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경영학석사학위논문

## **Shameful? Grateful?**

**: Emotional Response to Customer Helping and Its  
Impact on Job Stress and Job Performance**

고객참여행동에 대한 직원의 감정적 반응이  
직무스트레스와 직무성과에 미치는 영향

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홍 수 지

Abstract

## **Shameful? Grateful?**

### **: Emotional Response to Customer Helping and Its Impact on Job Stress and Job Performance**

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The impact of customer helping on service providers is a controversial issue. Experimental evidence examines that customer helping enhances employees' job performance; however, there is also empirical evidence that customer helping increases job stress. The purpose of this paper is to bridge the gap between the conflicting consequences of customer helping. Through the qualitative and quantitative research, this paper delineates how (1) employees' feeling shame and gratitude toward the customer helping relate to job stress and job performance and (2) the effects of customer helping on emotional responses depend on employees' mental simulation (outcome vs. process). The results show that feeling shame toward the customer helping leads to job stress and job performance, whereas feeling gratitude increases job performance.

Moreover, the employees' mental simulation had significant moderating effect, but only when the level of customer helping is high.

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**Keywords:** Customer Helping, Customer Participation, Shame, Gratitude, Job Stress, Job Performance, Outcome/Process Orientation

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Research Background and Purpose**

With a major shift from good dominant to service dominant logic for marketing (Vargo and Lusch 2004), the role of customer is getting important in these days. Now, customers are not just passive receivers, but rather proactive co-creators. The issue pertaining customer participation and customer's value co-creation has gradually gained considerable attention in both academic and managerial circles. Especially, researchers have elucidated the impact of customer participation on employees, companies, and customers as well.

Most of the research focused on the positive side of customer participation. They asserted that the more customers participate in the value-cocreation process in proactive way, the more they are likely to satisfy with the service (Chan, Yim and Lam 2010). Moreover, customer participation positively affects to employee's job performance. Prior research (Yi, Natarajan and Gong 2011) suggests that customer participation gives employees an opportunity to learn effective tactics with respect to how customers contribute effort, time and other resources to the service creation process. In other word, customer participation may influence employees indirectly by enhancing role clarity and fostering a sense of stability. Another aspect of research noted that customer participation can effectively remove or substitute for some of the labor tasks performed by

service providers (Bendapudi and Leone 2003, Rodie and Kleine 2000). In turn, observing customer's citizenship behavior is helpful to increase employee's actual performance.

However, customer participation is not always a good thing for service providers. Recently, Yim and Lam (2012) posit that customer participation is highly related to employees' perceived job stress. Based on their observation, this is because higher level of customer participation leads to more role conflict. Hsieh and Yen (2005) also asserted that the while observing customers who actively participate in the service creation process, employees might perceive more workload.

As described above, there are conflicting explanations with regards to how customer participation affects to service providers' performance and job stress. At the best of my knowledge, little research was done for bridging the gap between these two conflicting consequences of customer participation.

Therefore, here are my research questions. (1) How can both positive and negative side of customer participation be explained in one mechanism? (2) How about exploring the emotional responses toward the customer participation? (3) Under what condition, does customer participation affect to

employee positively (e.g., improve their job performance) or does it affect to employee negatively (e.g., increase their job stress)?

In the next section, I put forth a series of hypotheses by conducting qualitative research to explore the emotions that can explain both positive and negative side of customer participation. I then outline my experimental design and explain the results, and explore the moderating role of employee's elaboration types in the proposed research model. Finally, at the end of the paper I will discuss theoretical and practical implication of this article.

## **2. Main Concepts and Hypotheses Development**

### **2.1 Customer Helping: Customer as “Partial Employee”**

The definitions of customer participation vary with many forms and degrees (Meuter and Bitner 1998). As the purpose of the paper is to capture employees' responses to proactive behavior of customers (rather than passive behavior), I only consider customer helping behavior.

Compared to the other customers' prosocial behavior, in other word, customer citizenship behavior (e.g., feedback, advocacy, recommendation, Word of mouth), customer helping may refer to the most prosocial action, which aimed

at voluntarily assisting other customers (Yi and Gong 2013). In a service co-creation process, customers usually direct helping behavior at other customers just like an employee. Therefore, in the helping situation, customers can be viewed as “partial employee”.

## **2.2 Qualitative Research: In-depth interview**

The in-depth interview was conducted to explore the underlying mechanism which can explain conflicting results of customer helping. The interviewees were required to answer following questions: Have you ever observed customer helping behavior? How did you feel or think? Good or bad? Customer helping behavior gives you any changes?

Here, two cases are introduced as good illustrations of major findings.

