Age-Conditional Effects of Political Skill and Empathy on Emotional Labor:
An Experience Sampling Study

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Pre-Print Version of an In-Press, Accepted Manuscript

Please Cite As:

Toomey, E.C., Rudolph, C.W., & Zacher, H. (2020, In Press). Age-conditional effects of Political skill and empathy on emotional labor: An experience sampling study. *Work, Aging and Retirement*.

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Abstract

Grounded in lifespan development theories that posit a positive influence of aging on emotion regulation, we examine how chronological age and political skill (i.e., a work-related interpersonal competency that functions as an emotion-relevant resource) jointly moderate the relationships between within-person levels of empathy and the use of emotional labor strategies across a workweek. Participants were $n = 118$ full-time university employees ($M_{\text{age}} = 42.85$ years; $SD = 12.18$; Range = 20-70), who completed momentary surveys three times a day, over a single five-day workweek. Results show that age and within-person levels of empathy were positively related to momentary levels of deep acting. Considering further the interaction of age, political skill, and empathy, results suggest that the positive relationship between empathy and deep acting is conditional upon age and individual differences in political skill, with differential relationships observed for relatively older versus relatively younger participants. Overall, the findings of this study contribute to a better understanding of the role of age and political skill for daily emotional regulation in the work context.

Keywords. Age; Empathy; Political Skill; Emotional Labor; Emotion Regulation; Experience Sampling Methodology

Age-Conditional Effects of Political Skill and Empathy on Emotional Labor:
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Based upon theorizing and empirical work by Hochschild (1983), research has for some time investigated between-person relationships among empathy (i.e., the process of understanding and internalizing another person's emotional experience; Davis, 1996) and emotional labor (i.e., the motivated expression and suppression of emotions in social interactions at work; Hochschild, 1983; see also Miller, Birkholt, Scott, & Stage, 1995; Miller, Stiff, & Ellis, 1988) constructs. More recently, research has investigated links between empathy and emotional labor as a within-person emotion regulation process. Specifically, a study by Toomey and Rudolph (2017) demonstrates that variations in within-person levels of empathy are positively related to momentary deep acting (i.e., behaviors directed at changing emotional states in order to express genuine emotion; Grandey, 2000), and negatively related to momentary surface acting (i.e., behaviors directed at suppressing genuine emotion to be consistent with organizational display rules; Grandey, 2000). This study also demonstrated that the positive within-person relationship between empathy and deep acting is moderated by age, with a stronger relationship observed among younger workers, and a weaker and non-significant relationship observed among older workers.

Regarding the role of age, lifespan development theoretical perspectives emphasize a positive influence of aging on emotion regulation (Scheibe & Zacher, 2013). Studying dynamic processes such as emotion regulation requires the adoption of methodologies that can simultaneously capture dynamic within-person levels of emotionally relevant outcomes and within- and between-person predictors of such outcomes (see Scheibe & Moghimi, 2019). In the present study, we use an experience sampling methodology (e.g., Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013) to

examine the within-person relationship between empathy and the use of emotional labor strategies across a five-day workweek. Grounded in lifespan development theories, we additionally investigate how chronological age and a work-related interpersonal competency, political skill (i.e., the ability to effectively understand and influence others in service of goal achievement; Ahearn, et al., 2004), jointly moderate this relationship. Accordingly, the present study was conducted to make three important contributions to the literature on age and emotion regulation at work.

First, unlike many studies that focus on behavioral reactions (e.g., to affective events; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) in a phased process, we conceptualize a within-person process based on the notion of an interactive perspective on emotion regulation (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004). On the one hand, process models of emotion regulation often conceptualize the regulation of emotions in motivational terms, for example as actions taken following affectively relevant events or experiences (e.g., Gross & Thompson, 2007). On the other hand, interactive perspectives on emotion regulation view emotions and their regulation as a continual, ongoing, and concurrent process wherein the experience of emotions and their regulation are not separable from one-another (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004). Here, we focus on within-person associations between momentary levels of empathy and emotional labor strategies to operationalize emotion regulation from such an interactive perspective. Empathy represents a “critical predictor of prosocial behavior and effectiveness in the workplace...” (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2018, p. 1). Most research has construed distal outcomes of empathy at work at the between-person level of analysis (e.g., work performance; see Clark et al., 2018). As such, our study contributes to an understanding of the complex relationships between demographic (i.e., age) and individual difference (i.e., political skill) variables, and dynamic

within-person emotion regulation processes (i.e., momentary linkages between empathy and emotional labor).

Second, this study contributes to the literature by empirically exploring the age-conditional role of political skill, adding to our understanding of its role as a resource that shapes emotion regulation processes at work. Although theory and research have posited that emotion-relevant interpersonal competencies, like political skill, develop over time (e.g., Ferris, Anthony, Kolodinsky, Gilmore, & Harvey, 2002), age-graded relationships between political skill and emotion regulation processes have yet to be studied extensively. These gaps are important to note, as lifespan development theories of emotion regulation suggest that emotionally relevant competencies, like political skill, are important for the successful enactment of emotion regulation (Charles, 2010). Despite the relatively large literature on political skill at work in general (see Munyon, Summers, Thompson, & Ferris, 2015, for a meta-analytic review), no studies have considered the joint influences of trait-like political skill and state-like emotion regulation constructs. This is an important gap to address, because lifespan perspectives on emotion regulation recognize that with increasing age comes the development of enhanced abilities to understand, predict, and react to the emotional states of others (Charles, 2010). This enhanced capacity is often attributed to the accumulation of interpersonal experiences across the lifespan (Magai, 2001).

Third, extending from the second contribution, this study additionally contributes to the literature by empirically exploring the age- and political skill-conditional role of empathy on emotional labor, further clarifying how political skill serves an age-conditional resource that shapes emotion regulation processes at work. We consider both cognitive (i.e., perspective taking) and affective (i.e., empathic concern) forms of empathy in our study, and offer

theoretically-grounded hypotheses predicting that the positive relationship between empathic concern and deep acting will be stronger among older (as compared to younger) workers with higher levels of political skill. Although empathy has been examined as a work-relevant, emotion regulation construct that varies within-person and over time (e.g., Toomey & Rudolph, 2017), research has not yet considered a broader range of person-level psychological variables that moderate the relationships between within-person empathy and emotion-relevant work outcomes. Considering moderators of such relationships is important, because lifespan theories of emotion regulation suggest that aging is associated with increased strengths in the use of emotion regulation skills (e.g., behaviors aimed at regulating everyday emotional experiences; Charles, 2010). However, such theories do not posit the exact role that such skills play in service of emotion regulation, nor whether the successful deployment of such skills are themselves age conditional. Thus, we offer complimentary theorizing based on the lifespan development theory of strength and vulnerability integration (i.e., the SAVI model; Charles, 2010) to consider political skill as an important work-related, person-level moderator of emotion regulation processes that is itself age-conditional. Specifically, we argue that the successful deployment of political skill in service of emotion regulation is conditional upon one's age.

