Emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of employees and customers
Terje Slåtten

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Abstract

Previous research on services has mainly focused on the cognitive aspects related to a person’s satisfaction in service encounter. Specifically, this line of research has traditionally been conceptualized and measured person’s satisfaction responses as a cognitive disconfirmation of some comparative standard. This focus has, however, led to a relative neglect of study on responses, as well as the causes of a person’s emotions in a service encounter, and, consequently, the knowledge about the nature and role of emotions in a service encounter is limited.

The overall aim of this thesis is to contribute to deepening and extending our understanding and knowledge of emotions in service encounters by studying it from the two most central human actors in service encounter: (i) the service firm’s employees and (ii) the customer of this firm. This dissertation consists of five separate papers that conceptualize and empirically investigate how different appraisals by employees and customers generate positive and negative emotions, and how types of emotions in service encounters are linked to patterns of behavioural responses. The methods used for gathering data involved interviews and questionnaire studies of various service firms.

This dissertation has sought to offer two main contributions. First, this thesis presents an extended understanding of employees’ emotions in service encounters and their effect on employees’ perceptions of service quality. One of the chief findings is that work-related conditions such as employees’ perception of their working role and managerial practices are related to both positive and negative emotions in service encounters. Moreover, the findings indicate that there exists a spill-over effect between employees’ experiences of emotions and employees’ perceptions of the delivery of service quality in service encounters. Secondly, this thesis also contributes to furthering our understanding of the customer’s appraisal of service quality with respect to customers’ positive emotions in service encounters as well as to deepening our understanding of negative emotions when customers experience a negative service encounter. Specifically, it was found that both human and non-human service-quality factors are able to trigger customer’s positive emotions in service encounters. Positive emotions were strongly related to behavioural responses such as customer loyalty. When a customer experiences negative emotions in service encounters as a result of negative experience, the findings point to three sources of these negative emotions: (i) ‘self’ (the customer’s own fault), (ii) ‘other’ (the fault of the company), and (iii) ‘situational’ (the fault is beyond the customer’s and company’s control). Another finding is that customers’
negative emotions in service encounters tend diminish but only to some extent, even after the service firm has set into motion a process of service recovery. In summary, this thesis contributes to our understanding of emotions in service encounters and contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion in service research about the role of emotions in this context.
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Terje Slåtten
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Paper II:

Paper III:

Paper IV:

Paper V:
1 INTRODUCTION

Emotions in service encounters: we all have experienced them. On the one hand, it is not difficult to recall the positive experiences that we as customers might have had when having a good time together with family or friends, perhaps visiting a theme park during a summer holiday. Calling to mind the time we have been frustrated and angry because the hotel receptionist did not listen seriously to our complaints about the broken air-conditioning in the hotel room or about other such nuisances. Nor does it take a great leap of imagination for us to understand others who have undergone the same experiences. On the other hand, some of us might have experienced both positive and negative emotions as an employee in service encounters. We might have had good experiences with wonderful managers who really cared and supported us in our work, and really contributed to enhancing the ability to perform in your job serving the firm’s customers. At other times, we might have been frustrated because the managers did not provide the training or coaching necessary to deliver as best as possible quality of service to customers. We all have felt them. They affect us, and they move us whether we experience them as customers or as employees. This thesis holds that it is vital for service providers to understand the role of emotions in service encounters from these two perspectives.

In the services business, the interaction with the customer is important (Gemmel, 2003). The former president of Scandinavian Airlines (SAS), J. Carlzon, stressed the significance of this interaction by calling it ‘the moment of truth’. The expression ‘the moment of truth’ has its origin in Ernest Hemingway’s description of the encounter between the bull and the matador, Richard Normann introduced it into the study of service management in 1984. In the service literature the point or points of interaction has traditionally been labelled as ‘service encounters’ (cf. Solomon et al., 1985; Shostack, 1985). The service encounter is a moment of truth because the customer’s experience of it contributes to a person’s perception of service quality. Service encounters encompass several aspects of the service firm in which the employee and customer might interact. Consequently, on the basis that interaction is an aspect of service encounters and the fact that emotions are central to our lives as humans, it is reasonable to assume that there are many sources that are linked to both customers’ and employees’ emotions in service encounters.

A natural conclusion drawn from the abovementioned discussion is that the service encounter have been regarded and emphasized as being at the core of understanding and improving the performance of service firms (Mattila & Enz,
2002; Mills, 1990). Indeed, the service encounter has been recognized as a key strategic competitive weapon (Mittal & Lassar, 1996), and the service literature has emphasized the criticality or importance of the service encounter. The so-called gap model of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985), for example, stresses the service encounter. Although there has been extensive research related to service encounters, this line of research has traditionally limited its focus on two aspects which reveal important gaps of knowledge that this doctoral thesis aims to redress.

First, it seems that research into service encounters has most often been based on the customer's perspective when there has been a focus on the interactive elements in service encounter (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Dabholkar et al., 1996). The dominant focus in the service literature has been on the drivers of customer-perceived quality (Edvardsson & Gustavsson, 2003). Although service employees have been acknowledged as an essential resource in the provision of services, there have been surprisingly few studies that actually identify the factors linked to the provision of services from the perspective of the provider. (For one exception, see Little and Dean, 2006.) As Svensson (2006) has observed, ‘the service provider perspective in service encounters has seldom been acknowledged’ (p. 247). This means that only one perspective in service encounters has been properly explored. Consequently, there is a need for more research on the providers’ perspectives in service encounters.

Secondly, it seems that research both from the provider’s and the customer’s perspectives has taken a cognitive approach for the study of a person’s satisfaction in service encounters. More specifically, it seems that the so-called ‘expectancy-disconfirmation theory’ has been the dominant model for assessing satisfaction (Brookes, 1995; Liljander & Strandvik, 1997; Oliver, 1997). According to this model, the cognitive confirmation (or disconfirmation) of expectations of service as compared with perceptions of the actual service performance determines satisfaction (Danaher & Haddrell, 1996). However, according to Yu and Dean (2001), a focus on the cognitive component of satisfaction and the relative neglect of the emotional component can lead to an inadequate understanding of the concept of satisfaction. In this regard, Cronin et al. (2003) have posited emotions as a core attribute of satisfaction, and have suggested that models of satisfaction should include a separate emotional component. Wirtz and Bateson (1999) have similarly contended that a separation of the cognitive and emotional components is both necessary and valuable for modelling behaviour in service settings. These arguments underscore that there is a need for more research on emotions in service encounter research.
Most definitions have appeared to emphasize the human element present in service encounters (cf. Czepiel et al., 1985; McCallum & Harrison, 1985; Shostack, 1985). The two most central human actors in service encounters are (i) the service firm’s employees and (ii) the customers of service firms. In recognition of the fact that emotions are central to our lives and the fact that the role of emotions has been researched very little, there clearly is a need for more research on emotions in service encounters both from the perspectives of employees and customers. Specifically, with respect to emotions in service encounters from the perspective of employees, there is no previous research that has investigated how employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions (e.g., managerial practices) generate the (positive and negative) emotions that they carry with them into service encounters and what impact emotions have on employees’ perceptions of the service quality they provide to customers. Moreover, in regard to emotions in service encounters from the perspective of customers, there is little research that has investigated how customers’ appraisals of human as well non-human factors of quality (e.g., design) generate the (positive and negative) emotions in service encounters that customer take with them ‘out of’ the service encounter, which then have an impact on their behaviour (e.g., loyalty).

Previous research on service encounters has mainly employed the cognitive perspective. The previous research has investigated neither how employees’ appraisal of work-related conditions is a generator of employee’s emotions nor what the impact of emotions is on employees’ perception of the service quality to customers. Moreover, little research has investigated either how customers’ appraisals of human as well non-human quality factors generate customers’ emotions in service encounters or the impact of emotions on customers’ behaviour.

In the recent literature one can find a number of researchers calling for more research on emotions in relation to aspects linked to both service-organization customers and employees, or what can be defined and studied within the concept of a ‘service encounter’ (cf. Edvardsson 2005; Fitness 2000; Lewis 2000; Mattila & Enz, 2002; Wong 2004).

1.1 The aim of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the knowledge of emotions in service encounters from both the perspectives of employees and customers. The overall aim of this thesis can be divided into five secondary objectives:
1. To provide knowledge of the types of experiences that are linked to customer’s discrete positive emotions in service encounters.
2. To identify the negative emotions that customers experience in negative service encounters and the ensuing process of service recovery by firms.
3. To examine the linkage between different work-related conditions and its influence on employees’ emotions and employees’ delivery of customer service in service encounters.
4. To examine the linkage between different managerial practices and employees’ delivery of customer service in service encounter and the role of emotions in this relationship.
5. To examine the relationship between the extreme points of discrete types of emotions, managerial practices, and employee-perceived service quality in service encounters.

Objectives 1 and 2 are related to emotions in service encounters from the perspective of customers. Objectives 3, 4, and 5 are related to emotions in service encounters from the perspective of employees. All five secondary objectives are directly related to particular contributions in each of the five appended papers that together contribute to the overall aim of this thesis. By investigating emotions from an employee’s and customer’s perspective, this thesis reveals how and why emotions are an important concept for the study of service encounters from these perspectives.

This thesis adds to our understanding of emotions in service encounters. A number of researchers have suggested that emotions are a central element in service-quality management (Babin & Griffin 1998; Cronin, 2003; Liljander & Strandvik 1997). Despite the importance of the topic of ‘emotion’ for service organizations, investigations on this topic in service encounter still remain relatively scarce. There have been calls for more research focusing on emotions in service encounter. Bagozzi (1999), for example, has insisted that there is a need for further research on how emotions influence employee behaviour. Moreover, there has been call for more research on different aspects related to how emotions influence aspects related to customers’ experiences and behaviours (Bagozzi, 1999). Taken as a whole, this thesis contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion about the role of emotions in service research.
1.2 Structure of the thesis – a reader's guide

The thesis has the following structure:

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the area under investigation. This chapter identifies the gap of knowledge that the thesis seeks to redress. This chapter also discusses the aim of the thesis and gives a summary of the five appended papers that constitute this thesis. Moreover, it gives an overview of how the appended papers have contributed to fulfilling the aim of this thesis.

Chapter 2 presents and discusses the theoretical frame and the review of literature of the thesis.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology of the thesis. In this chapter there is a review of the methods used in the appended papers. At the end, there is a reflection on the research process in this thesis.

Chapter 4 is the final chapter in this thesis, and it includes an epilogue that outlines the research contributions, the managerial implications, and suggestions for future research.

The appendix is composed of the papers that form the basis for the research presented in the thesis.

This thesis uses the word ‘emotion’ and ‘emotions’ throughout the text. Most often the word ‘emotions’ in the text is used in relation to the empirical phenomenon which is discussed. Moreover, the word ‘emotion’ is most often used in relation to theoretical phenomenon.

Emotions in service encounter are in this thesis studied from the perspectives of employees and customers separately. Consequently, it does not study service encounter on an interactional level where one simultaneously focuses on employees’ and customers’ emotions during or as a result of their direct interaction. However, although such an approach may be regarded as a limitation, this thesis asserts on a theoretical basis that this approach contributes effectively to our understanding and knowledge of emotions in service encounters on an interactional level.

The next section gives a short summary of the five appended papers that constitute this thesis.
1.3 Summary of the appended papers

This section gives a brief summary of the five appended papers. Papers I and II take the perspective of the customer while papers III, IV and V take the perspective of the employee. Taken together these papers provide the reader with an overview and an understanding of the research and the contributions in this doctoral thesis. Moreover, the brief summary of the appended papers seeks to help guide the reader with the theoretical and methodological chapters.

1.3.1 Paper I: ‘Atmospheric experiences that emotionally touch customers - A case study from a winter park’

Previous research has mainly focused on cognition when studying the effect of customers’ experiences (Martin et al., 2008). Several recent studies, however, have criticized purely cognitive models for explaining satisfaction with services unsatisfactorily (e.g. Bagozzi, 1997; Landhari, 2007). There is, then, a need for further research on emotion in service settings.

