee behavior.

The results also show that more FI reflection is related to more negative stress coping, as the null hypothesis of no relationship was rejected. However, this relationship was expected to be positive, not negative. It is not clear why this result occurred, but perhaps as employees direct attention toward overall improvement, they are also more likely to deal with stressors by any means necessary, either positive or negative, which may explain why the FI variable is related to both types of stress coping. Another possibility for the effect is that, with higher FI reflections, employees are less focused on the stressors and more focused on either positive or negative coping strategies. Aligned with these speculations, Lo and Lamm (2005) found that the most common coping mechanisms in the hospitality work setting were those that centered on controlling one's emotions and thoughts and personal adaptation techniques. This new conception of FI reflection creates an opportunity for future research that focuses on learning and development and changing future behavioral patterns.

There was no statistically significant relationship between CA and either type of stress coping. One would expect that the more causal reflection an employee engages in, and thus the more actively a person is trying to understand and deal with challenges or stressors, the more PSC he/she would pursue. Failure to reject the null hypotheses does not imply that a causal reasoning approach is not a prominent part of stress coping for this population of workers. However, the action implications dimension of reflection or FI intentions may be more directly relevant to actual stress coping mechanisms. Future research could examine ways of strengthening reflection techniques to produce stronger positive stress coping.

5.2 Effects of Stress Coping on Withdrawal Behaviors

The results suggest that more NSC behavior is related to more absenteeism and turnover behaviors, given the rejection of the null hypotheses. Positive effects were predicted in the model. The model data indicate no statistically significant relationship between PSC and turnover, PSC and absenteeism, and PSC and lateness. It was unclear why positive coping did not have a negative effect on withdrawal behaviors, as we had hypothesized and had been found in previous studies (e.g., Wallace & Tighe, 1994).

It seems reasonable that NSC would lead to more withdrawal behavior. That is, as NSC increases so does the likelihood that individuals will leave, miss work, or be late to a scheduled shift. This relationship was supported in regard to NSC-Turnover, and NSC-Absenteeism. Borda and Norman (1997) proclaimed that both turnover and absence may be termed physical withdrawal behaviors and are also interrelated because they both stem from the same motivation to escape dissatisfying employment. It is therefore important to understand this form of coping behavior as something to manage and influence as it may help to reduce withdrawal by employees.

6. Conclusions

A goal of this study was to examine the role of reflection in helping employees develop coping strategies and the effectiveness of those coping strategies in reducing withdrawal behaviors. This study adds to the research literature by illustrating that future improvement reflection (FI) plays a role in helping employees develop NSC in the hospitality industry and that this form of coping leads to decreasing turnover and absenteeism, important forms of withdrawal in this industry. With respect to the non-significant effects of CA reflection on stress coping, there could still be other unstudied outcomes resulting from CA reflection in the hospitality and other industry

workplaces that could be examined. Future research could investigate the role of CA reflection on job performance, development, and work productivity, among other employment behaviors.

Like any other study, this one is not without limitations. First, sample size is limited to 193, so future research might pursue larger samples with greater statistical power to detect significance. Furthermore, the findings are limited to the U.S. hospitality market leaving open questions worthy of research in other countries. Societies characterized by power distance and male-dominated approaches could influence how employees cope with organizational stress. This study's sample consists of entry-level employees and hourly supervisors, and it included a large proportion of female respondents. It would also be interesting to see the outcome in managerial and executive positions.

The present study surveyed active U.S. hotel employees in every geographic region of the U.S. It included respondents from all demographics, professional backgrounds, and educational attainments. Therefore, the findings of this study can be generalized to a large population of hospitality workers and work settings within U.S. markets.

This study has practical implications and may contribute to the creation and implementation of stress coping training to assist employees with developing strategies to analyze and deal with challenging events. It may serve as a motivator for human resource or management practitioners to develop and implement interventions designed to teach hospitality professionals strategies to improve their reflection as a means to cope with stress. Specific recommendations for future research include:

- 1- Hospitality educators could collaborate with industry leaders to clearly define the specific skills and behaviors that would help hospitality students, who are entering the workforce, learn to apply reflection practices in the workplace.
- 2- The hospitality industry could be more involved, supportive and participate in research addressing the psychologically challenging nature of hospitality work. This involvement could include financial contributions that support research efforts, curriculum development and the provision of experiential learning opportunities.
- 3- Although employee withdrawal behaviors are considered a characteristic of the hotel industry, Lo and Lamm (2005) found that employee turnover may not be related to stress or work conditions, but rather to new employment opportunities and relocation. Therefore, hospitality professionals and researchers could identify other reasons for withdrawal behaviors for entry-level and hourly supervisors in the hospitality industry.