Having outlined the three contributions of this study, we next more closely consider the core within-person constructs under investigation in our study – empathy and emotional labor. We then discuss how we conceptualize a dynamic and interactive perspective on emotion regulation (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004) to explain within-person links between empathy and emotional labor. Following this, we introduce the SAVI model and supporting theoretical perspectives (i.e., SOC-ER; Urry & Gross, 2010; emotional capital; Andrew, 2015; Cottingham, 2016), before introducing political skill as an emotion regulation resource. This discussion

allows us to integrate these corollary theoretical perspectives into the prediction that the within-person relationship between empathy and emotional labor is jointly conditional upon two between-person factors, age and political skill.

Empathy

Empathy aids in understanding and responding to the emotions of others to successfully communicate emotion (Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, & Levine, 2009). The concept of empathy as *Einfühlung* (literally, “feeling into”) was first coined by Titchener (1909), referring to it as a process of humanizing; of reading or feeling ourselves into others. In its broadest definition, empathy is the “reaction of one individual to the observed experiences of another” (Davis, 1983, p. 113). Within this line of thought, Davis (1983) argues that empathy is not a unipolar, unidimensional construct, but can be best regarded as a construct with multiple dimensions that are related conceptually, but different from each other. Of the four dimensions identified by Davis (1983), the literature has largely accepted the perspective taking and empathic concern dimensions of empathy, as they represent the cognitive and affective components of the construct, respectively (Longmire & Harrison, 2018). *Perspective taking* refers to the tendency to understand another individual’s psychological standpoint (Davis, 1983). This component of empathy is the cognitive process of taking another’s point of view. *Empathic concern* refers to the “other-oriented” concern for others and the tendency to emotionally react to the feelings of others (Davis, 1983). As opposed to perspective taking, empathic concern is often viewed as the emotional reaction after witnessing someone else’s emotional state rather than the strategy employed (Davis, 1996).

There is some debate in the literature as to whether or not empathy should be construed as a state or a trait. On the one hand, some theorists hold that empathy is a state in which

individuals experience the emotions of others as a reactive response during interpersonal communication (Batson, 1991; Stocks, Lishner & Decker, 2009). On the other hand, research also describes empathy as a dispositional trait that allows individuals to understand and feel the emotions of others (Davis, 1983; Duan & Hill, 1996; Moore et al., 2012). This view emphasizes that some individuals possess more empathy than others naturally and that these differences remains stable over time (Clark, 2007; Davis, 1996). Research indicates that empathy can be conceptualized as both a state and as a trait (see Nezlek, Feist, Wilson, & Plesko, 2001), such that individual differences in empathy interact with the environment in which the individual is situated. As such, Clark (2007) emphasizes the view that this empathic trait sets the extent to which a person can feel a certain level of empathy under different environmental contexts. Thus, empathy can be viewed more as a process through which emotions are understood, experienced, and expressed rather than either being solely a state or trait (Clark, 2007; Duan & Hill, 1996).

Empathy at work has received increased attention in recent years (see Clark et al., 2018; Longmire & Harrison, 2018, for reviews). To this end, there is evidence to suggest that empathy affects the experience and regulation of emotions in workplace interpersonal contexts (Cohen, 2010; Rupp et al., 2008), and especially those that are characterized by emotional labor (e.g., Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). For example, research indicates that empathy helps to encourage interpersonal cooperation, in that it discourages deceitful behavior (i.e., faking emotions to manipulate others, a characteristic associated with surface acting; Cohen, 2010).

Regarding age and empathy, research demonstrates that there are differential relationships between age and affective and cognitive forms of empathy. Such evidence suggests that older adults show higher levels of affective empathy (i.e., empathic concern) as compared to cognitive empathy (i.e., perspective taking; see Bailey, Henry, & Von Hippel, 2008; Beadle et

al., 2012; Sullivan & Ruffman, 2004). One plausible explanation for this finding is that older adults, on average, possess diminished capacities to detect the mental states of others (i.e., reduced “theory of mind”). Such diminished capacities are associated with the normal course of aging, similar to declines in other fluid cognitive abilities (see Moran, 2013). Accordingly, we focus our hypothesizing on empathic concern, but also model relationships with perspective taking in an exploratory capacity and to rule out alternative explanations for our findings.

Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is traditionally defined as the suppression and expression of emotions in exchange for a wage (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labor was originally examined in service-industry interactions, typically between customers and frontline employees (Grandey, 2000; 2003; Hochschild, 1983); however, subsequent work suggests that emotional labor is ubiquitous across positions that require social interactions (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Organizations call upon their employees’ emotional facilities and stipulate that they follow certain organizational display rules (i.e., norms for the expression of emotions). As such, employees engage in emotional labor to influence the emotional states of others to achieve organization and/or personal goals (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003).

Compliance with display rules is achieved through one of two emotion-regulating strategies. *Surface acting* involves suppressing one’s genuine emotions and expressing emotions not truly felt to be consistent with organizational display rules. For example, when dealing with a difficult coworker, an employee engaging in surface acting would suppress their anger or frustration and display positive emotions to best represent and achieve organizational goals. *Deep acting* entails actively changing one’s emotional state to meet the demands imposed by the interaction in order to express genuine emotion (Bono & Vey, 2007). For example, when

interacting with a disgruntled patron, an individual employing deep acting would consciously change their emotional state to experience the emotions needed in the interaction to express genuine emotions.

Emotion regulation theories focus on how individuals express the emotions required of them (e.g., Gross, 2014). In the context of emotion regulation research, surface acting is generally referred to as a less-adaptive and response-focused approach to emotional labor in that the individual modifies their observable expressions of emotion (Grandey, 2000). In contrast, deep acting is seen as a more-adaptive and antecedent-focused strategy of emotional labor due to the fact that it involves employees appraising the situation and adjusting their emotional states as a result (Grandey, 2000). Whether it is suppressing or transforming emotions, both emotional labor strategies require the engagement in effortful emotion regulation (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). This perspective allows researchers to better understand the effort needed to engage in the two different strategies while providing an explanation for the differential effects of surface acting versus deep acting. Additionally, this perspective demonstrates that emotional labor is a dynamic process that varies within-person and over time. Research on age and emotional labor has generally found differential patterns of relationships for surface and deep acting. The common finding in this literature is that there is a positive relationship between age and deep acting, however research finds mixed results with respect to the relationship between age and surface acting (e.g., Cheung & Tang, 2010; Dahling & Perez, 2010; Anderson & Morgan, 2017). Accordingly, we focus our hypothesizing on deep acting. However as with empathy, we also model relationships with surface acting in an exploratory capacity and to rule out alternative explanations for our findings.