Paper I focuses on the impact of emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the customer, in particular, the positive emotions that a customer experiences in service encounters when using a hedonic service as setting. Hedonic services are good examples of the kind of settings that can evoke customers’ emotions (Barsky & Nash, 2002). Specifically, positive emotions were investigated on the basis of 162 customers visiting a winter park in Norway. The data was collected through a questionnaire that concentrated on their experiences of visiting the winter park and their positive emotions. The positive emotions in this article were limited to a distinct type, namely, joy. Joy has in many theories of emotion and generally in the literature been described as both a distinct and a highly positive type of emotion (Johnston, 1999; Wright et al., 2007).

The results from the questionnaire provided the evidence that customers’ experiences of joy are closely related to their decision to revisit the winter park in the future. Consequently, joy can be seen as an important driver to customers’ loyalty in hedonic service encounters. The analysis shows that design was the most important construct linked to the outcome of customers’ experiences. The construct of design referred to the physical (or tangible) and observable elements that customers experienced during their visit. The findings reveal that design directly affects customers’ emotions of joy. Moreover, the interaction (in this case between customers and those employees the customers came in direct contact with) turned out to be linked to customers’ emotions of joy. The results confirm
that human interactions are more engaging than impersonal ones (Czepiel & Gilmore 1987). Having this insight expands the current knowledge about what experiences that positively touch customers emotionally in a setting where there are hedonic service encounters.

This paper was co-authored with professors Göran Svensson and Mehmet Mehmetoglu and assistant professor Sander Sværi. The author of this thesis mainly conducted the empirical work, and a joint effort with the three co-authors produced the analysis and actual writing of the paper. The paper has been published in Managing Service Quality (Slåtten, Mehmetoglu, Svensson, & Sværi, 2009).

1.3.2 Paper II: ‘A SOS-construct of negative emotions in customers’ service experience (CSE) and firms’ service recovery (FSR) in the Norwegian tourism industry’

Paper II focuses on the impact of emotions from the perspective of the customer. However, in contrast to paper I, which focuses on the positive emotions in service encounters, this paper deals with negative emotions. Specifically, paper II describes what negative emotions customers experience in negative service encounters, whom these negative emotions can be attributed to, and whether these negative emotions remain even after a follow-up process of service recovery by the firm.

This paper employed a triangular approach that consisted of 269 personal interviews and a survey in which 3104 customers of the Norwegian tourism industry participated. The results provide evidence that negative emotions in a negative service encounter can be attributed to: (i) the customer’s own fault, (ii) the fault of the company providing the service, and (iii) incidents beyond the customer’s and company’s control. Moreover, the results indicate that the higher the initial level of negative emotions that customers experience, the higher it remains even after the service-recovery process. In other words, negative emotions in service encounters tend to diminish, but only to a limited extent. As in paper I, paper II generally enhances our knowledge about emotions in service research. However, paper II specifically contributes to the theory of service recovery, which is an area in the study of service encounters that hitherto seems to be neglected.

This paper was co-authored with professors Bo Edvardsson and Goran Svensson and assistant professor Sander Sværi, who is the main author of the paper. In this paper I contributed with the development of the qualitative and quantitative
questionnaires, the data collection, and the revisions done during the review process. The paper has been published in the *Journal of Services Marketing* (Sværi, Slåtten, Svensson, & Edvardsson, 2011).

1.3.3 *Paper III: ‘Antecedents and effects of emotional satisfaction on employee-perceived service quality’*

Paper III centres on the impact of emotions from the perspective of the employee. The notion of employee in paper III is limited to those who work as frontline employees. The service literature has emphasized frontline employees as the service firm’s most critical factor in relation to customers’ experiences in service encounters. There is a large body of research that has examined the experience of customers with frontline employees in service encounter by using such constructs as satisfaction and customer-perceived quality. However, the aim in paper III was to examine the relationship between employees’ emotions and the actual production of service quality delivered to customers. Moreover, by applying role theory, paper III examines how four role stressors are linked to employees’ emotions and consequently indirectly influence employees’ production of service quality in service encounters.

Paper III conducted a cross-sectional field study by using employees working as frontline employees in post offices in Norway as a setting. Of the 210 questionnaires, 149 were returned, which represents an overall response rate of 70.9 per cent.

The results show that employees who felt emotionally satisfied reported higher levels of employee-perceived service quality than those who did not. In addition, the analysis shows that three of the four role stressors (‘role conflict’, ‘role overload’, and ‘work-family conflict’) had a direct effect on emotional satisfaction, which then affected employee-perceived service quality. This paper provides evidence, then, that the service delivered by employees is indirectly related to various aspects of employees’ work situation mediated through emotional satisfaction. Paper III contributes to a better understanding of the linkage between role stressors, emotions, and service quality in service encounters from the perspective of the employee. Specifically, paper III pinpoints the importance for service firms to nurture positive emotions among employees because they play a critical role in ensuring that they provide the best possible service to customers.
Terje Slåtten is the single author of this paper, which has been published in *Managing Service Quality* (Slåtten, 2008).

### 1.3.4 Paper IV: ‘The effect of managerial practice on employee-perceived service quality – The role of emotional satisfaction’

Similar to paper III, the focus in paper IV is on the impact of emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee. However, in contrast to paper III, paper IV separates emotions into two different categories, namely, positive and negative. Moreover, paper IV examines how managerial practice (and not role stressors as in paper III) was linked to the two categories of emotions and in turn how this affects employee-perceived service quality.

An empirical investigation was conducted that asked respondents to evaluate both managerial practices and the emotions relating to managerial practices at work and to indicate their perception of the service they provide. A total of 1076 frontline employees from a broad context of service organizations participated in the study.

The findings provide evidence that managerial reward and managerial support are both directly related to positive and negative emotions and to employee-perceived service quality. In particular, positive and negative emotions appear to be directly related to employee-perceived service quality. It was also found that positive and negative emotions partially mediate the relationship between managerial (reward and support) practices and employee-perceived service quality. This study demonstrates the importance for managers to account of employees’ emotions, whether positive or negative, because of their role in explaining employee-perceived service quality in service encounter.

Terje Slåtten is the single author of this paper, and it has been published in *Managing Service Quality* (Slåtten, 2009).

### 1.3.5 Paper V: ‘Do employee’s feelings really matter in service-quality management?’

Like papers III and IV, paper V focuses on the impact of emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee. Paper V is based on the same source of empirical data that was used for paper IV. In contrast to paper IV, which focused on categories on emotions, this paper investigates two extreme points of discrete types of emotions, one positive and the other negative. However, similarly
to paper IV, paper V concentrated on managerial practices and how these practices were linked to emotions and employee-perceived service quality.

The findings in this study reveal that both types of discrete emotions are linked to managerial practices and employee-perceived service quality. The two discrete types of emotions explained 38.4 per cent of the variance in employee-perceived service quality, which can be described as substantial. Specifically, employees' emotions of frustration were found to have a strong negative effect on employee-perceived service quality. Moreover, employees’ emotions of joy had (although less) a positive effect on employee-perceived service quality. Of the two types of managerial practices, managerial practices of rewarding were found to be most influential on both employees’ emotions of frustration and joy. Managerial practices of empowerment were found to have the second-largest impact on the two types of discrete emotion.

The findings in this study reveal that employees’ emotions really do matter in service-quality management. Consequently, this paper has demonstrated the importance for managers to consider how their practices influence the service quality that their employees provide to customers. In particular, managers should be aware of employees’ emotions of joy and frustration because of their role in explaining employee-perceived service quality.

Terje Slåtten is the single author of this paper, which has been published in *European Business Review* (Slåtten, 2010).

The next section gives an overview of the links between the five appended papers and how they have contributed to fulfilling the aim of this thesis.

### 1.4 An overview of the links between the appended papers

This thesis uses service encounters as the empirical phenomena for its study of emotions from the perspectives of employees and customers. Papers I and II addresses emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the customer. From the customer’s point of view, the most vivid impression of a given service occurs in the service encounter or ‘the moment of truth’, when the customer interacts with the service firm (Zeithaml et al., 2008). Specifically, papers I and II contribute to a deeper understanding of how customers’ positive and negative emotions relate to positive and negative experiences in service encounters. Papers III to V deal with emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee. From the point of view of a service employee, service encounters are
where promises to customers are kept or broken, and these encounter constitute some of the building blocks for customers’ experiences. This thesis concentrates on how employees’ emotions relate to their perceptions of how they actually deliver service quality to customers. Specifically, papers III to V contribute to a deeper understanding of how employees’ experiences are related to their positive and negative emotions and in turn how these positive and negative emotions are related to employee-perceived service quality in service encounters. Figure 1 presents an overview of the links between the appended papers.

![Figure 1: An overview of the links between the appended papers.](image)

The fundamental purposes of theory are to define, establish, and explain relationships between concepts or constructs (Amundson, 1998). The following chapter presents and discusses the theoretical concepts central to the thesis.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter gives a description of this thesis’s theoretical framework and of the review of literature on emotions in service encounters. First, some characteristics of service encounters are presented. Secondly, the main theoretical tradition within research on emotion and the choice of perspective for studying emotion in service encounters are presented. Thirdly, the review of literature that reveals how and to what extent emotions has been emphasized and studied in service-encounter research is presented. Finally, the last part of this chapter summarizes the main pattern in today's research on the employees’ and customers' perspectives on emotions in service encounters and identifies the gaps of knowledge that this thesis aims to redress.

2.1 Characteristics and definitions of the service encounter

The interaction between the customer and the firm is an extremely important aspect of services (Gemmel, 2003). Interaction is at the heart of a service between the server and the customer. According to Chandon (1997) this is especially true for those services characterized by high degree of person-to-person interaction and by the absence of an exchange of tangible goods (p. 65). Shortly after the expression of ’the moment of truth’ was first introduced to stress the importance of this phenomenon, this point of interaction began to be called the ’service encounter’ (cf. Solomon et al., 1985; Shostack, 1985). There are three key players involved in a service encounter: (i) the company, which sets guidelines and policies through its rules and managerial practices, (ii) the provider, or the employees who enact the policies of the company, and (iii) the customer, who seeks to satisfy a range of wants and needs. These three key players are interlinked and together shape or form both the process and outcome of the service encounter.

It seems that most definitions have traditionally emphasized the human or interpersonal element in service encounters. For example, McCallum and Harrison (1985) state that 'Service encounters are first and foremost social encounters' (p. 35). In line with this reasoning, Czepiel et al. (1985) define a service encounter as a social interaction involving human beings who interact with each other. Similarly, Solomon (1987) defines the service encounter as 'the dyadic interaction between a customer and service provider'. In contrast to a narrow focus on the interpersonal element, Shostack (1985) defines the service encounter somewhat more broadly by defining the service encounter as ‘a period of time during which a customer
directly interacts with a service. This definition encompasses all aspects of the service firm with which the customer may interact, including its personnel, its physical facilities, and other visible elements. Consequently, according to this definition, the interaction between the customer and the firm can occur without any human interaction element (Bitner et al., 1990). In the literature there are examples of studies focusing on the impact of physical surroundings (or servicescapes) on both employees and customers (cf. Bitner, 1992). This thesis emphasizes this broad definition of service encounters, focusing on interaction with both interpersonal and non-human elements (e.g., the physical design) in service encounters.