*1) Kang is 31 years old, Female, an employee working at H department store information desk.*

“I saw a customer wondering around the same place 2-3 times. I don’t know what he is looking for, so I was up to approach him and ask him how I can help him with. At that time, a woman (other customer) nearby him asked him if he need any favor. He seems a bit embarrassed at the first glance, but soon felt gratitude toward the customer who

gave him a helping hand. What he was looking for is the route connected to subway station. She kindly explained how to get there. When I observed the behavior, I felt warmth and gratitude toward the customer who helped the other customer in trouble. After that, I decided to focus more on customers who need help or who are in trouble.”

Kang discusses her experiences and feelings on customer helping behavior. As prior research asserted, customer helping motivates her to improve job performance. Based on the Kang’s interview, I could find that “gratitude” is the underlying emotion which stimulates her to improve future performance after observing helping behavior. However, I cannot find any predictor of job stress from this conversation. This is because the level of customer helping isn’t high enough to provoke job stress or role-conflict.

*2) Lee is 28 years old, Male, a salesperson working at S electronics store.*

“A customer asked me to recommend a suitable laptop for her. I showed her several models and explained the specification of those models. Unfortunately, she seemed hard to get my explanations. I have no idea how to explain easier than this. At that moment, another customer who was shopping around the store came to us and started explaining

lucidly. The explanation was so clear that I was also amazed. At last, she decided to purchase the suitable laptop for her on behalf of his help. She expressed her gratitude toward me and the customer who helped her. I felt gratitude to him as well, because I learned a lot from his way of explanation. But on the other side, I was ashamed that I couldn't give a help to the customer in need. More importantly, what I concerned the most is that how he (customer who explained better than me) saw me. He might see me as inadequate and unqualified salesperson. I perceived a sudden stress at that moment. Even now, it's quite shameful and stressful for me to recall this memory. After that day, I took a lot of effort not to make the same mistake, I mean, that kind of shameful memory."

What Lee experienced is the high level of customer helping. The customer directly and spontaneously participated in the service creation process, and helped both Lee and the customer in trouble. Just like Kang did, Lee also felt gratitude toward the customers. But in this time, gratitude is not the focal emotion. Rather, shame is the intense emotion. While standing by two customers, Lee felt ashamed and perceived stress instantly. However, as noted above, the painful feeling induces not that bad result. To avoid making painful memory, he decided to train harder than before. In sum, shame is the emotional

responses of employee that can explain both negative and positive result of customer helping behavior.

The qualitative research explored that shame and gratitude are the main emotions which links the customer helping to job performance and job stress. Based on the findings, I added up the theoretical background of these two emotions.

## **2.3 Shame**

Shame is a painful, social emotion which resulting from comparison of self's action with the self's standards. However, it may equally stem from comparison of the self's state of being with the ideal social context's standard (Lewis et al. 1992). Thus, it refers to one of the most negatively intense self-conscious emotions (Lindsay-Hartz 1984, Tangney 1996).

As the definition of the shame tells us, vast amount of research has focused on the negative side of shame. They have seen shame as an ugly feeling. Because experiences of shame are characterized by confusion in thought, inability to speak, and rumination (Miller 1995, Orth, Berking, & Burkhardt 2006). Moreover, previous research has examined the negative consequences of shame in both psychological and behavioral side: having a lower self-esteem, less

empathy, more stress, more social anxiety, and a higher likelihood of depression (Gilbert, Pehl, & Allan 1994, Harder, Cutler, & Rockart 1992). Not only in our daily lives, shame is an intensely felt and frequently experienced emotions by service providers in reaction to customer behavior (Bagozzi and Verbeke 2003). In addition to prior research, present qualitative research provides an evidence that higher customer helping behavior elicits shameful feeling, which results in higher perceived job stress. Thus,

**H1:** Customer helping leads to employee's feeling shame.

**H2:** Feeling shame relates positively to employee's job stress.

However, shame is not always an ugly feeling. Recent research clarified the positive aspect of shame, which means, shame may motivate goal-directed behavior. Panagopoulos (2010) asserted that manipulations that activate shameful feelings appear to stimulate responsible behavior considerably. Just like Lee mentioned in the in-depth interview, people incline to enhance themselves not to make the same shameful result, and to attenuate the painful feeling.

Especially, when the influence of shame is endogenous, that is, relevant to the current decision situation, stronger behavioral effects can be expected (De

Hooge, Zeelenberg, & Breugelmans 2008). Likewise, shame is somewhat stressful and painful, though, it also makes employees to move forward in a good way. In turns, shameful feeling resulting from customer helping behavior may improve employee's job performance. Based on the reasoning, hypothesis 3 is proposed as follows,

**H3:** Feeling shame relates positively to employee performance.

## **2.4 Gratitude**

Gratitude, by definition, is a positive emotion expressing appreciation toward others. It is experienced when observing the admirable deeds of others, and that then motivate observers to engage in admirable deeds themselves (Haidt 2000, 2003). Gratitude has its similarity with shame within the context of other-oriented emotion. Unlike shame, however, it is positively valanced affect.