Interactive Perspectives on Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation can be defined in a number of ways. Two predominant meta-models of emotion regulation are process perspectives and the interactive perspectives (see Charles, 2010). On the one hand, process models see emotion regulation as an event-contingent motivational process, in that they posit specific behaviors that are employed following the exposure to emotionally relevant events that elicit an emotional response (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) is a common theoretical framework for studying emotion regulation at work from a process perspective. On the other hand, interactive models do not separate the experience of emotion and its regulation, rather they see these as two components of a concurrent and interactive process (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004). Grounded in earlier work on the nature and structure of emotions and adaptation (e.g., Lazarus, 1991), the fundamental premise of the interactive model of emotion regulation is the recognition that because people continuously experience emotions, they must continuously modulate their responses to emotions. From an interactive perspective, the process of emotion regulation -- "...the modification of any process in the system that generates emotion or its manifestation in behavior." (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004 p. 380) -- takes place continuously, and without necessary referent to an identifiable emotion elicitor (i.e., emotion regulation occurs automatically, and irrespective of a particular, identifiable affective event or experience).

We adopt an interactive view on emotion regulation in the present study by operationalizing the within-person relationship between empathy and emotional labor as an interactive process of emotion regulation. That is to say that the dynamic, within-person relationship between empathy as a cognitive-affective mechanism and emotional labor as a behavior is indicative of such an interactive emotion regulation process. To this end, past

research has found that experiencing empathy (i.e., momentarily taking the perspective of others and internalizing their emotions) is especially likely to facilitate the expression of deep acting, because it supports the ability to alter one's present affective state to meet the emotional demands of the current situation (Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). Specifically, because it facilitates the understanding and experience of others' emotions, the momentary experience of empathy is likely to translate into higher levels of momentary deep acting, and lower levels of momentary surface acting. Consistent with such an interactive perspective on emotion regulation, Toomey and Rudolph (2017) found that momentary experiences of empathy have associations with emotional labor, independent of emotionally relevant events. Specifically, controlling for the experience of affective events, momentary experiences of empathy were positively related to deep acting, and negatively related to surface acting. Thus, our first hypothesis aims to replicate this finding in support of this interactive perspective on emotion regulation.

Hypothesis 1: Within-person variability in the two dimensions of empathy (i.e., perspective taking and empathic concern) is positively related to momentary levels of deep acting, and negatively related to momentary levels of surface acting.

The SAVI Model and Supporting Theories

The SAVI model (Charles, 2010) is an extension of socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 1991), which is a lifespan theory of goal-directed self-regulation. Socioemotional selectivity theory offers that people prioritize different types of goals at different ages due to age-graded shifts in future time perspective. Relative to younger adults, older adults tend to perceive future time as more limited and, as a result, are more likely to prioritize emotionally meaningful goals. Additionally, the theory posits an age-related "advantage" in emotion regulation. This advantage suggests that older adults are better at regulating their emotions to support the

achievement of emotionally meaningful goals, which supports the maintenance of well-being. The pursuit of emotionally meaningful goals is facilitated by various mechanisms, which can be broadly classified in terms of proactive and adaptive emotion regulation strategies (i.e., strategies employed to modify emotional events or to modulate one's responses to them, respectively). These strategies are generally seen as adaptive, because they allow for the focusing of limited resources (e.g., energy, time) on those situations, relationships, or social interactions that have the greatest possible positive influence on well-being (see also Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003; Carstensen, Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999).

The SAVI model explains the mechanisms through which the age-related advantage in emotion regulation develops. Like socioemotional selectivity theory, the SAVI model recognizes age-related strengths in short-term emotion regulation, but also acknowledges vulnerabilities with regard to intense, chronic, and long-term negative emotions. To explain strengths in short-term emotion regulation, SAVI proposes an experiential mechanism, which suggests that with increasing age comes more experience in managing one's emotions. Chronological age, which is a demographic index of "time lived since birth," is typically taken as a proxy for such experience (Schwall, 2012). From this experiential perspective, relatively older people benefit from having learned "what works" and "what does not" regarding various ways of successfully regulating their emotions. At work, this means that relatively older workers are more likely to have a repertoire of time-tested strategies that aid in successfully navigating emotionally demanding situations.

Corollary arguments for this experiential explanation for the age-related advantage in emotion regulation can be derived from both the SOC-ER model (Urry & Gross, 2010) and the emotional capital perspective (Andrew, 2015; Cottingham, 2016). The SOC-ER model is also a

lifespan development theory, specifically an extension of the selection, optimization, and compensation (SOC) model (Baltes & Baltes, 1990). Like SAVI, the SOC-ER model suggests that emotion regulation (ER) resources accrue over time via experience, and especially benefit adaptive emotion regulation in older age. Similarly, the emotional capital perspective (Andrew, 2015; Cottingham, 2016) supports the experiential advantage argument offered by both the SAVI and SOC-ER models. Specifically, “emotional capital” is viewed as a strategic resource that accrues through a learning process resulting from successfully managing emotions over time. With a clearer sense of the theoretical models adopted here, we next discuss political skill in more detail, before discussing its role in developing our hypotheses.

Political Skill

Organizations are innately political arenas, inherent with social barriers to the achievement of goals (Mintzberg, 1985). The ability to navigate social situations and to influence others in pursuit of personal goals can play an important role for an individual’s success within an organization (Mintzberg, 1985; Pfeffer, 1981). Some individuals are more adept at this particular social skill than others, thereby affecting their behavior at work. Mintzberg (1983) was one of the first to propose the concept of *political skill*, asserting that power and an understanding of social situations was necessary to effectively exert influence at work. Ferris and colleagues (1999) conceive the construct as a skill that allows individuals to read and influence social interactions in a strategic, yet unobtrusive manner. The most widely used definition of political skill combines the perspectives of Mintzberg (1983), Pfeffer (1981), and Ferris et al. (1999), referring to it as “the ability to effectively understand others at work and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organizational objectives” (Ahearn, et al., 2004, p. 311).

Ferris and colleagues (2005) used the above definition in their development of the Political Skill Inventory (PSI), which captures four components of political skill identified in research: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity. Considering these components together, politically skilled individuals are able to act in ways that engender feelings of trust and confidence among those whom they interact with at work; thereby they can exert influence over situations while appearing both devoid of personal motives and genuine and sincere in their actions (Ferris et al., 2005; see also Bacharach & Lawler, 1998; Pfeffer, 1992). Thus, political skill is an individual difference characteristic that facilitates individuals' ability to "read" people and social situations.