There have been different proposal concerning the characteristics and to the best manner in which to study service encounters. Solomon et al. (1985), for example, use a role-theory perspective, and on this basis suggest that service encounters can be characterized as (i) dyadic, (ii) human interactions, and (iii) role performances. The last refers to customers and employees who have their respective roles to play, which is to some degree a learned set of behaviours, which are appropriate for the situation. While some have suggested only a few characteristics of service encounters are critical for research purposes, others have suggested a more detailed list of characteristics. The original work by Czepiel et al. (1985) has identified seven key characteristics that can be considered as distinguishing factors for the analysis of service encounters. According to this work, service encounters usually are (i) narrow in scope, featuring mere surface topics of conversation, (ii) mostly task-oriented, (iii) primarily marked by a stranger relationships, (iv) undertaken as part of work activities, (v) goal-oriented, (vi) on the whole structured by a pre-defined set of rules that facilitate the interaction, and (vii) marked by the roles of client (customer) and of service provider. Similarly, Chandon et al. (1997) propose several dimension of a service encounter. However, in contrast to the two aforementioned examples, these dimensions and subcategories in this work differ depending on whether it is the firm or the customer conducting the assessment. From the customers’ view, the perception of the service provider’s competence, ability to listen, and dedication are likely to be key factors in assessing the service received. From the employees’ view, completing the transaction is likely to be the key factor in the assessing process. It is this approach of studying service encounters from a customer and employee perspective that this thesis adopts. Specifically, from the perspective of the customer, the assessment includes the perceptions of quality of interpersonal interactions and of physical elements with the service provider. From the employee perspective, the assessment includes or concentrates on employees’ personal perceptions of the service quality they
provide. Accordingly, this thesis defines employee-perceived quality as the employee’s personal evaluations of service quality to customers. Although one could maintain that studying service quality on the basis of the employee’s own assessment, and not the customer’s, is a limitation of this thesis, previous research has suggested that there is a significant relationship between employees’ perception of service quality and customers’ perception of service quality. For example, both Schneider et al. (1980) and Schneider and Bowen (1985) have found strong relationships between (i) the employees’ thoughts about customers’ perceived service quality and (ii) the customers’ actual perceived service quality. Chung and Schneider (2002, p. 73) characterize this as a ‘psychological closeness’ between service employees’ perception of service quality and customers’ perception of service quality. Consequently, the focus on employees’ perceived judgement of their own abilities and actions in providing customers with excellent service quality is applicable.

In the next section a brief explanation of different perspectives within the research on emotions is provided. Moreover, this section contains a discussion where emotions are compared with other related concepts and how this thesis defines emotions in service encounters.

### 2.2 Theoretical traditions within research on emotions

According to Oliver (1997), the topic of emotions has ‘its history in general psychology’ (p. 291). Moreover, there seems to be four general perspectives linked to research on emotions in psychology (Fineman, 2003): (i) the Darwinian, (ii) the Jamesian, (iii) the cognitive, and (iv) the social constructivist perspectives.

The Darwinian perspective focuses on the function of emotions in the context of evolution by natural selection. According to the Darwinian perspective, humans share part of their evolutionary history with other primates and on this basis the emotions of humans and primates should be similar. Psychologists who work within this perspective are most interested in displays or expressions of emotions. The Jamesian perspective regards emotions as something that is primarily based in the experience of bodily changes. Such bodily changes could, for example, be visceral, postural, or facially expressive. The cognitive perspective emphasizes the role of thought in the genesis of emotions. Specifically, this perspective studies how emotions result from the way individuals appraise their environment and that such appraisals form underlying causal explanations for emotional processes. The social constructivist perspective in general rejects the biological orientation of the
Darwinian and Jamesian perspectives. In contrast the social constructivist hold both that emotions are cultural constructions that serve particular social and individual ends, and that they can only be understood by referring to a social level of analysis. It should be noted, however, that these theoretical traditions within the research on emotions are not mutually exclusive (Cornelius, 1996).

Although it is reasonable to assume that it would be possible to use several of these perspectives of emotion in relationship to services, this thesis draws only from the cognitive perspective in its studies of emotions from the perspectives of the customer and the employee. The cognitive perspective on emotions in service encounters is chosen in this thesis for three reasons: (i) it emphasizes the role of (employees’ and customers’) thoughts as the basis for emotions and thus identifies the sources of a person’s appraisal as an explanation for emotions, (ii) it concentrates on (employees’ and customers’) behavioural responses to the experienced emotions, and (iii) this perspective has been suggested as an appropriate approach for the study of emotions. For example, Watson and Spence (2007) describe it as a ‘promising avenue for pursuing the study of emotions’ (p. 488). Moreover, Johnson and Stewart (2005) have called it ‘an especially relevant approach for understanding of emotional responses’ (p.3). In summary, it is reasonable to assume that this perspective can contribute to a deeper understanding of emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of customers and of employees.

In the next section a fuller explanation of the cognitive perspective on emotions is presented.

2.2.1 Cognitive perspective on emotions

As mentioned, the cognitive perspective on emotions is the perspective chosen in this thesis. The cognitive perspective is grounded in Bagozzi’s (1992) theoretical framework on attitude theory. Figure 2 depicts this perspective. In Bagozzi’s conceptualization, an individual appraises various past, present, and future outcomes. These outcomes produce particular emotions and subsequently lead to various responses (behaviours) and hence there is the sequence of (i) appraising processes, (ii) emotional reactions, and (iii) responses. For example, if an individual were to experience a pleasant event, it will lead to joy, which in turn will direct the individual to take the necessary steps to attain that outcome (Bagozzi, 1992). The cognitive evaluation of experiences, then, precedes emotional reactions and emotional responses play a determining role in directing individual behaviour.
Conversely, if one were to experience an unfavourable event, it may lead to negative emotional responses, which subsequently may direct efforts to reduce or avoid such outcomes (Babakus et al., 2003). Consequently, these three elements in the boxes in figure 2 serve as a CEO model, that is, Cause-Effect, Outcome.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 2:** An overall research application model based on the cognitive perspective used in this thesis.

Four of the five appended papers of empirical research (numbers I, III, IV, and V) in this doctoral thesis have their theoretical basis in this general framework, as is shown in figure 2. Specifically, these four papers have used all elements related to each of the three ‘boxes’ in figure 2, and have empirically studied the linkages between them when focusing on different aspects related to emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of customers and employees. However, paper II goes more deeply into the ‘box’ in the middle of the framework that focuses on the emotional responses or ‘effect’ that is linked to a specific event or situation that an person experiences in a service encounter. (In paper II one of the aims is to determine which negative emotions have arisen as a result of a negative service experience; for a deeper investigation, see paper II in the appended papers.)

### 2.2.2 Emotions compared to other related concepts

Before I turn to a discussion of the appropriateness of using the cognitive perspective when studying emotions in service encounters from both the perspectives of the customer and the employee, I need to differentiate emotions from other related concepts. On this basis, I shall in the following first briefly discuss the characteristics of emotions and compare these characteristics with two other related concepts, namely, moods and evaluations. Secondly, I shall discuss how the use of emotions in this thesis is different from another concept in the service literature that is relevant for the perspective of the employee, namely,
emotional labour. The aim of this discussion is to give a deeper and enhanced understanding of what this thesis means by emotions in service encounters.

2.2.3 *Emotions versus affect, mood, and evaluation*

There seems to be little consistency in the terminology related to emotions (Bagozzi, 1999). It seems that the literature often uses emotions, affect, and mood interchangeably. Moreover, different researchers have described and explained emotions, affect, and mood differently (Friman, 2000). For example, subjective emotional experiences are often referred to as affect (Lazarus, 1991). However, there seems to be an agreement in the literature that the term ‘affect’ is an umbrella, as illustrated in table 1, for a set of more specific types of mental responses, including emotions, moods, and evaluations (Peter & Olson, 1996). Affect has been described as a subjectively experienced ‘feeling state’ and a general term for moods and emotions (cf. Cohen & Areni, 1991).

The literature has also characterized moods as a temporary emotional state, or a ‘mild pervasive and generalized affective state’ (Mattila & Wirtz, 2000). Moods can be described as being less target-specific, intense, and arousing compared to emotions (Liljander & Mattson, 2002). Moods may be so mild that they might not be recognized by other people (Liljander & Mattson, 2002). Moreover, moods can be so mild that a person might not be consciously aware of experiencing any emotions (Cohen & Areni, 1991). As illustrated in table 1, moods have lower levels of psychological arousal, activation, and strength compared with emotion. Examples of a person’s mood are states of being alert, relaxed, calm, or bored.

As illustrated in table 1, evaluations are characterized by rather weak affective responses accompanied by low levels of arousal compared with moods and emotions. Examples of a person’s evaluation are statements like ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘like’, or ‘dislike’. According to Peter and Olson (1996), evaluations are affective responses that are so low that one ‘sometimes hardly feels anything at all’ (p. 50). In the literature, evaluation is sometimes coupled to a person’s attitude or formation of attitude. For example, in Cohen and Areni’s (1991) view, attitudes are evaluative judgements. However, it is important to recognize that the literature often reveals divergent views on presenting and defining what evaluation consists of, and there is even a disagreement on whether evaluation should be included under the term of affect at all (Bagozzi, 1999).
This thesis focuses on emotions as a subset of the general umbrella concept of affect. As table 1 shows, emotions are characterized by the highest level of psychological arousal and intensity. Like the two other affective constructs, moods and evaluation, there is considerable debate among researchers about how emotions should be defined and studied. Various taxonomies and dimensions of emotions have been suggested (Richins 1997; Watson et al., 1988). It seems that in today's service research, there is little agreement on many aspects related to emotions, such as the nature, dimension(s), and definition of emotions. According to Tronvoll (2011), the ‘nature and number of dimensions of any construct of emotions are unclear’ (p. 113).

A generally accepted typology for the categorization of emotions is the division of emotions into two groups, positive and negative emotions (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Chaudhuri, 1998; Liljander & Strandvik, 1997). Positive emotions include such emotions as joy, pleasure, and contentment; negative emotions may include such discrete emotion as frustration, anger, and fear. This thesis investigates positive and negative emotions in service encounters from both customers’ and employees’ perspectives.

As indicated in the abovementioned discussion, the literature offers various definitions of emotions, and there is neither a generally accepted definition of the term (Cohen et al., 1991; Peterson et al., 1986; Richins, 1997; Wong, 2004) nor a consensus of how to measure them (Edwardson, 1998). Izard (1977, p. 10) has, for example, defined emotions as something: ‘…..that motivates, organizes, and guides perception, thought, and action’. Goleman (1996) has referred to emotions as a feeling and its distinctive thoughts. Oatley and Jenkins (1996) have suggested that emotions represent mental states that cause bodily changes as well as facial and vocal expressions, and they are usually followed by actions. Bagozzi et al. (1999, p. 184) have defined emotions as ‘… mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or one’s thoughts’. Lazarus (1991) has also defined emotions as ‘a reflection of a person’s appraisal of their environment’. For the purpose of this thesis, emotions are defined as a ‘mental states that arise from cognitive appraisals of his or her environment’. It is important to emphasize that the phrase ‘mental states’ in this definition is not limited to only implying a short-term or ‘in-the-moment’ emotional state (e.g., experiencing a positive emotion as a result of an appraisal of good entertainment while watching a theatre show). Mental states also include more stable tendencies of positive or negative emotions which can be compared with or characterized as a person’s emotional trait on the basis of a person’s appraisal of contextual factors (e.g., an employee being
frustrated or angry because the managers systematically over a certain period don’t prioritize the provision of the necessary training or coaching needed to carry out the best possible service quality to customers). Consequently, as also illustrated in table 1, this thesis positions emotions as being characterized by a higher level of psychological arousal and intensity or strength.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of affective responses</th>
<th>Level of physiological arousal reaction</th>
<th>Intensity or strength</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Higher arousal and activation</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Joy, love, fear, guilt, anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moods</td>
<td>Lower arousal and activation</td>
<td>Weaker</td>
<td>Alert, relaxed, calm, blue, listless, bored</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Types of affective responses (Adapted from Peter and Olson, 1996).

2.2.4 Emotions versus emotional labour

An often-mentioned emotional concept that is relevant for employees working in a service setting is emotional labour (Grandey 2000). Hochschild (1983) first defined this construct as the ‘management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display’ (p. 7). According to this definition, employees manage or regulate their emotional expressions through the facial ‘mask’ they present to others. This mask involves enhancing, faking or suppressing emotions in order to modify the expression. Generally, emotions are managed in response to the public emotion that the organization or job expects from their employees (Hochschild, 1983). Consequently, this perspective states that we can distinguish an employee’s emotions from his or her displayed emotions, which take the form of facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and language used to convey emotions (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). Displaying emotions that differ from what a person feels involves emotional regulation, which is the attempt to control the emotions we express,
when we have them, and how these emotions are experienced (Gross, 1998). This activity is considered to be labour because part of what employees (e.g., service employees) are being paid to do involves regulating their own emotions and producing the appropriate emotional state in others (Hochschild, 1983). The literature on the content of emotional labour has not focused on what the employee feels emotionally, but rather on the impact on service quality due to what the employee displays.