Gratitude may also serve to reinforce prosocial behavior in benefactors. McCullough et al. (2001) asserted that grateful people often motivated to respond pro-socially both to their benefactor and toward others. Based on these research and findings from the in-depth interview, customer helping behavior can be considered as admirable deeds to employees so that it's natural for employees to feel grateful toward the customers who helped others. Moreover,

this will provoke employees to spontaneously engage in their performance and do more care about the customers. Thus,

**H4:** Customer helping leads employee's feeling gratitude.

**H5:** Feeling gratitude relates positively to employee performance.

## **2.5 Employees' Process- Oriented and Outcome-Oriented Thinking**

Not all employees may feel the same extent of shame and gratitude toward customer helping. Then, to what extent employee react to customer helping? Based on the past literatures, process-oriented and outcome-oriented thinking could be the answer to moderate the relationship between customer helping and employees' reaction.

Previous research on mental simulation introduces two types of elaboration: process-oriented and outcome-oriented thinking (Pham and Taylor 1999, Liberman and Trope 1998, Zhao et al. 2007). Individuals with Outcome-oriented thinking focuses on the end state they want to achieve (e.g., a student imagining getting a high grade; Taylor et al. 1998). In contrast, process-oriented thinking encourages individuals to envision the step-by-step process that leads to accomplishing a desire (e.g., a student imagining the activities she/he would

do to achieve a high grade).

Although these These two types of elaboration can be applied to employees as well. Outcome oriented employees may focus on the outcome, not on the process. From their perspective, the most important thing is to obtain a better outcome. If the outcome brings to good results (e.g., get promoted or more incentives), the process doesn't matter. It can be applied to the customer behavior situation. On behalf of the customer helping, they raise their sales, which means they obtain good outcome. As outcome-oriented employees only care about the result, they feel gratitude toward the customers very much, whereas they feel less shame. This is because what they concerned about is not how customers think of themselves, but the sale increase.

On the other hand, process-oriented employees may react differently from outcome-oriented ones. They do focus on service creation process, and concern about the relationship between customer. In addition, they consider overall service process is important, because they think good process will lead to good outcome after all. From their perspective, the desired status of themselves as employees is the professional who provide service to the customers in need. In the customer helping situation, however, there comes the discrepancy between their status and desired status. Because of their lack of effort or ability, they

need a customers' help to obtain good outcome. Moreover, they also concern how customers rate the service provided by them, and how customers see them as improper person. Thus,

**H6:** Employees' process- or outcome-oriented thinking may moderate the relationship between customer helping and emotional responses.

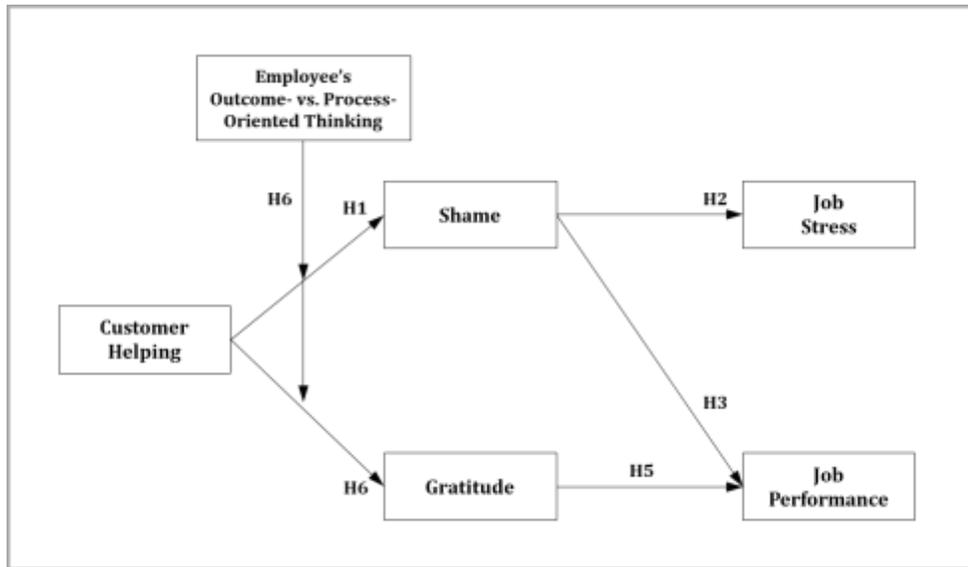
**a)** Outcome-oriented employees feel more gratitude than shame.