Ferris, Perrewé, and Douglas (2002) have suggested that political skill is a component of the higher order construct "social effectiveness," which is a concept grounded in the early work of Thorndike (1920) on social intelligence. Accordingly, political skill shares construct domain space with related individual difference constructs such as social intelligence, self-monitoring, and social self-efficacy, but is conceptually and empirically distinct (see Meisler, 2013; Semadar, Robins, & Ferris, 2006). Research suggests that politically skilled individuals are more adept at using influence tactics as they navigate the political undertones and challenges within organizations (Ferris et al., 2005; Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska & Shaw, 2007; Treadway et al., 2005). Thus, political skill may play an important role in helping individuals to build personal resources, such as social capital.

Theoretical Integration

To understand how age and political skill moderate the dynamic relationship between empathy and emotional labor as part of an interactive process of emotion regulation, we borrow support from the SAVI model, with complimentary support from the SOC-ER model and the

emotional capital perspective. As suggested, these theories help us make predictions about age differences in the deployment of emotion regulation resources (i.e., political skill), and the moderating influence that such resources have on the dynamic process of emotion regulation, construed as the relationship between momentary experiences of empathy and associated levels of emotional labor.

To explain the anticipated relationships between political skill and emotional labor, we draw from the SOC-ER model (Urry & Gross, 2010). One argument offered by this model is that emotion regulation is resource intensive, and that possessing more emotion-relevant resources leads to greater success in emotion regulation. Interpersonal competencies represent emotion-relevant resources that influence emotion regulation at work (e.g., Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). As suggested, political skill is an emotional competency that reflects one's ability to understand and influence others in social contexts in pursuit one's own or organizational goals (Ahearn et al., 2004). Political skill entails understanding the intentions of others, the ability to make people feel comfortable and to develop relationships with others, and an awareness of the importance of appearing sincere. Politically skilled individuals are adept at understanding the behavior of others in order to enact the appropriate behaviors to appear sincere within the interpersonal exchange (Ferris et al., 2005). Given its role in interpersonal relationship management at work (see Ferris, Davidson, & Perrewé, 2005), we therefore expect that political skill is differentially related to within-person levels of emotional labor. Specifically, we assume that political skill will be positively related to more-adaptive and antecedent-focused deep acting, and negatively related to less-adaptive and response-focused surface acting.

Hypothesis 2: Political skill is positively related to momentary levels of deep acting and negatively related to momentary levels of surface acting.

As suggested, the capacity to deploy emotion-relevant resources to enhance emotion regulation increases with age (Charles, 2010; Scheibe & Zacher, 2013). The SAVI model emphasizes that such age-related strengths result from the accumulation of knowledge and skills that are acquired through diverse emotion regulation experiences across the lifespan (Charles, 2010). Similar to human capital theory (Becker, 1975), emotional capital theory likewise supports this core tenet of the SAVI model. Specifically, emotional capital theory suggests that emotion regulation competencies result from learning how to effectively manage emotions over time (see Andrew, 2015; Cottingham, 2016). Successfully navigating a variety of emotional experiences across the lifespan “builds up” one’s emotional capital, including interpersonal competencies like political skill, which serve to enhance emotion regulation.

By virtue of having accumulated experiences with emotion regulation over time, older people have higher emotional competence and accordingly possess a richer inventory of more effective emotion regulation strategies (Scheibe & Carstensen, 2010). Integrating these core tenets of SOC-ER, SAVI, and emotional capital theories, it is expected that older workers are better equipped to deploy political skill as an interpersonal competency in service of emotion regulation. This notion is supported by the literature on age and emotion regulation, which suggest that older people are motivated to and oftentimes more competent at regulating their emotion-relevant resources -- including interpersonal competencies like political skill -- toward better emotion regulation (for a review, see Doerwald, Scheibe, Zacher, & Van Yperen, 2016).

Assuming an interactive model of emotion regulation (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004), we would argue that political skill should especially benefit the positive relationship between empathy and adaptive emotional strategies (i.e., deep acting). Moreover, given that the successful deployment of interpersonal competencies in service of emotion regulation is likely

age-graded (i.e., differentially beneficial as a function of life experience; e.g., Andrew, 2015; Cottingham, 2016), we expect this interactive process to manifest as a *stronger* and more *positive* relationship between empathy and deep acting for older workers who possess higher levels of political skill.

As suggested, we expect this relationship for deep acting, and not surface acting, as previous research has shown that age is especially associated with the enactment of deep acting. Moreover, based upon past research that has found that older adults may be more effective at engaging affective forms of empathy (i.e., empathic concern) than cognitive forms of empathy (i.e., perspective taking; e.g., Bailey, Henry, & Von Hippel, 2008; Beadle et al., 2012; Sullivan & Ruffman, 2004), we posit that empathic concern will be the primary form of empathy that facilitates this process of adaptive emotion regulation. We suggest that respondents' age will interact with political skill and within-person levels of empathic concern to predict deep acting. In other words, political skill will especially benefit the momentary experience of empathic concern among relatively older workers (i.e., compared to relatively younger workers) and will particularly benefit their engagement in more adaptive emotion regulation, as evidenced by a stronger positive relationship between empathic concern and deep acting for relatively older workers.

Hypothesis 3: Age and political skill jointly moderate the positive within-person relationship between empathic concern and deep acting. Specifically, the relationship is stronger (weaker) for older (younger) respondents with higher levels of political skill.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were $n = 118$ university employees. Emotional labor has traditionally been studied in customer service roles (e.g., flight attendants; Hochschild, 1983). However, emotional labor likely occurs in some form in virtually all jobs. For example, day-to-day interactions with coworkers, supervisors, and clients require all employees to regulate their emotions as a part of fulfilling the responsibilities of their jobs (e.g., Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006). Accordingly, researchers have called for the study of emotional labor outside of more traditional customer service roles. (e.g., Bhawe & Glomb, 2009; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

All participants worked full-time ($M_{hours/week} = 42.33$, $SD = 6.73$), were predominantly female (86.00%) and White (90.51%), and their average age was $M_{age} = 42.85$ years ($SD = 12.18$, Median = 44, Range = 21 to 70). Participants were asked to complete momentary surveys three times a day over a single, five-day workweek; email reminders with links to online surveys were sent to participants at each time point. The first daily survey was sent at 10:00 a.m., the second at 1:00 p.m., and the third at 4:00 p.m. To allow for some flexibility in day-to-day work schedules, participants were given a one-hour window to complete each survey (e.g., participants had between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to complete their first daily survey).