In contrast to emotional labour, which focuses on the ‘act of displaying appropriate emotional expression’ (Ashforth & Humphrey 1993), emotions in this thesis denote ‘true’ employee emotions. As already mentioned in the previous discussion, the idea behind the focus on ‘true’ emotions is grounded in Bagozzi’s (1992) theory of attitude. According to this theory, emotional responses mediate the relationship between a person’s appraisal (e.g., managerial practices) and his or her behaviour (e.g., delivery of service quality). In taking account of the context, this thesis assumes that ‘true’ emotions, described as relatively stable tendencies, arise from a person’s cognitive appraisals of contextually relevant factors (e.g., employees’ appraisals of work factors or customers’ appraisals of human or non-human factors of quality).

2.3 Linking emotions and service encounters – A cognitive perspective

Emotions are negative or positive reactions to specific events or circumstances (Bagozzi et al., 1999) or experiences. In line with this reasoning it is clear that a person’s emotions have a one or several causes. Specifically, it is reasonable to assume that emotions are directly caused by someone (such as an enthusiastic hotel receptionist) or something (such as a broken bed in the hotel room). As also stated in the beginning of the thesis, emotions in service encounters are experiences that most of us have had, either from a customer’s or employee’s perspective, or both.

The characteristics of services have traditionally been divided into four so-called IHIP characteristics: (I)ntangibility, (H)eterogeneity,(I)nseparability, (P)erishability (Edvardsson et al., 2005b; Parasuraman et al., 1985). Although it seems that the discussion on IHIP often have focused on whether these characteristics are different from those in goods, it nevertheless emphasizes the importance of human factors in service quality and the experience of the customer in the service encounter. Moreover, this focus on human factors in service encounters is also well documented in other descriptions of services. Service textbooks as well as research papers contain a good number of statements like ‘service is performance’
(Zeithaml et al., 2008), ‘customers as co-producers’ (Kellogg et al., 1997), ‘employees ...are the service’ (Zeithaml et al., 2008) that emphasize this important characteristic of services. On this basis, it is possible to conclude that services to a large extent put emphasis on the interaction between employee and customer. Both are important factors and salient elements in service encounters or ‘moments of truth’.

The cognitive perspective on emotions is useful when considering emotions in service encounters in regard to the two chosen perspectives in this thesis. The cognitive perspective on emotions emphasizes a person’s judgement, which in figure 2 is labelled as ‘appraisal’. Appraisal refers to the process by which we judge the situation as being either good or bad. According to Cornelius (1996), appraisal is ‘at the heart of every emotion’ (p. 116). Arnold (1960), a well known researcher within the cognitive perspective on emotions, calls appraisal ‘the direct, immediate sense judgment of weal or woe’ (p. 175). Consequently, without appraisals there can be no emotions, for all emotions are initiated by an individual’s appraisals of his or her circumstances. Arnold (1960) explains this point by stating that ‘to arouse an emotion, the object must be appraised as affecting me in some way, affecting me personally as an individual with my particular experience and my particular aims’ (p. 171). Consequently, emotions are linked to thoughts. Accordingly, Cornelius (1996) states that thoughts (or cognition) are recognized as constituting ‘important if not critical aspects of emotions’ (p. 114).

On the basis of the aforementioned discussion, we may draw three conclusions. First, human factors make up an important element of services. Secondly, emotions are linked to human thoughts, and in the cognitive perspective on emotions, as illustrated in figure 2, emotions or emotional responses are linked to thoughts (or cognition). Thoughts (or cognition), then, refer to an appraising process of judgement. Thirdly, according to this perspective, these emotional responses that the ‘judgement thoughts’ have caused are linked to responses (e.g. behaviour).

It seems that the characteristics of service and the cognitive perspective on emotions have a strong emphasis on people. The cognitive perspective mainly concentrates on the role that emotions play in the relationship between a person’s thoughts (or appraising process of judgement) and a person’s behaviour. This aspect has, as indicated in the introduction of this thesis, been to a large extent a neglected area in service research and there has recently been a call for more research on the impact of emotions on services (cf. Edvardsson 2005; Fitness
Consequently, the application of the cognitive perspective on emotions in service research contributes towards our improved understanding of emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of the customer and of the employee.

In summary, in order to understand emotions in service encounters, one first must understand people’s judgements or appraisals about relevant aspects of their environment and their relationship to emotions. Secondly, one must also understand what responses emotions are able to trigger. It is reasonable to assume that only when one considers emotions in such a way that one can more fully understand the role or ‘mechanism’ of emotions in service encounter.

On the basis of how service encounters and emotions were described and defined in the previous discussion, the following sections reveals the research on emotions has emphasized when studying service encounter from both employees’ and customers’ perspectives.

### 2.4 Emotions in service encounters in today’s service research

This section contains a review of the literature that reveals how and to what extent emotions have been emphasized and studied in service-encounter research. This section is divided into three parts. The first two parts correspond to the two perspectives chosen for studying emotions in service encounters. Specifically, the first part is a review of the literature of how and to what extent the customer’s perspective on emotions in service encounter have been emphasized in today’s research. The second part deals with the employees’ perspective, and how and to what extent this perspective has emphasized emotions in service encounters. The third part both summarizes the main pattern in the existing research in each of the two perspectives and identifies the lacunae of knowledge in this field.

The aim of this review is briefly to describe how emotions have been studied from the two chosen perspectives on emotions in service encounters. This review of the literature is limited to articles from service-research journals that have been published during the last 15 years. I am aware that emotions have been studied for more than fifteen years back. However, there is good reason to assume that this research has been accounted for and referred to in the articles that have been published during last fifteen years. Consequently, the goal has not been to give a total overview and summary of all of the research that has been carried out. In total ten journals were used as a basis for the identification of studies on emotions.
in service encounters. Specifically, these ten journals were: (i) The Journal of Service Research, (ii) The Journal of Service Management (formerly The International Journal of Service Industry Management), (iii) The Journal of Services Marketing, (iv) The Service Industries Journal, (v) Managing Service Quality, (vi) The International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences, (vii) The Journal of Marketing Research, (viii) The Journal of Retailing, and (x) The Journal of Academy of Marketing Science. Although other journals could have been added or included in the review and the time frame could have been broadened, it is reasonable to assume that this survey provides both satisfactory insight and a representative overview of how emotions in service encounters have been studied in recent service research from the perspectives of employees and of customers.

To be selected for this review, the article had to meet two criteria: (i) the keyword ‘emotions’ or ‘emotion’ is mentioned in the abstract of the article, and (ii) the article is an (quantitative or qualitative) empirical study. Tables 2 and 3 give summaries of the findings of this review. The tables show the name of the author, the type of study, the primary focus in the article, the (cause) variables related to emotions, the (effect) type(s) of emotions, and the (outcome) variables related to emotions and study context(s). I employed the categories of cause, effect, and outcome variables in order to reflect the overall CEO (Cause-Effect-Outcome) research application model that forms the empirical basis for studying emotions in this thesis (see figure 2).

2.4.1 The perspective of customers on emotions in service encounters

Table 2 includes in total 14 articles that focuses on the perspective of the customer on emotions in service encounters, and these have been published between 1996 and 2010. According to the criteria of selection for review, the article by Liljander and Strandvik (1996) is one of the first to undertake an empirical study on emotions in service encounters. According to Liljander and Strandvik (1996) ‘emotions have not traditionally been included in service quality models in the literature’ (p. 167). Consequently, the purpose of these authors’ article was to explore the fundamental questions about whether customers’ experiences when consuming a service triggers emotions and whether emotions contribute to explaining customers’ satisfaction. All articles in table 2, with the exception of two, the articles by Liljander and Strandvik (1996) and by Nyer (1997), have been published between 2001 and 2010.
Most studies focusing on emotions in service encounter from the perspective of the customer have been quantitative. However, there are two exceptions in table 2, the articles by Essén and Wikström (2008) and by Tronvoll (2011). In the article by Essén and Wikström (2008), the authors use empirical qualitative data from in-depth interviews with 26 senior citizens who were consumers of a long-term residential care services in a Swedish rural community. The empirical findings were analysed inductively by way of dimensions derived from the literature on the role of emotions in consumers’ evaluations of service quality. Moreover, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative collections of data is used in the article by Tronvoll (2011). The empirical data here is derived from 25 in-depth interviews and the results of a questionnaire survey with 3104 respondents.

An exploration of the types of contexts that have been used reveals that two types of contexts are predominant in the study of emotions from the perspective of the customer. Specifically, it seems that hotel customers and customers visiting shopping malls or retail stores are most often used as the study context. However, table 2 reveals that many contexts have been the bases for the collection of data, such as theme parks, sporting events, museums, labour-force bureaus, residential-care services, and tourism customers in general. In three of the 14 articles, students at universities have been used as respondents in studies that deal with emotions in service encounters. Clearly, there is a wide range of contexts that has been used for the investigation of emotions from the perspective of the customer.

When focusing on how emotions have been studied, two major patterns appear. First, most studies have focused on both the positive and the negative emotions of the customer. Of the 14 articles, seven of them include both categories of emotions. The rest of the articles are only focused on one of the two categories of emotions. However, the study by Mattila and Enz (2002) is to some extent different from all the others with respect to capturing different emotions. In this article emotions are captured by focusing on customer expressed emotions observing their eye contact, smiling, thanking behaviour in their relationship to front-line employees. Secondly, when one explores what types of positive and negative emotions that are included in the two types of emotions, there seems to be little agreement and consistency among the different researchers. An illustrative example is the study by Johnston et al. (2009) that measures positive emotions by using discrete positive emotions as joy, elation, enthusiasm, and satisfaction. In contrast, White (2006) represents positive emotions by using happy, hopeful, and positively surprised as discrete categories. In total, of the 14 articles included in the review, only two of them, Yu and Dean (2001) and Liljander and Strandvik (1996),
include similar types of discrete types of emotions that represent the two categories of emotions.

Emotions are linked to thoughts, and Cornelius (1996) states that thoughts (or cognition) are recognized as ‘important if not critical aspects of emotions’ (p. 114). According to the cognitive perspective on emotions, emotional responses are linked to thoughts. Table 2 reveals what types of causes of emotional responses have been most often studied in service research. The pattern can be described as having two aspects. First and most prominent is that emotions are studied in relation to customers’ appraisals related to service delivery. Specifically, customers’ appraisals are most often linked to service-provider performance either on the service-firm level or the individual level, that is, front-line employee or service-firm personnel in general. Secondly, when focusing on service-provider performance, most studies have generally measured service performance using different aspects related to one or more dimensions of service quality. One illustrative example of this is the study by Liljander and Strandvik (1996) that examined service performance by centring on these six service-quality dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and core service.

However, although empirical studies often have focused customer perception on service quality in a more general way there example of studies that have focused on two other types of customer appraisal that have been studied as a cause to customer emotions. These two types of appraisal or causes of emotions are (i) customers’ perception of service quality in specific situations and (ii) specific conditions related to the customers itself.