**b)** Process-oriented employees feel more shame than gratitude.

**c)** Process-oriented employees feel more shame than outcome-oriented employees do.

## 3. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

### 3.1 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses



< Figure 1. Conceptual Framework >

**H1:** Customer helping leads to employee's feeling shame.

**H2:** Feeling shame relates positively to employee's job stress.

**H3:** Feeling shame relates positively to employee performance.

**H4:** Customer helping leads employee's feeling gratitude.

**H5:** Feeling gratitude relates positively to employee performance.

**H6:** Employees' process- or outcome-oriented thinking may moderate the relationship between customer helping and emotional responses.

a) Outcome-oriented employees feel more gratitude than shame.

- b)** Process-oriented employees feel more shame than gratitude.
- c)** Process-oriented employees feel more shame than outcome-oriented employees do.

## **4. Methods and Results**

### **4.1 Participants and Research Design**

The goal of the study to test the six hypotheses proposed in this research. The study is designed as a 2 (customer helping: high vs. low) x 2 (employee's mental simulation: outcome vs. process) between-subjects experiment. Subjects were randomly assigned across four conditions. Initially, 244 subjects attended the main experiment. However, 9 participants were eliminated from the result analysis, since the subject answered the item halfheartedly or did not fully answer the survey questionnaires. In conclusion, the data of 235 (Male = 130, Female =105) were used for testing the six hypotheses in this research.

### **4.2 Procedures**

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions. In the first part, participants were asked to imagine that they needed to finish a difficult assignment that required a great deal of effort (Liberman and Trope 1998). This is the procedure which encourages participants to involve in outcome- or process- oriented thinking. As previous research has suggested, these two types of elaboration can be changed and manipulated through mental simulation. Individuals who were mentally simulated by step-by-step procedures are likely to more engaged in process-oriented thinking. Conversely,

those who were simulated by the end states are likely to engaged in outcome-oriented thinking.

Consistent with prior research (Escalas and Luce 2003, 2004), process-oriented instructions focused on the activities associated with completing the assignment, whereas outcome-oriented instruction focused on the benefits associated with completing the assignment. To ensure that participants performed the process- or outcome- oriented thinking, they were asked to write down a detailed list of their thoughts following the mental simulation exercise. They were also asked to answer the items whether they have outcome- or process- oriented thoughts.

In the second part, participants were asked to read the scenario regarding customer helping. Before reading the scenario, all participants in all conditions were informed to imagine themselves as an employee in the scenario. Then, participants in each condition read the scenario regarding customer helping (see Appendix).

### **4.3 Measures**

After reading the scenario, respondents are asked to answer the following questions regarding shame, gratitude, job stress, and job performance. The

scale across the questions consists of 7-point Likert scale points varying from “*strongly disagree (=1)*” to “*strongly agree (=7)*”.

**Mediating variables: Shame & Gratitude** Shame is measured within the context of the customer helping behavior. The shame questions used in this study were developed by Leary (1991). Those questions are related to (a) action tendencies (e.g., *I think the blushing coming on*), (b) belief that the core self is threatened or the self is diminished (e.g., *I think that the customers sees me as an incomplete and inadequate person*), (c) self-focused attention that others are looking at every detail (e.g., *I think the customer knows what I am thinking and feeling*), and psychological description (e.g., *I feel embarrassed, I feel ashamed*).

Gratitude questions (Grant and Wrzesniewski, 2010) consists of two parts: (1) the value of the grateful action itself (e.g., *Customer’s help is valuable to me.*) and (2) grateful feeling itself (e.g., *I admired the customer who gives help to other, I feel gratitude toward the person who helped a customer*).

**Dependent variables: Job Stress & Job Performance** After the emotion part, job stress and job performance will be rated. I employ job stress questionnaires developed by Van Yperen and Hagedoorn (2003). Adjusted with the customer helping context, the questionnaire will be changed into following way. (e.g.,

*Customer helping makes me nervous, increase my job stress, makes me work under conflicting directives, makes me under more time pressure.)*

Job performance in the present study is operationalized in terms of the quality of predicted performance, and anticipated effort exerted at the job right after observing customer's helping behavior. This operationalization is quite similar with empirical studies in the areas of job performance (Lawler & Porter 1968). However, compared to the prior research, information on job performance was obtained from employees themselves, not from respondents' immediate supervisors. In other word, in the present study, employees will rate their future job performance by themselves. They were provided with following questions. (e.g., *customer helping motivates me to work harder, customer helping makes me pay more attention to the customers' need, customer helping encourage me to take more effort on my job.*)

**Other Measurements** Participants also answered some additional items. First, questionnaires regarding customer helping were asked for manipulation check. Second, socio-demographic information such as age and sex was collected. With all things above completed, the main experiment was finished.