Those who completed at least 80% of the momentary surveys (i.e., completing 12/15 surveys) were entered into a lottery that awarded four participants with a \$50 Amazon gift card. Moreover, participants qualified to receive “Vitality Points” (i.e., credits towards discounts on medical premiums that full-time employees receive as a result of participation in the university’s wellness program) in exchange for their participation. Initially, $n = 232$ people agreed to participate; after accounting for attrition, our final sample size was $n = 118$ participants (effective completion rate = 50.86%).

The maximum possible number of observations was 1,770 (i.e., 15 surveys $\times$ 118 respondents = 1,770), and complete data were observed for $n = 810$ or 46.15% of these observations. This is somewhat lower than other experience sampling methodology studies on related topics (e.g., Scott & Barnes, 2011, reported complete data for 73% or $n = 425$ out of 580 possible observations). It is important to note that the current study was more time intensive than these previous efforts, surveying participants three times a day for five consecutive days, which may have contributed to the missingness (e.g., Scott & Barnes, 2011, consider only two daily surveys).

In line with best-practice recommendations, we conducted logistic regression analyses to address the possibility that data were systematically missing (Goodman & Blum, 1996). We regressed the number of missing momentary data points onto the substantive variables (i.e., age, political skill, and baseline levels of empathy and emotional labor). We observed no appreciable evidence that these variables could account for observed patterns of missingness, suggesting that such cases are at least missing at random (i.e., with respect to other variables considered in this study), and that there is not a systematic pattern to the missing data observed here (Rubin, 1976). In line with past research (Rudolph et al., 2015; Toomey & Rudolph, 2017), we chose carryover imputation to estimate the missing values for each momentary empathy scale. Carryover imputation replaces missing values with the value of the nearest previous time point and serves to reduce rather than augment the observed variance of the focal variables. Thus, carryover imputation is a conservative approach to missing data remediation that is well-suited to intensive longitudinal research designs. We discuss the implications of this imputation procedure in more detail in our online appendix: <https://osf.io/jh2ny/>.

Measures

Age. Participants chronological age (i.e., years lived since birth) was self-reported, and was captured as part of the first momentary survey.

Trait Political Skill. Political skill, also captured as part of the first momentary survey, was assessed using the 18-item political skill inventory (PSI) from Ferris and colleagues (2005). The PSI measures four sub-dimensions of political skill, including interpersonal influence, social astuteness, networking ability, and apparent sincerity. This measure asks respondents to rate their level of agreement with statements reflecting each of these dimensions. Example items include: “I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others” and “It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do.” These items were rated using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) Likert-type scale, and an overall score was created by averaging responses across all items. This measure demonstrated good internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = 0.92$).

Momentary Empathy. To measure empathy, six items were used from the interpersonal reactivity index (IRI; Davis, 1996). These six items were scaled to be momentary in nature, such that respondents were asked to indicate how well each statement described them at that moment on a 1 (*does not describe me well*) to 5 (*describes me very well*) scale. Three items each from the perspective taking and empathic concern subscales were used; example items from these respective subscales are as follows: “I find it difficult to see things from ‘another guy’s’ point of view” (reverse scored) and “I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.” Although this momentary measure demonstrated acceptable internal consistency across all fifteen time points for empathic concern ($\bar{\alpha} = 0.75$, $SD_{\alpha} = 0.11$), this value was somewhat lower for the perspective taking dimension ($\bar{\alpha} = 0.66$, $SD_{\alpha} = 0.06$). We also computed average test-

retest reliabilities across all fifteen time points; both measures demonstrated high average levels of temporal consistency (empathic concern $\bar{r}_{xy} = .72$; perspective taking $\bar{r}_{xy} = .76$).

Momentary Emotional Labor. Six items representing surface and deep acting were used from the emotional labor scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 1998, 2003). As with the measures of empathy, the instruction set was adapted to reflect momentary emotional labor strategies. Respondents were asked to rate the frequency of their engagement and use of emotion at work so far that day for the first measure of the day, and their use since the previous survey for the afternoon time points. Responses were captured on a (*never*) to 5 (*always*) scale. Three items measuring surface acting, and three items measuring deep acting were used (example surface acting item: “Pretended to have emotions you didn’t really feel”; example deep acting item “Tried to actually feel the emotions that I must show”). Momentary deep and surface acting scales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency across all fifteen time points with $\bar{\alpha} = 0.94$ ($SD_{\alpha} = 0.02$) and $\bar{\alpha} = 0.88$, ($SD_{\alpha} = 0.03$), respectively. Additionally, both measures demonstrated high average levels of temporal consistency across all fifteen time points (deep acting $\bar{r}_{xy} = .74$; surface acting $\bar{r}_{xy} = .66$).

Analyses

Because momentary measures of emotional labor and empathy were nested within-person, we used mixed-effects models (i.e., so called “multilevel” models) to test our hypotheses using the “lme4” package (Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2015) for the R statistical computing environment. Such models allowed us to concurrently model within-person relationships as well as cross-level relationships, including the cross-level interaction of between person chronological age and political skill, and within-person associations between empathy on emotional labor strategies. Momentary measures of empathy were person-mean centered to

isolate observations into orthogonal between-person (i.e., average person levels) and within-person components (i.e., fluctuations from person mean levels; see Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013, p. 77–78). In addition to these level-one centering decisions, level-two chronological age and political skill were grand mean centered. To account for possible spurious temporal variations, we also controlled for time in our models, construed as day-of-week. Time was centered around the midpoint (i.e., “Wednesday”) to allow the intercept to represent average levels of emotional labor across the workweek. The computation of variance explained estimates (i.e., R^2) in mixed effects models is the subject of continued debate (see LaHuis et al., 2014, for a review). To approximate estimates of within-person variance explained here, we report pseudo- R^2 estimates following the advice of Raudenbush and Bryk (2002). Likewise, we also report marginal pseudo- R^2 estimates as recently suggested by Nakagawa, Johnson, and Schielzeth (2017).

Results

Table 1 contains means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations representing between- and within-person relationships. To establish the factor structure of our momentary measures of empathy and emotional labor, we first conducted a series of multilevel confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) using the ‘lavaan’ package (Rosseel, 2012) for R. We specified five multilevel CFA models: Model 1, a one-factor model, combining all items from each measure (i.e., empathic concern + perspective taking + surface acting + deep acting); Model 2, a two-factor model, combining all items from the measures of empathy (i.e., empathic concern + perspective taking) and emotional labor (i.e., surface acting + deep acting), respectively; Model 3, a three-factor model differentiating dimensions of empathy (i.e., empathic concern vs. perspective taking) and combining those of emotional labor (i.e., surface acting + deep acting);

Model 4, a three-factor model differentiating dimensions of emotional labor (i.e., surface acting vs. deep acting) and combining those of empathy (i.e., empathic concern + perspective taking); and finally Model 5, a four-factor model differentiating dimensions of emotional labor and empathy (i.e., empathic concern vs. perspective taking vs. surface acting vs. deep acting), respectively. Table 2 summarizes the fit indices derived from each of these five models.