The first type is related to perceptions of service quality in different situations. Specifically, these situations are related to customers’ appraisals of the firm’s handling of complaints. The handling of complaint or service recovery is closely related to customers’ perceptions of justice. In table 2 one example of this is the empirical study by DeWitt et al. (2007). Their study investigates how customers evaluate a service-recovery attempt as being either just or unjust. The authors conceptualize customers’ perceived justice as a three-dimensional construct: (i) distributive, (ii) procedural, and (iii) interactional justice. However, these three dimensions are in the article studied as a single global construct for customers’ perceptions of justice in service-recovery situations. According to the DeWitt et al. (2007), customers’ appraisals of justice following service recovery are able to trigger both customers’ positive and negative emotions. Their findings in their empirical study support this view.
The second type of appraisal of specific conditions relate to the customers themselves. Table 2 shows that one customer-specific condition related to emotions is ‘mood state’. White (2006) proposes that customers’ mood state among other variables is related to customers’ emotions. The author divides mood into positive and negative mood states. The results indicate that mood states, as a customer-specific condition, were significantly correlated with customers’ emotions and consequently support the view that specific conditions related specifically to the customer (mood state) can be seen as a cause of customer’s positive and negative emotions. Other studies in table 2 have related customer emotions to more general types of customers’ appraisal. Nyer (1997) relates customers’ emotions to three types of appraisal: (i) goal relevance, (ii) goal congruence, and (iii) coping potential. Goal relevance refers to the extent to which an event or an outcome is personally relevant to the individual. Goal congruence indicates the extent to which an event or an outcome is congruent (or incongruent) with what an individual wants or desires. The third type of appraisal, coping potential, reflects an individual’s evaluation of the potential for and the consequences of engaging in coping activity. The results of this study reveal that the three types of appraisals are in different ways related to customers’ positive and negative emotions.

As discussed earlier and also mentioned in the overall research application model in figure 2, emotions are linked to behaviour (outcome). As one may expect most empirical studies have linked emotions to customers’ satisfaction and customers’ loyalty. Of the 14 studies included in table 2, nine articles include either satisfaction or customers’ loyalty, or both variables. Other variables that have been linked to specific outcomes of customers’ emotions in empirical studies are ‘relationship quality’ (Wong, 2004), ‘complaint behaviour’ (Tronvoll, 2011), ‘switching behaviour’, ‘willingness to pay more’ (Yu & Dean, 2001), and ‘intensifying the service experience’ (Bigné et al., 2008). There are also studies that have non studies specific outcome but used more comprehensive or overall outcome variables. One example of this is the study by Mattila and Enz (2002) that uses a general customer-evaluation variable that includes customers’ evaluations of the overall perception of service quality, the value of price paid, global satisfaction, the intention to return, and ‘word of mouth’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
<th>Primary focus in relationship to customers</th>
<th>(Independent) variable(s) related to emotions</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Dependent variable(s) related to emotions</th>
<th>Study context(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tronvoll (2011)</td>
<td>Qualitative and quantitative</td>
<td>To identify negative emotions, patterns of these negative emotion and their effects on customers' complaint behaviour</td>
<td>Negative emotions in five categories (fear, anger, shame, sadness, and frustration)</td>
<td>Complaint behaviour</td>
<td>Tourism industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson et al., (2009)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To provide insight into emotions across customer relationships</td>
<td>Perceived price and perceived quality (in general)</td>
<td>Positive emotions (joy, elation, enthusiasm, satisfaction) and negative emotions (indifference, disappointment, frustration, irritation, dislike, contempt, hatred, and anger)</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>Customers of an international hotel chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladhari (2009)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To provide insight into the role of emotions in predicting customers' behavioural intentions</td>
<td>Perceived service quality (in general)</td>
<td>Positive emotions (happiness, pleasantness, and joy)</td>
<td>Customers' behavioural intentions</td>
<td>Customers who stayed at a hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essén &amp; Wikström (2008)</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>To explore the role of emotions in consumers' evaluations of service quality</td>
<td>Dimensions of process quality</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Consumer of long-term residential-care services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bignè et al., (2008)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To examine experiential consumption cognition and emotions on behavioural intentions</td>
<td>Disconfirmation Emotions pleasure (angry-content; unhappy-happy; displeased-pleased; sad-joyful; disappointed-delighted; and bored-entertained) and arousal (cheerful-depressed; quiet-anxious; enthusiastic-calm; nervous-relaxed; active-passive; and surprised-indifferent)</td>
<td>Loyalty, Willingness to pay more. Satisfaction. Intensifying the service experience.</td>
<td>Loyalty, Willingness to pay more. Satisfaction. Intensifying the service experience.</td>
<td>Interactive museum and a theme park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWitt et al., (2007)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To explore customers' loyalty following service recovery</td>
<td>Justice perception</td>
<td>Positive emotions (enjoyment, joy, pleasure, happiness) and negative emotions (enraged, incensed, furious, irate, distressed)</td>
<td>Antidotal and behavioural loyalty</td>
<td>Customers in shopping malls, parks, and sporting events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Type of study</td>
<td>Primary focus in relationship to customers</td>
<td>(Independent) variable(s) related to emotions</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Dependent variable(s) related to emotions</td>
<td>Study context(s)</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yavetz &amp; Rafaeli (2006)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>E-Service display and customers' reaction</td>
<td>Aesthetics and professionalism</td>
<td>Positive emotions (pleasantness)</td>
<td>Customers' satisfaction</td>
<td>NA*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Customers' approach towards a service interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (2006)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To explore the relationship between emotions, moods, service quality, and customers' loyalty</td>
<td>Overall service quality, Mood</td>
<td>Positive emotions (happy, hopeful, positively surprised) and negative emotions (angry, depressed, guilty, disappointed, regretful, humiliated)</td>
<td>Customers' loyalty intention</td>
<td>Students at a private university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menon &amp; Dubé (2004)</td>
<td>Qualitative and quantitative</td>
<td>Service-provider responses to customers' negative emotions</td>
<td>Episodes creating negative emotions</td>
<td>Negative emotions (anxiety, anger)</td>
<td>Customers' satisfaction with the service encounter as a whole</td>
<td>Air-travel passengers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wong (2004)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>The role of emotional satisfaction in predicting customers' loyalty and relationship quality</td>
<td>Service quality (in general)</td>
<td>Positive emotions (pleased, happy, contented, enjoyable) and negative emotions (displeased, unhappy, disgruntled, frustrating)</td>
<td>Customers' loyalty and relationship quality</td>
<td>Customers shopping in a retail store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattila &amp; Enz (2002)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To study the in fluence of affect in consumers responses to brief, non-personal service encounters</td>
<td>Service provider's performance (in relationship to front-line employees)</td>
<td>Customers' expressed emotions (eye contact, smiling, thanking behaviour)</td>
<td>Overall evaluation (overall service quality, value of room for the price paid, global satisfaction, return intention, word of mouth)</td>
<td>First-class hotels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu &amp; Dean (2001)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To explore the role of emotions in satisfaction</td>
<td>Positive emotions (happy, hopeful, positively surprised) and negative emotions (angry, depressed, guilty, humiliated)</td>
<td>Overall loyalty (Positive word of mouth, complaining behaviour, switching behaviour, and willingness to pay more)</td>
<td>On-campus undergraduates students at a university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyer (1997)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To explore the relationships between customers' appraisals of goal relevance and different emotions</td>
<td>Customers' appraisals of goal relevance, goal congruence, and coping potential</td>
<td>Negative emotions (anger, sadness) and positive emotions (joy)</td>
<td>Word of mouth intentions</td>
<td>Students at a large university</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Literature review of studies on emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the customer

In summary, the review of literature on the perspective of the customer on emotions in service encounters shows that most studies are quantitative and have used hotels, shopping malls or retail stores as a study context. They tend to employ a range of discrete types of emotions representing the two categories of emotions and to focus on customers’ perception of service quality and customer-related conditions as causes of emotions. Finally, most studies have linked emotions to outcomes like customers’ satisfaction and loyalty.

2.4.2 The perspective of employees on emotions in service encounters

Table 3 focuses on the perspective of the employee on emotions in service encounters. On the basis of both the selection of journals and the criteria for the selection of articles, this table includes seven articles. The seven articles in table 3 were published between 2003 and 2010. Generally, compared to the customer perspective on emotions, it seems that less research has been aimed at studying emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee.

A comparison of empirical studies that have been undertaken reveals two common characteristics. First, similar to the perspective of customers, the empirical studies undertaken from the employees’ perspective have most often used a quantitative methodology. Of the seven empirical studies in table 3, only one is qualitative, by Harris and Reynolds (2003). In their article the authors use empirical qualitative data from in-depth interviews with 106 respondents focusing on the consequences of dysfunctional behaviour. The second similarity between the two perspectives is related to three types of contexts. The empirical studies have been undertaken in (i) hotels, (ii) restaurants, (iii) shops or stores, or have used (iv) students as the study context. However, table 3 reveals that many empirical studies have used students as the setting. Of the seven studies, three articles presented in the table 3 have used
students as respondents. When students have been the context the researchers have in two of the three studies used an experimental design where participants (students) were asked to visualize themselves in a service-encounter situation and to take part of a described role-play scenario. An illustrative example of this use of students is the empirical study by Söderlund and Rosengren (2008). In their study, 220 participants from courses in business administration for undergraduates and adult decision-makers were involved.

With regard to how emotions have been studied, two patterns appear in the research articles that were selected for review. First, most of the studies in table 3 have limited their focus to one type of emotion, the employee’s positive emotions. Of the seven articles, five articles use positive emotions as a part of their study. Grandey et al. (2010) is the only study that focuses on both employees’ positive and negative emotions in service encounters. However, in contrast to the studies focusing on one or both types of emotions, Harris and Reynolds’ (2003) study of customers’ dysfunctional behaviours limited the focus to employees’ negative emotions. Secondly, a majority of the seven articles in table 3 centre on how emotions are observed or manifested in service encounters. Most studies employ one or more dimensions of both verbal and non-verbal observational measures of service personnel. For example the study by Lin et al. (2008) uses three types of manifestations of positive emotional expressions. In their study, these dimensions of positive expression are (i) appearance, (ii) behaviour, and (iii) attitude. In contrast to the study by Lin et al. (2008), other researchers have only focused on one type of emotional expression. For example the study by Söderlund and Rosengren (2008) focuses on service workers’ display of a smile to capture how emotions are expressed in service encounters.

As mentioned in the overall research application model in figure 2, emotions are linked to certain outcome(s). Table 3 shows that most studies use one or more variables related to the customer as outcome variables. Specifically, they most often use customers’ satisfaction and customers’ loyalty as outcome variables. Of the seven articles that are included in the table, four include either satisfaction or customers’ loyalty or both variables in their empirical study. Other variables that have been linked to specific outcomes are attitudes towards the brand (Wang, 2009), customers’ emotions (Lin et al., 2008), service behaviour (Tsai, 2009), and attitudes towards the service worker (Söderlund & Rosengren, 2008).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
<th>Primary focus in relationship to employees</th>
<th>Independent variable(s) related to emotions</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Dependent variable(s) related to emotions</th>
<th>Study context(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grandey et al., (2010)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To examine how rules of emotional display are influenced by relational, occupational, and cultural expectations</td>
<td>Displaying rules related to the degree of expression of positive and negative emotions</td>
<td>Positive emotions (happiness) and negative emotions (anger)</td>
<td>Undergraduate students in management or industrial-psychology course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsai (2009)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Effect of employee's ability to manage emotions on service behaviour</td>
<td>Uses four dimension of employees' emotional-management abilities (Self-emotional appraisal, others' emotional appraisal, regulation of emotions, emotions as measurement tools)</td>
<td>Service behaviour</td>
<td>Hotel industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wong (2009)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To investigate effects of emotional displays by service personnel</td>
<td>Positive emotions displayed by service personnel</td>
<td>Dimensions of both verbal and non-verbal observational measure of service personnel's display of positive emotions</td>
<td>Customers' positive emotions, Customers' satisfaction, attitudes towards the brand, Store patronage intention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin et al., (2008)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To examine the effects of service personnel's emotional expressiveness</td>
<td>Personnel's emotional expression</td>
<td>Positive emotional expression manifested in their 1) appearance, 2) behaviour, and 3) attitude</td>
<td>Customers' emotions, Customers' satisfaction, Customers' loyalty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Söderlun and Rosengren (2008)</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>To examine the service worker's display of emotions</td>
<td>Appraisal of the service worker's emotional state and the service worker's display of smiling</td>
<td>Display of smiling in service encounter</td>
<td>Students in business administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Literature review of studies on emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee.