## **4.4 Results**

### **4.4.1 Manipulation Check**

The level of customer helping was assessed using the following items (Yi and Gong 2013): “The female customer helped David to solve his problem”, “The customer gave him an advice, which is helpful for him to choose the product.”, with seven-point scales ranging from “strongly disagree (=1)” to “strongly agree (=7)” ( $\alpha = .88$ ). An independent-samples t-test was conducted for the manipulation check. The result showed that the level of customer helping was successfully manipulated ( $M_{\text{high}} = 5.54, M_{\text{low}} = 3.93; t(209.72) = 25.459, p = .000$ ).

Likewise, employee’s mental simulation manipulation was tested using following items: “Focusing on outcome (process: reverse coding) helps to achieve my goal” with seven-point scales, and “Which one do you think is more important to achieve your goal?” with simple choice of “outcome-oriented (=1)” or “process-oriented (=2)”. As expected, the result indicate that participants had more outcome-related thoughts in the outcome simulation conditions than in the process simulation conditions ( $M_{\text{outcome}} = 4.08, M_{\text{process}} = 1.91; t(232.74) = 23.748, p = .000$ ).

### **4.4.2 Structural Equation Modeling Approach**

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to investigate the proposed

research model. This is because SEM is one of the most appropriate for testing theoretical structures and causal relationship between several variables (Hair et al. 2010). Further, it effectively corrects for measurement error in the measures and therefore reduce the possibility of Type II error (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). SEM follows a two steps approach: assessing the measurement model and testing the structural model proposed in this paper (Anderson & Gerbing 1988).

**Measurement Model – Validity and Reliability** In this paper, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine the number of constructs and the loadings of items on the corresponding construct. The result of confirmatory factor analysis was shown in Table 1.

Constructs	Correlations				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Customer Helping	1.00				
2. Shame	.44	1.00			
3. Gratitude	.56	.23	1.00		
4. Job Stress	.31	.73	.18	1.00	
5. Job	.69	.46	.56	.38	1.00
Composite Reliability	.70	.91	.79	.92	.87
Average Variance Extracted	.54	.71	.57	.80	.69
Cronbach's alpha	.70	.91	.76	.92	.87

< Table 1. Correlations and Reliability >

The standardized loadings facilitate computation of average variance extracted and composite reliability estimates. The average variance extracted for each measure ranges from 0.54 to 0.80, indicating convergent validity (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The composite reliability estimates range from 0.70 to 0.92, suggesting acceptable properties in terms of internal consistency (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). In addition, the loading of each indicator is higher than all of its correlation estimates. Considered in total, the results suggest sufficient convergent and discriminant validity (Hair et al. 2010).

	Criteria	Indicators
<b><math>\chi^2</math> Test</b>		
$\chi^2$	$p > .05$	8.674 ( $p = 0.193$ )
$\chi^2/df$	$\leq 2.00$	.803 (df=6)
<b>Fit Indices</b>		
GFI	$> .90$	.986
AGFI	$> .90$	.928
NFI	$> .90$	.985
<b>Alternative Indices</b>		
RMSEA	$< .06$	.044
CFI	$> .95$	.995

< Table 2. Summary of Model Fit Indices >

**Testing of Structural Model** The proposed structural equation model is estimated with a maximum likelihood estimation method and a correlation matrix as an input data. The fit indices of the structural model are shown in

Table 2. The results of chi-square test and the fit indices are within the suggested criteria, which indicates that the proposed model is a good fit.

**Mediation Analysis** Figure 2 and Table 3 describes the path results and standardized coefficient estimates for mediation analysis. The results H1 proposes the positive relationship between customer helping behavior and shame. Consistent with H1, shame is positively related with customer helping. The structural coefficient of 0.43 suggests that a higher customer helping put more shame to employees. H2 examines the relationship between shame and job stress. As proposed in H2, the coefficient is significant. Interestingly, the path from customer helping to job stress is insignificant, which indicates shame fully mediates the relationship between customer helping and job stress.