Comparing these indices, the four-factor model (i.e., Model 5) offered the “best” fit to the data in an absolute sense and fit relatively better than then next best-fitting model (i.e., Model 4; $\chi^2_{(6)} = 125.50, p < .001$). We take this as additional evidence (i.e., beyond that afforded by theory and past research) for differentiating facets of empathy (empathic concern and perspective taking) and emotional labor (surface and deep acting) in our focal models.

To test our substantive hypotheses, we initially considered intercept only models to ascertain the amount of within-person variability in emotional labor. The ICC₁ estimates for deep and surface acting were .69 and .53, respectively, suggesting that an appreciable amount of variance in observations of these variables occurred within person (i.e. for deep acting, $1.00 - 0.69 = 31\%$; for surface acting, $1.00 - 0.53 = 47\%$).

We next specified two mixed-effects models, separately regressing deep and surface acting onto time, between-person chronological age, and political skill, as well as between- and within-person perspective taking and empathic concern. These models simultaneously included all possible two- and three-way cross-level interactions among between-person chronological age and political skill, and within-person perspective taking and empathic concern. A summary of these models can be found in Table 3.

These models suggest that within-person variability in both empathic concern ($B = 0.10, SE_B = 0.04, p = 0.01$) and perspective taking ($B = 0.22, SE_B = 0.04, p < .001$) are positively

related to momentary deep acting. We also observed significant negative relationships of within-person variability in empathic concern ($B = -0.09$, $SE_B = 0.04$, $p = .03$) and perspective taking ($B = -0.09$, $SE_B = 0.04$, $p = .04$) with surface acting. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 suggested that political skill would be positively related to momentary levels of deep acting and negatively related to momentary levels of surface acting. We did not find support for this prediction, as neither zero-order (Table 1) nor partial (Table 3) estimates of these effects were statistically significant. Importantly, each of these main-effect relationships are qualified by the higher order interactions among these variables, discussed next.

Considering the interactions of age, political skill, and empathy lends support to Hypothesis 3. Specifically, we observed a significant three-way interaction among between-person age and political skill, and within-person empathic concern on momentary levels of deep acting ($B = 0.01$, $SE_B = 0.00$, $p = 0.02$). We conducted follow-up simple slopes tests to further probe the form of this relationship. Of note, age is a continuous variable and no single “cutoff” values exist to differentiate older versus younger employees (Bohlmann, Rudolph, & Zacher, 2018). Thus, the following age labels (i.e., “younger” vs. “older”) are used only in a descriptive sense to characterize the form our interaction effects. When political skill was low (i.e., -1 SD from the mean), the relationship between empathy and deep acting was positive and significant ($B = 0.16$, $SE_B = 0.06$, $p = 0.01$) for relatively younger respondents (i.e., -1 SD from the mean), yet was not significant ($B = 0.04$, $SE_B = 0.07$, $p = 0.63$) for relatively older respondents (i.e., +1 SD from the mean). When political skill was high (i.e., +1 SD from the mean), the relationship between empathy and deep acting was not significant ($B = -0.01$, $SE_B = 0.08$, $p = 0.86$) for relatively younger respondents (i.e., -1 SD from the mean), and was positive and significant ($B = 0.21$, $SE_B = 0.09$, $p = .02$) for relatively older respondents (i.e., +1 SD from the mean). To better

understand the complexity of these relationships, we also plotted these simple slopes (see Figure 1).

We also observed two non-hypothesized two-way interactions for surface acting (*n.b.* given the similarity in parameter estimates observed here, we report these findings to the third decimal place here to emphasize differences). The first non-hypothesized two-way interaction was observed among between-person age and within-person perspective taking on momentary surface acting ($B = 0.008$, $SE_B = 0.003$, $p = .022$). Simple slopes tests suggest that the relationship between perspective taking and surface acting was negative and significant ($B = -0.181$, $SE_B = 0.054$, $p = 0.001$) for relatively younger respondents (i.e., -1 SD from the mean), and was not significant ($B = 0.008$, $SE_B = 0.063$, $p = 0.906$) for relatively older respondents (i.e., +1 SD from the mean).

The second non-hypothesized two-way interaction was observed among between-person age and within-person empathic concern on momentary surface acting ($B = 0.007$, $SE_B = 0.003$, $p = .029$). Largely mirroring the previous finding, simple slopes tests suggest that the relationship between empathic concern and surface acting was negative and significant ($B = -0.176$, $SE_B = 0.055$, $p = 0.001$) for relatively younger respondents (i.e., -1 SD from the mean), and was not significant ($B = < 0.001$, $SE_B = 0.060$, $p = 0.997$) for relatively older respondents (i.e., +1 SD from the mean). To better understand these findings, we again plotted simple slopes for both interactions (see Figures 2 and 3). We explore the implications of these observations in our discussion.

Discussion

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, we found that within-person variation in both perspective taking and empathic concern was positively related to momentary levels of deep acting and

negatively related to surface acting. This finding contributes to an emerging line of research that links within-person empathy to emotional labor, and in particular to higher levels of more adaptive deep acting and lower levels of less adaptive surface acting (e.g., Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). Of particular importance, by distinguishing between the two dimensions of empathy in the present study, the evidence presented here suggests the possibility that there may be differential relationships between empathy and emotional labor for affective (i.e., empathic concern) and cognitive (i.e., perspective taking) components of empathy.

We did not find support for Hypothesis 2, as political skill was neither positively related to momentary levels of deep acting nor negatively related to momentary levels of surface acting. However, as noted, the higher-order relationships between chronological age, political skill, and empathy qualify these proposed main-effect relationships. Regarding Hypothesis 3, we anticipated a three-way interaction among between-person chronological age and political skill, and within-person empathy on momentary deep acting. Based upon the SAVI model, supporting theories, and previous research that has found age-differential effects of empathic concern and perspective taking, we predicted that the strength of this positive relationship between empathic concern and deep acting would be higher for relatively older respondents with higher levels of political skill. Our findings supported this prediction. We also noted that, when political skill was low, the relationship between within-person empathic concern and momentary deep acting was stronger for relatively younger respondents. This observation suggests that the age-conditional role that political skill and empathic concern plays in the enactment of deep acting is more complex than our hypotheses anticipated.