As mentioned in the previous discussion and shown in table 2, there seems to be a relative few studies on emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee in service literature. However, more along this line has been done in related streams of research, specifically, the research associated with what has been labelled as ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild, 1983). As mentioned previously, this stream of research concentrates both on how individuals manage their emotions in public to create certain facial and bodily displays and on the influence of emotional labour on service employees (Hochschild, 1983). According to the literature on emotional labour, employees in service encounters tend to adopt one of two types of strategies to regulate their emotions, (i) surface acting or (ii) deep acting. Surface acting refers to an employee’s engaging in a superficial display of normative emotions without making any effort to change what they feel internally (Lin & Lin, 2011). Deep acting refers to an attempt to modify internal emotions in order to bring behaviour and internal experience into alignment with the organizational expectations for emotional display (Lin & Lin, 2011). As table 3 reveals, the literature on emotions in service encounters has most often focused on how employees’ emotions are expressed or manifested in their interactions in service encounters (cf. Lin et al., 2008). Consequently, the seven articles in table 3 represent the general emphasis in today’s service research on the study of emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee.

Although it would be interesting to include more of the literature that focuses on emotional labour or ‘the act of displaying appropriate emotional expression’
(Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), this thesis limits its focus on employees’ true emotions that arise from the employee’s cognitive appraisal of internal relevant factors (e.g., managerial practices) and how these true emotions relate to the employee’s perception of service quality in service encounters. This internal focus on emotions differs from the external focus in previous research, which has predominantly examined how employees with respect to surface or deep acting regulate their emotions when interacting directly with customers. The seven studies in table 3 indicate that this thesis’s focus on emotions stemming from internal relevant factors has not been a theme taken up in previous service research, and this consequently identifies a gap of knowledge in the service literature, which this thesis seeks to redress.

To conclude, previous service research on emotions in service encounters from the perspective of the employee has typically stressed how emotions are manifested or expressed. Most often the studies deal with the manifestation or expression of employees’ positive emotions in service encounters. Similar to the studies on customer perspective, most studies that take the perspective of the employee are quantitative and have linked emotions to outcome variables such as customers’ satisfaction, loyalty, attitude towards the brand, and customers’ emotions.

2.5 Summarizing my theoretical framework

The point of departure of this theoretical framework is service encounters involving emotions. The previous discussion has shown how emotions can be differentiated from related concepts. The main theoretical contribution is the use and application of the cognitive perspective on emotions. In this respect this thesis contributes by using the cognitive perspective when studying emotions in service encounters from both the perspectives of the customer and the employee. Specifically, it contributes to revealing how employees’ and customers’ appraisals generate emotions and how these emotions are linked to these persons’ behaviours. Research so far has been sparse in this area. Consequently, this thesis contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion about the role of emotions in service research.

The review of literature that takes the perspective of the customer on emotions in service encounters reveals four gaps of knowledge in the existing service literature. First, previous research has mainly studied emotions on the level of general categories, that is, the categories of positive and negative emotions, which contain several discrete emotions. Secondly, it seems that studies undertaken until now
have limited their focus to how the service-quality delivery from service personnel is linked to customers’ emotions. Thirdly, with respect to customers’ negative emotions, no study, except Tronvoll’s (2011), has identified the spectrum of negative emotions that customers’ experience in negative service encounters. Fourthly, no study has explored the process of if or how negative emotions change following the service recovery by firms. Thus, one purpose of the present thesis is to fill these lacunae in the existing literature by identifying (i) the types of experiences that are linked to customer’s (ii) discrete positive emotions and (iii) identification of negative emotions that customers experience in negative service encounters and the following process of service recovery by firms.

Likewise, the review of literature on service encounters from the perspective of the employee also reveals a number of gaps in the service research. First, it seems that studies until today have limited their focus to how employees’ emotions are expressed or manifested in their interactions in service encounters. Moreover, most studies have related employees’ emotions to variables such as customers’ satisfaction, emotions, and loyalty, but not how employees’ emotions are related to employee-perceived service quality. Secondly, no previous study has focused on how managerial practices relate to employees’ emotions. Thirdly, similarly to the customers’ perspective, previous research that take the perspective of the employee have been limited to studying emotions on the level of general categories. In fact, they use the same general categories of positive and negative emotions, which comprise a number of discrete positive and negative emotions, respectively. Fourthly, no previous study has focused on how work conditions are related to employee emotions. On the basis of these knowledge gaps in the existing service literature, this thesis contributes to enhancing our knowledge by (i) examining how managerial and (ii) work-related conditions are related to (iii) employee-perceived service quality and (iv) the role of emotions in this relationship.

This thesis studies emotions in service encounter from the perspectives of employees and customers separately. Although this might not be an optimal approach for capturing the phenomenon of the service encounter on an overall (interactional) level, prior research on service encounters has shown that there is a ‘psychological closeness’ (Chung & Schneider, 2002, p. 73) between the employee and the customer. For example, Schneider et al. (1980) and Schneider and Bowen (1985) have found strong relationships between the quality of service that employees believed the customers to be receiving and the quality of service that customers said they received. Further, Schneider and Bowen (1985) have found that customers’ ‘turnover intentions’ (switching to another service provider) were
related to employees' turnover intentions. The notion of 'psychological closeness' is also emphasized in so-called service profit-chain model (cf. Heskett et al., 2003). Among other linkages in this model, there is a relationship between employees' satisfaction and customers' satisfaction and they thus reinforce each other (Zeithaml et al., 2008). This reasoning implies that by knowing the perceptions or experiences of one actor in service encounters, say, the employee, we are able to some extent to know or foresee the perceptions or experiences of the other actor, namely, the customer, on the basis that there is a relationship between the two actors in service encounter. That little research has been undertaken on emotions in service encounter makes it reasonable to assume that this thesis, in addition to contributing to our understanding of employees' and customers' emotions in service encounters separately, also contributes to extending our knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters on a overall (interactional) level.

In summary, this thesis contributes theoretically by using the cognitive perspective on emotions for the study of emotions in service encounters. Specifically, since there are most often two actors in service encounter, that is, the employee and the customer, it contributes to our theoretical understanding of the appropriateness of the cognitive perspective for research on emotions in service encounters from these two actors’ perspectives. However, the application of the cognitive perspective to emotions in service encounters does not merely provide theoretical contributions, but it also provides managerial implications for service firms.

The next chapter discusses and describes the research methodology that this doctoral thesis has employed in order to approach the aforementioned aims of this doctoral thesis.
3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the research methodology used in the thesis. First, there is a brief introduction that aims at explaining the background to the research. Secondly, there is a section that gives an overview of the research methodology in the five appended papers. Thirdly, there is a reflection on the overall research process that addresses aspects of quality concerning the validity and reliability of the five appended papers that constitute this thesis.

3.1 Introduction

According to Bryman (2001) the reader has a right to know about the elements of the researcher's background that have contributed to at least two choices: (i) the choice of research area and (ii) the choice of research question. Accordingly, I shall provide a short description of my research background. The discussion follows the choices linked to my role as a researcher.

In regard to the first choice, it is my belief that my background has affected my area of research. Before I decided to apply for a degree in higher education I was first trained as a post-office cashier. After finishing this training, I worked as post-office cashier at several post offices in Norway. During this time, I became aware of how managerial practices and expectations from other people (both customers and employees) about how I should perform my job both positively and negatively affected the quality of the job performance. This phenomenon fascinated me and I quite often discussed it with other colleagues, and I asked if they had the same experiences. Some years later I was recruited to carry out an 18-month trainee programme qualifying for jobs in the postal administration. During this period I participated in a project that focused on the attempt to reduce the level of costs related to illness among post-office cashiers. As part of this project, another trainee and I interviewed all who were ill in a specific postal area. At the same time we also interviewed their managers. Interestingly, during these many interviews, we found two clear patterns. First, we identified a gap between how managers perceive their own practices and how employees perceive their managers’ practices. Secondly, our findings in most cases found a linkage between a person’s appraisals of their managerial practices and certain consequences like stress, service quality, or illness. These findings fascinated me and motivated me to take further steps to understand this phenomenon. Generally, I was interested in understanding how different managerial practices could trigger different reactions among employees.
With respect to my choice of the research question (Bryman, 2001), I was quite clear about what should be the focus in my doctoral thesis. My decision and primary aim were to focus on the antecedents and effects of managerial practices and role stress in service encounters from the perspective of frontline employees. However, in an early stage of my PhD, my main advisor, professor Bo Edvardsson, encouraged me to study the closely related concept to role stress, namely, emotions or emotional satisfaction. I found this focus on emotions or emotional satisfaction intriguing because it was (i) within my research interests, and, more importantly, from a scientific point of view, and (ii) there had been little effort to study emotions or emotional satisfaction in service encounters from the perspective of the employee within the field of service research. Following these lines of thought, I initiated two projects aimed at examining questions concerning the linkage between employees’ emotions and employees’ perceptions of customer service in service encounters and how employees’ appraisal of their role and managerial practices affected this relationship. This work resulted in the appended papers III, IV, and V.

On the basis of my discussions with professor Edvardsson and the review of the literature, I found that even the customers’ perspective on emotions or emotional satisfaction in service encounters had been relatively neglected within service research. Although taking the perspective of the customer was not a part of my original plan, I found this perspective to be promising in two ways: (i) my thesis could contribute to a more holistic view on emotions in service encounters, and (ii) taking this perspective into consideration gave me the opportunity to combine my research interests with the interests of two of my colleges at the Oslo School of Management, Bård Tronvoll and Sander Sværi, who had also chosen to take the perspective of the customer. Of particular interest were questions of what negative emotions are triggered in a negative service encounter. This common research interest among us three PhD students resulted in a large research project that has formed the basis for the empirical data presented in paper II. Moreover, it resulted in another research project between me and Sværi where we were particularly interested in questions related to the types of experiences that affect customers’ positive emotions in service encounters. Our work has resulted in paper I.

According to role theory, if a person in a particular role is not able to fulfil the expectations associated with the position, the person will experience role stress (Kahn et al., 1964; Weatherly & Tansik, 1992).
While this section aimed to describe the research background and my choice of research area and research questions from a more personal perspective, the following section aims to describe the research process and the choice of methodology from a more theoretical and practical perspective.

3.2 Research methods in the appended papers

The choice of research methods should be based on research problems and questions as well as on a link of theory to method. In this way the research is linked to the empirical world by the research design. All papers in this thesis are primarily based on the cognitive perspective illustrated in figure 2. To investigate the subject of emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of the customer and the employee, three different research designs have been used in the five appended papers. Specifically, papers I, III, IV, and V employed a causal design, and paper II used a combination of explorative and descriptive designs. Table 4 gives an overview of the research methods in the five appended papers. The table shows the type of paper, the data collection, the research approach, the research subject, and the empirical bases of the studies.

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of paper</td>
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<td>Empirical</td>
<td>Empirical</td>
<td>Empirical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Interviews and questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
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<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Quantitative and qualitative</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Customers at a Norwegian theme park</td>
<td>Customers of the Norwegian tourism industry</td>
<td>Frontline employees in public offices in Norway</td>
<td>Frontline employees in private and public organizations in Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical base</td>
<td>162 respondents</td>
<td>269 semi-structured interviews and 3104 respondents</td>
<td>149 respondents</td>
<td>1076 respondents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Research methods applied in the appended papers

In the following section the research methods and the research process in the five appended papers are presented in more detail.
3.2.1 Questionnaire, paper I

Paper I, ‘Atmospheric Experience That Emotionally Touch Customers – A Case study from a Winter park, (Slätten et al., 2009), is an empirical paper that is based on a survey questionnaire. The dataset is part of a larger project that I administered, entitled ‘Emotional satisfaction in theme parks’. The research project was carried out in cooperation with Hunderfossen Family Park in Lillehammer. The research planning process began in November 2007 and the project ended in May 2008. Following informational meetings with senior bachelor students, three students indicated their interest in work as research assistants for the project. The three research assistants were allowed to use the data set as a part of their bachelor’s thesis.