In conclusion, any efforts toward cost-effective reduction in employee withdrawal behavior could be beneficial. Research and practice that addresses the strategies of employees in this domain are critically important for the hospitality industry, and the present study is intended to help advance that effort.

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APPENDIX: Assessment of Reflection and Stress Coping

Learning and improvement can come from the challenging experiences people have at work. Challenging experiences at work are those that are unusual or difficult. After a person has a challenging experience, he or she may (or may not) reflect upon or think about how he/she handled that experience. He/she may think about what he or she can learn from the way he/she behaved in the experience.

We want to survey you and ask questions about the way you usually or typically "think about" or "reflect upon" challenging experiences that you might have at work. We are focusing here on normal work-related challenges—not those that are traumatic, and which could cause personal, psychological, or physical harm (e.g., an act of violence, illness, crime, disaster, etc.). We are only interested in normal work-related challenging experiences. These experiences can come from all kinds of tasks or events and occur frequently in the workplace (unfamiliar, difficult assignments, difficult people, high stakes or pressure, a lack of understanding or preparedness, surprises, or any other work-related experiences that are challenging). We want to find out how you usually or typically learn from the challenging experiences that you had—your thought processes and the content of your thoughts following such experiences.

Instructions: Some people may think about challenging experiences in different ways and amounts, some think a lot and some a little. In any experience, different factors might be a cause of how the experience goes for a person. Perhaps you have thought about how various things caused how experiences went for you in the past. Please describe how much you have usually thought about each of the following as being a cause of how challenging experiences went for you in the past. Consider both your strengths and weaknesses and how they may have combined to be a cause of how challenging experiences went for you in the past. Some of the items below are similar, but each differs in some way, and it is important to answer every item.

How much I have usually thought about the item being a cause of how experiences went for me:

	Little or no thinking about it being a cause	2	Some thinking about it being a cause	4	Extensive thinking about it being a cause
My behavior					
My actions					
Behaviors I performed or displayed					
How hard I was trying					
The amount of effort I was giving					
Situational effort					
What I knew					

My knowledge					
What I had knowledge of					
What I had the skill to do					
My skills					
The skills that I possessed at the time					
Feelings I had					
Emotions I experienced					
My emotions or feelings experienced					

	Little or no thinking about it being a cause	2	Some thinking about it being a cause	4	Extensive thinking about it being a cause
My behavior					
My actions					
Behaviors I performed or displayed					
How hard I was trying					
The amount of effort I was giving					
Situational effort					
What I knew					
My knowledge					
What I had knowledge of					
What I had the skill to do					
My skills					
The skills that I possessed at the time					
Feelings I had					

Emotions I experienced					
My emotions or feelings experienced					

Earlier you described possible causes of challenging experiences. Next, you should rate the extent to which you have usually thought about improving upon or enhancing of the following after thinking about the causes of experiences.

Based upon my thinking about causes of experiences, the extent to which I then usually plan to change, improve, or enhance:

	Little or None	2	Some	4	Extensive
My behavior					
My actions					
Behaviors I performed or displayed					
How hard I was trying					
The amount of effort I was giving					
Situational effort					
What I knew					
My knowledge					
What I had knowledge of					
What I had the skill to do					
My skills					
The skills that I possessed at the time					
Feelings I had					
Emotions I experienced					
My emotions or feelings experienced					

There are many ways to try to deal with challenging experiences. I am interested in knowing how you have tried to deal with challenging experiences. I want to know to what extent you have been doing what the item says: how much or how frequently. Don't answer on the basis of whether it seems to be working or not – just whether or not you are doing it. Use the response choices below. Try to rate each item separately in your mind from the others. Make your answers as true FOR YOU as you can.

	I have not been doing this at all	2	3	I have been doing this a lot
I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I am in				
I take action to try to make the situation better				
I try to come up with a strategy about what to do				
I think hard about what steps to take				
I accept the reality of the fact that it happened				
I learn to live with it				
I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive				
I look for something good in what is happening				
I get emotional support from others				
I get comfort and understanding from someone				
I get help and advice from other people				
I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do				
I give up trying to deal with it				
I give up the attempt to cope				
I say to myself “this isn’t real”				
I refuse to believe that it has happened				