< Figure 2. Structural Model >

Paths	Estimate (standardized)	SE	CR	p-value
Help → Shame	.425	.065	7.189	***
Help → Gratitude	.562	.047	10.403	***
Shame → Stress	.726	.056	14.684	***
Shame → Performance	.203	.042	4.185	***
Gratitude → Performance	.253	.059	4.754	***
Help → Stress	.005	.062	.109	.913
Help → Performance	.458	.055	8.036	***

< Table 3. The results of Path analysis >

Moreover, shame also influences on job performance in a positive way. Therefore, H3 is supported. However, unlike the relationship between customer helping and job stress, shame is a partial mediator of the link between customer helping and job performance. Considered in total, shame is proved as a powerful explanatory variable to understand the positive and negative consequences of customer helping. In addition, H4 and H5 proposes a positive link between customer helping and gratitude, and job performance. As expected, two hypotheses are all supported. gratitude positively related to customer helping and job performance, as I proposed in the H4 and H5.

**Moderated Mediation Analysis** The sixth hypothesis in the present paper is related to the moderating role of employee's outcome vs. process focused thinking. At first, a multigroup analysis was employed to verify this hypothesis. Table 4 displays the path analysis of outcome and process. The results of

multigroup analysis revealed that the emotional responses toward the customer helping is different from outcome- vs. process- oriented thinking. In the outcome-oriented condition, customer helping is significantly related to gratitude, while there's no significant link between customer helping and shame. Moreover, as for participants in outcome-oriented condition, observing customer helping increases the job performance, but does not increase the job stress.

Paths	Estimate (standardized)	SE	CR	p-value
<b>Outcome Oriented</b>				
Help → Shame	.039	.090	.419	.675
Help → Gratitude	.577	.069	7.632	***
Shame → Stress	.527	.083	6.784	***
Shame → Performance	.054	.071	.841	.400
Gratitude → Performance	.252	.093	3.198	.001
Help → Stress	-.148	.081	-1.899	.058
Help → Performance	.539	.085	6.849	***
<b>Process Oriented</b>				
Help → Shame	.808	.052	14.778	***
Help → Gratitude	.550	.062	7.100	***
Shame → Stress	.477	.119	4.570	***
Shame → Performance	.288	.071	3.079	.002
Gratitude → Performance	.119	.059	1.805	.071
Help → Stress	.309	.113	2.960	.003
Help → Performance	.482	.072	4.806	***

< Table 4. The results of Multi-Group analysis >

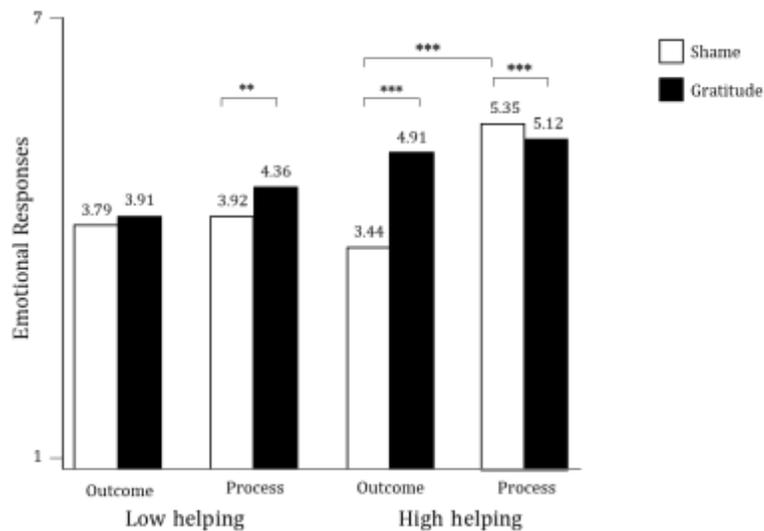
However, participants in process-oriented conditions perceived gratitude and shame toward the customer helping. Their feeling shame is positively linked to job stress and job performance. More specifically, shame is partially mediated

the relationship between customer helping and job stress, and customer helping and job performance. In other words, when observing shame people feel shame, which leads the increase of job stress and job performance. The impact of gratitude in this condition is marginal to job performance ( $p = .071$ ). Thus, the different paths resulted from the employee's thinking types partially support for hypothesis 6.

To further examine hypothesis 6, I also ran a 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA. The MANOVA examined the two different emotional responses to customer helping as dependent variables, and the level of customer helping and employee's outcome versus process oriented thinking as independent variables with emotional responses as the dependent variables. It showed a significant multivariate effect for the two dependent variables as a group in relation customer helping (low versus high:  $p = .000$ ) and the employee's mental simulation (outcome versus process:  $p = .000$ ). In addition, the interaction between customer helping and mental simulation was significant ( $p = .000$ ), which indicates that there is a significant moderating effect of outcome versus process oriented thinking, as proposed in hypothesis 6.

As can be seen in Figure 3, outcome oriented participants felt more gratitude than shame. However, the difference between two emotional responses is

significant only in case of observing high level of customer helping (4.91 vs. 3.44,  $t(113) = 10.42, p = .000$ ). Although gratitude is evaluated higher than shame as in the low helping condition, there's no significant difference between two (3.90 vs. 3.79,  $t(98) = .86, p > .01$ ). Accordingly, hypothesis 6a is supported only in the high level of customer helping.