In the winter of 2008, the survey questionnaire was constructed. Most items used were based on previous research. However, some changes and adaptations were necessary. We discussed the instruments internally, and they were checked by both a representative from Hunderfossen Family Park and senior researchers. Consequently, they were reformulated several times. Moreover, the questionnaire was then pretested on ten individuals for content validity and some items were reworded to improve both validity and clarity on the basis of the comments received from the participating individuals.

The structure of the questionnaire followed the logic and the tripartite pattern of the cognitive perspective on emotions, which comprises (i) appraisals, (ii) emotions, and (iii) behaviours (see figure 2). Specifically, the respondents were first asked to indicate their appraisal of certain aspects of the winter park (e.g., service quality of the staff). Next, they were asked to describe the emotions they experienced during their visit to the winter park (e.g., joy). Thirdly, the respondents were asked about future behavioural outcomes (e.g., giving a recommendation of the winter park to friends). Each questionnaire included background questions (e.g., gender, age, place of residence).

The survey was conducted during the opening season of the winter park. The original idea was to conduct the interviews with visitors at the parking space following their visit to the park or on their way out of the winter park. However, we identified two practical problems with this environment. First, most respondents were busy leaving the park in the evening. Secondly, there was not enough light to read the questionnaire. A new solution of to collecting data had to be found. Thereafter, visitors were contacted during their visit to the only café in the winter park. This tactic of collecting was useful because people tend to follow a
certain pattern: (i) they first visit the park and (ii) then they went to the café (Askeladdens Gryte). All data was collected at the end of the opening hours in order to ensure that the respondents had been in the park for a sufficient amount of time and thus had sufficient experience of their visit to the winter park to participate as key informants in the survey. Each respondent was given a brief introduction of the aim of the study and they were informed that their responses would be kept anonymous.

The data collection resulted in 162 respondents recruited among visitors at the winter park during the period from January to March 2008.

3.2.2 Interview and questionnaire, paper II

Paper II, ‘A SOS-Construct of Negative Emotions in customers Service Experience (CSE) and Firms’ Service Recovery (FSR) in the Norwegian Tourism Industry’ (Sværi et al., 2011), is an empirical paper that employed both in-depth interviews and survey questionnaires. The data set is part of a larger research project that I conducted with two colleagues at the Oslo School of Management. We began planning the research project during the spring of 2005 and we recruited students to conduct the empirical data collection during the fall of 2005 after several informational meetings. The selected students were recruited among the senior bachelor students. Out of 95 applications, we selected 45 students ranked according to their average marks and an interview in which they were asked about their motivations to participate in the research project. The students were put into groups of two or three, and were asked either to conduct in-depth interviews or to use of a survey questionnaire. In the fall of 2005, the selected students received an extensive introduction to the research project, the relevant theory, as well as training in data collection and interview-probe techniques. The students also used the data set as part of their bachelor thesis.

In the fall of 2005, an initial interview guide and a survey questionnaire were constructed. Both the interview guide and the survey questionnaire were framed and constructed. Both the interview guide and the survey questionnaire were framed to cover systematically the total service process. The instruments were

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2 This part is based on pages 52 and 53 in the thesis by Bård Tronvoll (2008). Bård Tronvoll and I (plus another colleague at the Oslo School of Management) cooperated during the planning and data-collection process of this research project. Consequently, the description of methodology, which forms the basis for paper II, is similar.
discussed internally, checked by senior researchers, and rewritten several times. My colleagues and I tested the interview guide on the students involved in the research project and later the students tested the guide on 15 informants. The final interview guide was then accepted. From January to April 2006, in-depth interviews were conducted. The collection of data resulted in 309 interviews.

The final version of the survey questionnaire was completed after 25 in-depth interviews were carried out. This resulted in some changes, for example, a new group of emotions was included. The survey questionnaire was then pretested on 40 respondents for content validity. As a result, some questionnaire was reworded to improve both validity and clarity. The collection of data resulted in 3104 respondents, who were recruited among the general public in southern and eastern Norway from February to April 2006.

Both the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire were conducted with informants or respondents, respectively, who were asked to describe their negative service experiences as customers. The structure of both the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire in paper II is similar to those in paper I in that it followed the logic and tripartite pattern of cognitive perspective on emotions, that is, (i) appraisals, (ii) emotions, and (iii) behaviours (see figure 2). Specifically, the interviews and questionnaires covered the following seven aspects: (i) the overall service process, (ii) the type of service, (iii) the time and location in which the negative incident took place, (iv) the circumstances surrounding the incident, (v) the type of triggers that appeared to cause the incident, (vi) their emotional responses during the incident, and (vii) their complaint behaviour during and after the service interaction. This technique of asking about critical incidents involved asking informants to recall a specific event and to explain the circumstances surrounding the incident. The informants and respondents were asked to recall a negative critical incident during the past 12 months. A negative critical incident was defined as one that had the potential for and adverse effect on the customer’s attitude or behaviour, or both, towards the service company. Both instruments were structured to guide the informants and respondents through the entire process, so that the recollection of the negative critical incidents was framed in an actual service experience.

There were three criteria of inclusion in the studies: (i) informants or respondents had experienced an unfavourable service experience in the tourism industry in the last 12 months, (ii) they were 16-80 years old, and (iii) they had been permanent residents of Norway for at least five years.
3.2.3 Questionnaire, paper III

Paper III, ‘Antecedents and Effects of Emotional Satisfaction on Employee-perceived Service Quality’ (Slåtten, 2008), is an empirical paper using a survey questionnaire. The data were collected as part of the obligatory coursework in a doctoral course in Writing and Publishing Scientific Articles at Karlstad University. Paper III is a very special paper for me since it was actually my first experience with writing a scientific article. Moreover, it gave me the inspiration of what should be the main focus in my five articles. Originally, I decided in paper III to take the perspective of the employee in service encounters and to narrow its focus to only stressors (e.g., role conflict, role ambiguity) and its effects on employees’ perceptions of the level of customer-service quality. But then my main advisor, professor Bo Edvardsson, introduced me to the idea of implementing ‘emotions’ or ‘emotional satisfaction’ as a part of my focus in the doctoral work. Bo Edvardsson recommended that I read an article that had been published in Managing Service Quality in 2004 by Amy Wong entitled, ‘The role of emotional satisfaction in service encounters’. Although this article took an external or the customer’s perspective on emotions in service encounters, I found the conceptual ideas to be relevant with regard to an internal or the employee’s perspective on emotions in service encounters. Consequently, I decided that my obligatory coursework paper in writing and publishing scientific articles should focus on antecedents and effects of emotional satisfaction on employee’s perceptions of the level of customer-service quality.

In the autumn of 2004, the survey questionnaire was constructed. Most of the items used were based on previous research. The instruments were discussed with my colleagues who also participated in the doctoral course, and were checked by a representative from the context in which they would be used for data collection. The questionnaire was then pretested on five respondents for content validity. There was a rewording of some items based on their suggestions for improving both validity and clarity.

Paper III followed the logic and tripartite pattern of the cognitive perspective on emotions: (i) appraisals, (ii) emotions, and (iii) behaviours (see figure 2). Specifically, the respondents were first asked to indicate their appraisal of aspects related to their experience with four role stressors: (i) work-family conflict, (ii) role overload, (iii) role ambiguity, and (iv) role conflict. Second, the respondents were asked to indicate the different emotions that are present in their work role (e.g. happy or unhappy, frustrating or enjoyable). Thirdly, the respondents were asked...
about behavioural outcomes (the employee’s perception of the level of customer-service quality).

The interested participants self-administered the survey in their own time. All participants were informed that the responses would be kept anonymous. The collection of data resulted in 149 respondents recruited among employees in post offices in southern Norway from August to September 2004.

3.2.4 Questionnaire, paper IV

Paper IV, ‘The effect of Management Practice on Employee-Perceived Service Quality – The role of emotional satisfaction’ (Slåtten, 2009), is an empirical paper using a survey questionnaire. Students collected the data as a part of their obligatory coursework in quantitative research methods. In addition, the students had just completed a course in service management. I assumed, then, that all students were able to choose appropriate respondents for this study. However, in order to ensure that they chose frontline employees from service organizations, I spent time in class to discuss the characteristics of service organizations and gave them examples.

Most of the questions were developed from the literature. Two experts evaluated the questionnaire and the survey questionnaire was pretested with 53 respondents for content validity. Some questions were reworded to improve validity and clarity. The test questionnaire answers were not used for the subsequent analysis.

In a manner similar to the structure of the other papers in this thesis, the questionnaire in paper IV followed the logic and the tripartite pattern of the cognitive perspective on emotions: (i) appraisals, (ii) emotions, and (iii) behaviours (see figure 2). Specifically, the respondents were first asked to indicate their appraisal of certain aspects related to the managerial practices in their service organizations (e.g., managerial reward practices). Secondly, the respondents were asked to indicate on a seven-point Likert-type scale whether the different emotions were present on the basis of how employees experience managerial practices at work (e.g., joyful, proud, frustrated, angry). Thirdly, the respondents were asked about behavioural outcomes (employee’s perception of the level of customer-service quality). Each questionnaire included background questions (e.g., gender, age, work arrangement, type of service sector).

The questionnaire, the aim of the project, and the model of the study were all discussed in class. The students were free to collect the data independently or with
other students, but in groups of no more than three. They chose the service organizations from which they would collect the data. However, each individual or group had to collect data from different service organizations. Each student could, moreover, collect only 15 personal interviews each. There were two reasons for these limitations. First, and most importantly, it was necessary to ensure sufficient variation in the number of service organizations included, thus avoiding the overrepresentation of some service organizations. The second reason was practical. The aim was to make it easier for the students by giving them concrete guidelines and limitations.

The data was limited to include only frontline employees in service organizations in Norway. All respondent were given a brief introduction of the aim of the study and informed that the responses would be kept anonymous. The collection of data resulted in 1076 respondents recruited among frontline employees in service organizations in southern of Norway during March and April 2006.

3.2.5 Questionnaire, paper V

Paper V, ‘Do employee’s feelings really matter in service-quality management?’ (Slåtten, 2010), is an empirical paper. Paper V is based on the same source of data as in paper IV. Consequently, the questionnaire, data-collection procedure, and the respondents are similar as for paper IV.

3.3 Reflections on the research process

The following are some reflection of the research process in general and a discussion about the quality of the research conducted in this thesis. Of special interest in this section is the issue of quality concerning validity and reliability in the five appended papers.

Generally, the writing of this thesis has been a challenging task but at the same time a positive learning experience. In retrospect, it was a good decision to write an article-based dissertation. This way of working clearly matches my personality in two ways. (i) I like concrete projects with a clear goals and relatively clear timeframe, and (ii) I become motivated by projects that I feel have practical value. This latter point is really true since writing an article-based dissertation gives one an excellent opportunity to practise and prepare for the ‘real life’ as a researcher. My conclusion is clear. I would absolutely make the same choice again.
Any research method will have inherent flaws and will limit the conclusions that can be drawn (Scandura & Williams, 2000). There are many reasons why research has these limitations. However, one fundamental limitation, regardless of whether the study has a qualitative or quantitative orientation, is the limitation concerning the ability to study the totality of a population of individuals. Moreover, there is always a question about the research process and the findings related to whether the conditions of (i) validity and (ii) reliability are accounted for and evaluated as satisfactory. Validity is often divided into external and internal validity. External validity refers to how generalizable findings are across times, settings, and individuals (Merriam, 1988; Scandura & Williams, 2000). In contrast, internal validity can be described as the degree to which the researchers study and measure are what they intended, or whether the results obtained within the study are true (Ghauri et al., 1995). According to Yin (1994) the role of reliability is to minimize errors and biases in the study. Reliability describes the extent to which the same results can be obtained if the study were to be carried out again. Although validity and reliability are different, they are closely related. For example, the improvement of the validity of a research study can enhance its reliability (Merriam, 1988).