Specifically, higher levels of political skills seem to particularly benefit the positive relationship between empathic concern and deep acting for relatively older employees (i.e.,

supporting the fundamental premise of Hypothesis 3). Additionally, lower levels of political skill seem to particularly benefit the positive relationship between empathic concern and deep acting for relatively younger employees. Although speculative, this might be because political skill develops across longer periods of time, and younger employees have yet to gain experience in navigating the politics of their work environments that are necessary to facilitate the adaptive use of political skill as an emotion regulation resource on a momentary basis (i.e., in any given situation at work that would require its deployment to support adaptively enhancing the expression of empathic concern in service of deep acting). Older employees, who have the benefit of such age-related experiences, may be better geared to engage political skill to augment their experience of empathy.

Alternatively, younger employees with lower political skill may be especially called on to use empathy as a compensatory strategy, whereas older employees with lower political skill may never have gained the skills to appropriately engage and/or recognize their experiences of empathy. The unanticipated finding that younger employees also rely more on empathy (i.e., empathic concern and perspective taking) to buffer against the use of surface acting may speak to this possibility (see Figures 3 and 4). Similarly, younger employees with higher political skill may not yet understand how to appropriately apply it as a resource to augment their experiences of empathy, whereas older employees with higher political skill may be particularly adept at leveraging such skills to augment the experience of empathy in service of adaptive deep acting. Each of these possibilities represents an exciting possible direction for future research, which will be discussed below.

More generally, these findings replicate and extend previous research by Toomey and Rudolph (2017), and support predictions derived from the SAVI model and supporting theories,

which suggests that relatively older workers possess strengths in their ability to deploy their accumulated socioemotional competencies in service of emotion regulation (Charles, 2010). Likewise, from the standpoint of the SOC-ER model and the emotional capital perspective, relatively younger workers, who have not yet had the benefit of additional years of practice at deploying political skill, may have lower capacity to effectively and successfully use these competencies to facilitate more adaptive forms of emotional labor.

Practical and Theoretical Implications

These results also have both practical and theoretical value. Practically, the results of this study offer further evidence for the important role of empathy as a predictor of successful aging and emotional wellbeing (Kunzman & Wrosch, 2015). Thus, it may benefit organizations to focus on developing political skill and empathy as a means to promote successful aging at work (Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). Such efforts should be grounded in the longstanding literature that focuses on emotional skills training (e.g., Satterfield & Hughes, 2007) and empathy training in particular (Batt-Rawden, Chisolm, Anton, & Flickinger, 2013). Our results likewise suggest that training interpersonal competencies, such as political skill, may have differential benefits for younger and older workers.

Theoretically, given the recent focus on theorizing successful aging *at work* (e.g., Zacher, 2015; Kooij, 2015), focusing on studying dynamics in indicators of successful emotional aging seems particularly germane. As Kunzman and Wrosch (2015, p. 7) note, “Given the importance of social and emotional goals among older adults [...] empathy may also be among the most influential predictors of successful aging and particularly affective well-being.” Political skill is also an important factor in promoting and maintaining person-environment fit, likewise an important facet of successful aging at work (e.g., Kooij, 2015; Rauvola, Rudolph, Ebbert, &

Zacher, 2019). Finally, although positive relationships between age and empathy have been noted elsewhere in the literature (Kunzmann & Wrosch, 2015), we extend these results by considering an emotionally-relevant moderator (i.e., political skill) that, in combination with age, partially explains *for whom* more-or-less positive relationships between empathy and emotional labor are to be expected over time.

Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of the present study is that we have operationalized experience in terms of chronological age. Chronological age is an index of the time lived in life, which is an imperfect demographic proxy for such experience. Although SAVI posits an experiential mechanism for explaining age related advantages in emotion regulation, the exact nature of that mechanism is not explicitly stated. We hope that future research and theorizing will expand upon the nature of this mechanism. Additionally, beyond chronological age, researchers have proposed “alternative” age constructs (e.g., subjective age; see Rubin & Bernsten, 2006). While compelling, such variables are arguably even poorer proxies for experience (i.e., “life lived”) and perhaps more indicative of self-relevant cognitions (e.g., core self-evaluations, see Zacher & Rudolph, 2018, 2019).

Also, regarding limitations of the variables studied here, the low observed internal consistency reliability of the momentary measure of perspective taking bears some consideration. Despite the low internal consistency estimate, the high test-retest estimate should partially alleviate concerns about the reliability of this index. As suggested, we used a modified version of the IRI (Davis, 1983) to measure momentary empathy, and the original, intended use for the scale was for the measurement of trait empathy. While there are several measures focusing on empathy as a trait, none lends itself well to the measurement of state forms of both the cognitive

and affective component of empathy (Davis, 1983; Eisenberg et al., 1991; Mehrabian, 1996; Spreng et al., 2009). Currently, the majority of the scales either focus on one component of empathy (either affective or cognitive; Goldberg et al., 2006; Hofstee et al., 1992; Mehrabian, 1996), and the scales that measure both components are difficult to adapt to reflect empathy as a state as they examine specific behavioral tendencies in certain situations (Mehrabian, 1996; Spreng et al., 2009). Given the dearth of empathy measures that do not quite hold up under momentary conditions, there is a pressing need for the development and validation of an empathy scale that allows for the examination of empathy as both a trait and a state, and especially so for use in momentary assessments.

Further limitations of the current study include the sole use of self-reported data and our inability to detect causal effects with the experience sampling design. The exclusive use of self-report scales may raise concerns about inflated associations between the measures, although the within-person approach may mitigate such concerns to some extent (as would the results of our CFA models). Nevertheless, future research could obtain peer or supervisor assessments of empathy, political skill, or use of emotional labor strategies. As experience sampling designs focus on intraindividual variability, but not change or causality, it may be possible that the use of emotional labor strategies has reverse effects on empathy as well. While we developed theory-based hypotheses, experimental work and longer-term longitudinal studies that focus on within-person changes are needed to shed further light on this issue. Taking these two points together, it will be important for future research to explicitly and purposefully consider the role of time (i.e., in the sense of an ordered and assumed-to-be causal process) and timing (i.e., in the sense of the framing of measurements) in the design of future studies concerning direct and conditional relationships between empathy and emotional labor.

Despite these limitations, the results of our study provide a number of interesting directions for future research. For example, we observed that for younger, low politically skilled individuals, momentary fluctuations in empathic concern are positively related to deep acting. Although we speculated as to why this may be in our discussion of these results, it remains to be seen whether this represents an adaptive compensatory process. Moreover, emotional experiences, such as the experience of empathic concern, are resource-draining (e.g. Trougakos, Beal, Green, & Weiss, 2008). Thus, as suggested, more research is needed to determine if this relationship would hold over a longer period of time, or if this is but a momentary phenomenon.