**< Figure 3. Effect of Customer Helping and Mental Simulation on Shame/Gratitude >**

Process oriented participants, on the other hand, responded differently to the level of customer helping. When the helping level is high, they perceived more shame than gratitude (5.12 vs. 5.35,  $t(86) = -2.30, p < .05$ ). Whereas process-oriented participants perceived more gratitude than shame toward the low

level of customer helping (4.36 vs. 3.92,  $t(113) = 3.09, p < .01$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6b is supported only in case of high level of customer helping.

Lastly, hypothesis 6c is also supported in case of high helping. The mean in process oriented group is always higher than the one in outcome oriented group, however, the difference between two is not significant in the low level of helping. Considered in total, employee's thinking types is a significant moderator between customer helping and its emotional responses, and its conflicting results. However, the moderating role has its effect only in the high level of customer helping. Therefore, H6 a, b and c is partially supported.

## **4.5 Discussion**

This study examines the premise that employees' feeling shame and gratitude relate to job stress and job performance. In addition, this study also demonstrates the role of employees' outcome versus process orientation in moderating this moderating relationship. As explored by the in-depth interview in this paper, observing customer helping drives employees to feel shame and gratitude. As the level of customer helping is higher, employees experience more shame and gratitude. In turn, hypothesis 1 and 4 were verified.

Moreover, the results of the study show that perceiving shame toward customer helping had a significant, positive effect on job stress and job performance at the same time. In more detail, feeling shame is completely mediates the effect of customer helping on job stress. These findings successfully supported hypothesis 2 and 3. Regarding mediating role of the gratitude, it also has significant impact on job performance, therefore hypothesis 5 was also supported.

In addition, the moderating role of employees' mental simulation was tested. The result of multigroup analysis proved a significant moderating effect, however the result of 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA showed that the moderating effect is partially significant only in case of observing high level of customer helping. As expected, the results of this study supported most of the proposed hypotheses, and all these findings have theoretical and managerial implications, which are discussed next.

## **5. Conclusion: Contribution and Limitation**

The objective of the present paper was (1) to explore the underlying mechanism of the relationship between customer helping and employees' job stress, customer helping and job performance, (2) to examine how employees' feeling

shame and gratitude toward the customer helping relate to job stress and job performance and (3) to demonstrate the moderating effect of the employees' outcome versus process focused thinking on this mechanism. The qualitative and quantitative research indicated that employees observing customer helping perceive both shame and gratitude, which leads to increase job stress and job performance, and employees' mental simulation had significant moderating effect, yet only when they observed high level of customer helping. All these findings provide scholars and practitioners with various theoretical and managerial implications.

**Theoretical Implications** Firstly, the research reported here provides evidence for the underlying mechanism which can bridge the gap between the conflicting results of customer's helping behavior. Through the qualitative and empirical research, this thesis paper demonstrates that customer helping drives people to perceive shame and gratitude at the same time, and the emotional responses toward the customer helping not only increases the job stress, but also promote job performance. Especially, the significant impacts of shame on job stress and job performance are noteworthy. Because most of the psychological theories and research on shame have focused the negative aspects of consequences of this emotion. However, recently few researchers start to demonstrate the positive aspect of shame on prosocial behavior or

commitment behavior (De Hooge, Zeelenberg, & Breugelmans 2008). The findings from this paper (e.g., employees' feeling shame on customer helping motivates them to work harder) will strengthen the positive aspect of shame.

Second, this paper has shed light on the impact of employees' emotional reaction in the workplace. Recently, there has been researched regarding customers' emotional reaction to customer participation or organizational citizenship behavior. Yet, to date, little attention has been paid to the employees' emotion in service encounter, especially in customer participation situation. This paper will enlighten the importance of examining employees' emotion in the service situation.

Third, another objective of the present study was to investigate the moderating role of employees' process vs. outcome orientation in the relationship between customer helping and emotional responses (e.g., shame and gratitude). Over the past few decades, outcome versus process focused thoughts has been considered as a strong explanatory variable for predicting customer's mindset and reaction toward the event. However, the researchers have paid relatively little attention to employee's outcome versus process orientation. Based on the findings from this paper, future research could investigate the moderating role of employees' outcome versus process oriented thinking on employees'

satisfaction, commitment and turnover rate.

**Managerial Implications** The findings also suggest several important managerial implications. For managers, they can select the outcome or process oriented framing when they train the employees. If they wanted to avoid the negative affect of the customer participation, they can train employees with outcome oriented framing. However, the motivation from gratitude is weaker than the motivation elicited from shame. Even though process oriented employees feel more shame and more job stress than outcome oriented ones, they are more encouraged to work harder and more focus on customers' needs. Therefore, process oriented training would be the best option to make employees perform better and stirred by the customer participation.

Moreover, under outcome oriented condition, there was significant effect of shame on job stress, whereas its effect on job performance had no significance. In turn, for outcome-oriented employees, feeling shame cannot be positively affect to job performance. Here, the experiment only use customer helping scenario which resulted in good outcome, so that outcome focused employees perceive gratitude toward the customer helping. Then, what if the outcome of the customer helping does not relate to sales increase? Or what if outcome focused employees meet the customer helping situation, which make them feel

inevitable shame? In this case, customer helping only cause employees' job stress, rather performance increase. employees observing customer helping to work hard as a matter of course, rather they might feel job stress. In contrast, process oriented employees have a power to shift shame to job performance. Hence, process-oriented training is highly recommended managers to concern about employees' mental focus.

Concretely, whether outcome or process focused employees, employees who have been the recipients of customer helping are likely to reciprocate by engaging in greater levels of job performance. This is strongly validated from overall paper. This feedback mechanism might fuel the "cycle of success", which is crucial to a firm's ability to thrive. Therefore, as proactive role of customers gradually broadens its scope across the industries, understanding the impact of customer participation on employees' responses is getting important not only for service companies, but also for manufacturing companies.

**Limitation and Future Research** Although this research provides useful insights, there are following limitations worth addressing. First, I focused on anticipated shame and gratitude as mediating variables, but there may exist additional emotions which are not yet found. More research is needed to reveal other emotions due to customer participation.

Secondly, as briefly noted above, I only consider the good outcome comes from customer helping, such as sales increase. However, in the future study, it would be meaningful to examine the impact of customer participation resulted in bad consequences (e.g., customer helping sometime can be felt as interference of employee's service. Therefore, customer's good will to help others devalues the customer satisfaction toward the service).

Third, future research should examine the impact of customers' attitude toward the service providers while they offer others a help. For example, after helping other customers, the customer who helped others will behave badly toward the employee, and laugh at him. In this case, employee felt extreme shame, which cannot be repaired by improvement of self.

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## **7. Appendix**

### **: Customer Helping Scenario**

*1) Low level of Customer Helping:* A customer, named David, is searching for specific laptop. He has no idea where to find it. He asked to you where the product is. However, you don't know much about electronic things, because this is the first time to work in the electronic section. (Even until yesterday, you were in the pet shop.) Therefore, you were about to ask to another employee. At that time, another customer told him where the exact place to find the product, and quickly went her own way. On behalf of the customer's helping behavior, the customer who was helped by another purchased the product.

*2) High level of Customer Helping:* A customer, named David, entered the shop to purchase the lap top. He has not much knowledge about the product, so he wanted to get some suggestion from you. He briefly explained what he wants and expects to the lap top. However, you don't know much about the electronic device either, because you just moved to this section today. You were about to ask another employee to give him some suggestion. At that time, another customer recommends him the product A, and tell him why she suggest that model at some length. You were standing by two customers, not knowing what to do. On behalf of the customer's helping behavior, the customer who was helped by another purchased the product.

국문초록

# 고객참여행동에 대한 직원의 감정적 반응이 직무스트레스와 직무성과에 미치는 영향

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고객참여행동을 경험한 직원은 직무성과가 향상되는 한편, 직무스트레스를 느낀다. 본 논문은 적극적 고객참여행동에 대해 직원의 감정적 반응이 직무성과향상과 직무스트레스에 끼치는 영향을 연구하였다. 그 결과, 고객참여행동을 통해 직원이 부끄러움을 강하게 느낄수록 직무성과가 향상되고, 직무스트레스 또한 증진됨을 확인하였다. 반면, 참여행동을 한 고객에 대해 고마운 마음이 클수록, 직무성과는 향상하지만 이를 통해 직무스트레스가 발생하지는 않음을 검증했다. 또한, 직원의 목표지향성은 유의한 조절효과를 가지고 있으나, 그 효과는 부분적인 것으로 나타났다. 고객참여행동의 정도가 높을 때에만 조절효과가 확인되었기 때문이다. 본 연구의 결과는 서비스상황에서 직원이 느끼는 감정을 정성적, 정략적으로 연구했다는 점에서 이론적

의의가 있으며, 서비스 기업과 기업 인사담당자들에게 다양한 시사점을 제공한다.

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주요어: 고객참여행동, 부끄러움, 감사함, 직무스트레스, 직무성과, 결과/과정 지향성

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