For older, less politically skilled individuals, momentary fluctuations in empathic concern do not appear to be related to deep acting. Moreover, older individuals seem to engage in deep acting more, regardless of their political skill or positive/negative momentary fluctuations in empathic concern. One question unanswered here, is whether there are other mechanisms beyond political skill that support this process for older workers, and future research should consider similar emotion regulation resources to unpack the nuance of this relationship. For example, given that politically skilled individuals experience a greater amount of perceived control over social interactions (Perrewé, Ferris, Frink, & Anthony, 2000), future research should consider the role of perceived control as an ancillary mechanism in this process.

For younger, more politically skilled individuals, momentary fluctuations in empathic concern do not appear to be related to deep acting. This may be due to younger people not yet knowing how to effectively use their political savviness to positively augment their experiences of empathy at work. In other words, the experience of empathy is not optimally channeled into adaptive emotional labor for relatively younger, high politically skilled individuals. To this end,

it would be of great value to know whether it is possible to train the effective deployment of political skill to help augment younger workers capability to use empathy at work.

For older, more politically skilled individuals, momentary fluctuations in empathic concern appear to be positively related to deep acting, and this is the strongest relative effect observed here. This suggests that older workers are “best” at using their accumulated political knowledge as a resource to optimize the experience of empathy in service of emotional labor. Although compelling, the question that remains to be answered here is how this observation can be optimally harnessed. For example, does it make sense to select particularly older employees for service roles on the basis of their political skill? This and related questions should be addressed by future research.

Finally, we construed political skill as a between-person individual difference in trait-like terms, as has been done in all previous research. However, our theorizing based upon SAVI suggests that emotionally relevant competencies like political skill are themselves dynamic over time. Thus, future research should consider the longitudinal development of political skill, and its consequences, across a longer time span.

Conclusion

Overall, this study provides evidence that the relationship among within-person levels of empathy (particularly empathic concern) and momentary emotional labor (particularly deep acting) is conditional upon one’s age and level of political skill. These findings expand lifespan development theoretical perspectives on aging and emotion regulation, and they support the view that political skill is an advantageous intrapersonal resource. Our study additionally suggests the value in studying the influence of empathy at work as an internal, intra-individual process rather than focusing on its operation as a trait. Although our focal hypothesis regarding age and

political skill conditional effects of empathy on emotional labor was supported, the nature of this interaction was more complex than we initially anticipated. Our hope is that the above-outlined possibilities for future research inspire researchers to unpack the complicated interactions of age and emotional regulation competencies for within-person emotion regulation processes.

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Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics and Within- and Between-Person Correlations*

	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Age	42.85	12.18	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
2. Political Skill	5.01	0.82	-0.07	0.92	-	-	-	-
3. Perspective Taking	3.94	0.65	0.14	0.45	0.66	0.27	0.16	-0.09
4. Empathic Concern	4.26	0.69	0.28	0.24	0.61	0.75	0.11	-0.10
5. Deep Acting	2.97	1.03	0.11	0.13	0.22	0.18	0.94	0.21
6. Surface Acting	2.25	0.76	-0.10	-0.14	-0.33	-0.32	0.18	0.88

Note. Between-person correlations ($N = 118$ employees) appear below the diagonal; within person correlations ($n = 1770$ observations) appear above the diagonal. For between-person correlations, the minimum observed statistically significant effect = $|.22|$ ($p < .05$); For within person correlations, the minimum observed statistically significant effect = $|.09|$ ($p < .05$). Where relevant, coefficient alpha or average coefficient alpha (i.e., for momentary measures) is reported along the diagonal.

Table 2. *Summary of Multilevel CFA Model Fit Indices*

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	CFI	TLI	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	SRMR
Model 1	3423.36	108	< 0.001	0.00	-0.46	42052.95	42376.32	0.14	0.39
Model 2	2351.02	106	< 0.001	0.42	0.28	40984.61	41318.76	0.11	0.35
Model 3	2224.29	102	< 0.001	0.47	0.31	40865.88	41221.59	0.11	0.34
Model 4	369.82	102	< 0.001	0.95	0.94	39011.41	39367.12	0.04	0.12
Model 5	244.33	96	< 0.001	0.98	0.97	38897.91	39285.96	0.03	0.09

Note. CFI & TLI values > .95, RMSEA values < .05, and SRMR values < .10 indicate “good fit” of the model to the data. AIC & BIC values follow “smaller is better” criteria.

Table 3. *Summary of Mixed-Effects Regression Models Predicting Momentary Emotional Labor*

<i>Predictors</i>	Momentary Deep Acting			Momentary Surface Acting		
	<i>Est.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Est.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	2.97	0.09	< 0.001	2.24	0.07	< 0.001
Time	0.02	0.01	0.05	-0.05	0.01	< 0.001
Age	0.01	0.01	0.39	0.00	0.01	0.79
Political Skill (PS)	0.07	0.13	0.59	0.01	0.09	0.93
Btwn Perspective Taking (PT)	0.24	0.20	0.24	-0.26	0.14	0.06
Btwn Empathic Concern (EC)	0.08	0.18	0.66	-0.21	0.13	0.11
Wthn PT	0.22	0.04	< 0.001	-0.09	0.04	0.04
Wthn EC	0.10	0.04	0.01	-0.09	0.04	0.03
PS x Age	0.01	0.01	0.59	-0.01	0.01	0.40
Wthn PT x Age	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.01	0.00	0.02
Wthn PT x PS	-0.01	0.04	0.79	-0.03	0.04	0.47
Wthn EC x Age	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.01	0.00	0.03
Wthn EC x PS	0.00	0.04	0.96	0.07	0.05	0.14
Wthn PT x Age x PS	0.00	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.52
Wthn EC x Age x PS	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.05
Random Effects						
	σ^2	0.44		0.48		
	τ_{00}	1.02		0.49		
	ICC ₁	0.70		0.51		
	Level-1 Observations	1770		1770		
	Wthn R^2 / Marginal Wthn R^2	0.03 / 0.05		0.03 / 0.09		

Note. Btwn = between-person effects, Wthn = within-person effects. PS = political skill, PT = perspective taking, EC = empathic concern

Figure 1

Interaction between Age, Political Skill, and Empathic Concern Predicting Momentary Deep Acting

Figure 2

Interaction between Age and Perspective Taking Predicting Momentary Surface Acting

Figure 3

Interaction between Age and Empathic Concern Predicting Momentary Surface Acting