The reliability of paper II,3 ‘A SOS-Construct of Negative Emotions in customers Service Experience (CSE) and firms’ Service Recovery (FSR) in the Norwegian Tourism Industry’, could be questioned. My two research colleagues and I have asked students to collect the data. Although we had constructed the interview guide and survey questionnaire on the basis of a solid theoretical foundation and had given the students intensive training in how to collect the data in order to strengthen the reliability, some problems could exist. The most difficult part of the data collection was the in-depth interviews, where the students had to probe the informants in order to reveal the actual emotions experienced during the negative service experience. Nevertheless, these in-depth interviews resulted in a new group of emotions that was not defined by Diener et al. (1995), which we included in the questionnaire. To enhance the reliability of our work, the collection of data was carried out in several phases. First, we reduced the possibility of pseudo-answers by letting the students work in groups of three. Secondly, during the data input, one student read while another student punched in the data into a SPSS web-based questionnaire. By separately reading and punching in the data as well as using a

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3 This paragraph is also based on pages 55 and 56 in the thesis by Bård Tronvoll (2008). Bård and I (along with another colleague at the Oslo School of Management) collaborated during the planning and data-collection process of this research project. Consequently, the limitations concerning reliability in paper II are similar.
web-based questionnaire for input data, we certainly reduced the number of punching-in errors. Third, we checked the data files thoroughly for any errors. In spite of possible problems with reliability that arise through the use of students for the collection of data, I believe we have managed to minimize the errors and biases through a number of techniques.

As in paper II, the students collected data that formed the basis of paper IV, ‘The effect of Management Practice on Employee-Perceived Service Quality – The role of emotional satisfaction’ (Slåtten, 2009), and of paper V, ‘Do employee’s feelings really matter in service-quality management?’ (Slåtten, 2010). Consequently, the reliability of the collected data could be questioned. However, I tried to minimize errors and biases during the entire process. First, a solid theoretical foundation for the survey questionnaire was laid and an extensive pretest was carried out. Secondly, time was used in class to explain clearly both the aim and the structure of the questionnaire. Thirdly, I ensured variation by limiting the number of interviews for each student. Fourthly, I reduced the possibility of pseudo-answers by letting the students work in groups. Fifthly, I arranged special data lab seminars where each group would punch in the collected data into a SPSS file that I had set up. I believe that all of these efforts contributed to a real reduction of the possible errors in papers IV and V.

Regarding the internal validity of questionnaire that has formed the basis of the five papers, I believe that the measures are adequate for the aims of the studies. However, one could question the internal validity of the dependent variable in study III, ‘Antecedents and Effects of Emotional Satisfaction on Employee-perceived Service Quality’ (Slåtten, 2008), study IV, ‘The effect of Management Practice on Employee-Perceived Service Quality – The role of emotional satisfaction’ (Slåtten, 2009), and study V, ‘Do employee’s feelings really matter in service-quality management?’ (Slåtten, 2010). This dependent variable in all three studies is similar, and is about ‘employee-perceived service quality’. In all the three studies I have used self-reporting measures. The questions included were of the sort: ‘generally, my overall service is excellent’ and ‘generally, I offer a service of very high quality’. From my perspective, this use of self-reporting measures can be rightly criticized and is a limitation of my research. In the review process of paper IV, one reviewer actually criticized my use of self-reporting measures in respect of my measure of service quality. In practice there are four main ways to measure service performance: (i) self-appraisal, (ii) peer-appraisal, (iii) supervisory evaluation, and (iv) customers’ evaluations (Behrman & Perreault, 1982). Some scholars have criticized the practice of using self-evaluations because they can lead to the
possibility of shared response bias with regard to the relations among variables and common method variance (Armstrong & Overton, 1977; Thornton, 1980). However, my choice of using self-report measures of service quality is neither new nor untraditional. Several past studies have used employees’ perception of service delivery (cf. Boshoff & Mels, 1995; Jaworski & Kohli, 1991; Singh, 2000). More importantly, the focus in the three papers using self-reports is to examine how the construct of employee-perceived service quality is correlated with other constructs (e.g., positive and negative emotions). With this focus in mind, the use of self-reporting measures is acceptable. Singh (2000) supports this view and states that ‘on the basis of several studies and meta-analysis of these biases, it is reasonable to state that performance self-reports are more likely to bias the mean values (upward) but less likely to bias their correlations with other constructs’ (p. 441).

Another argument that downplays the biases caused by self-reporting measures is the importance of anonymity. As Singh states: ‘biases are substantially reduced and … the validity of self-report performance is enhanced by using anonymous mail surveys … because motivation for self-presentation is curtailed’ (p. 441). Although I did not use a mail survey, all participants’ were informed that their responses would be kept anonymous, and hopefully this information contributed to an enhancement of internal validity. In retrospect I recognize that other alternatives could have been used for measuring service quality, such as (i) peer-appraisal, (ii) supervisory evaluation, and (iii) customers’ evaluation. However, owing to issues of time, practicality, and cost, these alternatives were not realizable in this research project. In total my choices for measuring service quality might not be characterized as optimal, but the choice is suitable for the contributions this study has to offer, that is, the initial testing of a relatively neglected area in service research.

Sample biases are able to affect the external validity (or the generalizability of the study) negatively. There are three types of sample biases: (i) nonresponse bias, (ii) coverage bias, and (iii) selection bias. Nonresponse bias occurs if the failure to respond is disproportional across groups. Coverage bias arises if some segment of the population is excluded from the investigation for some reason. The third type of sample bias, selection bias, occurs if some parts of the population have higher or lower chances of being selected. It could be questioned whether external validity in paper I, ‘Atmospheric Experiences That Emotionally Touch Customers – A Case Study from a Winter Park’ (Slåtten et al., 2009), is affected owing to the possibility of selection bias. As described previously in this chapter, I chose for practical reasons to collect the data when visitors went to the café (Askeladdens Gryte). Although I am sure that the participating visitors had sufficient time in the park
before answering the survey questionnaire, it is a possibility that respondents with one or more children are overrepresented in data material. The reason is rather logical and obvious since it is reasonable to assume that children or parents would want to go to the café to get out of the cold or to eat. In retrospect, upon studying the descriptive data, one can see that 97 per cent of those who participated in the survey were travelling companions with more than one person. Moreover, about 80 per cent of the participants had two or more travel companions, indicating the probability that persons with children are overrepresented in the study. Although the question of sample bias could limit the generalization of the findings to persons with families (and not single persons) visiting a theme park, it is reasonable to assume that the characteristics of the respondents do not critically limit the main aim of this study, which was to examine the linkage between customers’ experiences, positive emotions, and behavioural responses in service encounters by using a hedonic service as the empirical context.
4 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS, MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter concludes this doctoral thesis and summarize its contributions. First, a conceptual model describing the contributions is introduced. Secondly, there is a discussion of the thesis’s empirical and theoretical contributions. This part is structured according to the two chosen perspectives of studying emotions in service encounters. Thirdly, there is discussion of the managerial implications from this thesis. Fourthly, some suggestions for future research will be presented.

4.1 Conceptual model of research contributions regarding emotions in service encounters

The aim of this thesis was to enhance the knowledge of emotions in service encounters from the perspectives of the customer and of the employee. Previous research has mainly focused on the cognitive perspective when investigating service encounters. No previous research has investigated how employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions can generate employee’s emotions and how emotions have an impact on employees’ perceptions of the service quality they provide to customers. Moreover, little research has investigated how customers’ appraisals of human as well non-human factors of quality are a generator of customers’ emotions in service encounters and what the impact of emotions are on customers’ behaviour. This thesis has contributed to deepening and broadening existing research by focusing on emotions in service encounters and how these factors relate to both employees and customer is linked to their emotions and their behaviours. Consequently, this thesis extends the existing research on emotions that hitherto has been a relatively neglected perspective in the study of service encounters. This thesis thus contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion about the role of emotions in service research (cf. Cronin, 2003, Edvardsson, 2005).

Figure 3 provides one way of illustrating the contributions of this thesis. This figure illustrates the two perspectives on emotions in service encounters that this thesis has adopted. The grey box represents the area or the boundaries of the service encounter. Figure 3 shows how both employees’ and customers’ emotions are present in service encounters. Moreover, figure 3 shows how employees’ emotions linked to their perceptions of service quality. On the other hand, customers’ emotions are linked to their appraisals or assessments of human and non-human service quality in the service encounter. Consequently, the grey box in
Figure 3 display two essential aspects in service encounters related to the interaction between service employees and service firm’s customers. Moreover, on the left side of this figure and outside of the grey box, there is an illustration of how employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions is a generator of employees’ emotions, which they bring ‘into’ the service encounter. This is illustrated by the box ‘emotions’ being partly inside and outside the grey box of the service encounter. According to figure 3 the emotions that employees bring into service encounters have an impact on employees’ perceptions of the service quality they provide to customers. Figure 3 also illustrates that customers’ appraisals of human as well as non-human factors of quality (e.g., design) generates customers’ emotions in service encounters they take them with them out of the service encounter. This is illustrated by the box ‘emotions’ being partly inside and outside the grey box representing service encounters. The right side of figure shows that the emotions that customers take out of the service encounter have an impact on behavioural responses (e.g., loyalty). In figure 3 there are no lines between employees’ perceptions of service quality and customer’s appraisal or assessment of quality. This indicates the limitation of this thesis in that it has not applied an interactional approach in its study of emotions in service encounters. Although this thesis does not study the direct interaction between employees and customers in service encounters, figure 3 nevertheless suggests that, conceptually, there could be such a relationship on the basis of previous research (cf. Chung & Schneider, 2002; Schneider et al., 1980; Schneider & Bowen, 1985). Consequently, there are good reasons to assume a relationship between these two actors in service encounters, although it is not focused on explicitly in this thesis.
In the next section there is a more detailed discussion of this thesis’s empirical and theoretical contributions. The discussions are structured on the basis of the logic as illustrated in figure 3. Corresponding with beginning from the left side the figure 3 and continuing on to the right side of the figure, the first and second sections contain a discussion of the contributions in respect of the perspective of the employee on emotions in service encounters. Sections three and four contain a discussion of contributions in regard to the perspective of the customer on emotions in service encounters. The final section discusses the overall (interactional) contributions that have been made through the study of emotions in service encounters from both the perspectives of the customer and the employee.

4.2 Research contributions – the perspective of employees on emotions in service encounters

The contribution of this thesis regarding the perspective of the employee on emotions in service encounters comprises two main aspects: (i) an extended understanding of the effect of emotion on service quality and (ii) the influence employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions on service quality and the role of emotion in this relationship. Each of these two contributions is discussed in the following two sections.

4.2.1 An extended understanding of the effect of emotions on service quality

Taking the perspective of the employee on emotions in service encounters offers a deeper understanding of the effect of emotions on service quality. This contribution corresponds to the two boxes on the left side in figure 3, labelled ‘emotions’ and ‘quality’. Previous service research has predominantly been focused on two main aspects on employee emotions in service encounter. First, previous research on emotions in service encounters has most often focused on how employees’ emotions are related to customers’ perceptions of service quality (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989; Wang, 2009). Secondly, previous research has largely focused on emotion as something that employees display and express in their interactions with customers (cf. Lin et al. 2008). For example, previous research has studied service workers’ display of smiling (Söderlund & Rosengren, 2008), the authenticity of emotional display (Hennig-Thuray et al. 2006), and how emotional expression is manifested in behaviour and attitude (Lin et al. 2008). Much focus has been on how employees regulate their emotions in their contact or interaction with customers. As mentioned earlier in
this thesis there are two types of emotional regulation: (i) surface acting and (ii) deep acting (Hochschild, 1983). The former refers to employees’ engaging in superficial displays of normative emotions, while the latter refers to employees’ trying to change what they really feel internally in order to match the situation.

On the basis of the two aspects that have been predominant in previous research, this thesis furthers previous research on the effect of emotion on service quality in two ways. First, in contrast to the focus on how employees’ emotions are related to customers’ perceptions of service quality, this thesis focuses on employees’ perceptions of service quality. Secondly, this thesis does not focus on how emotions connected to either surface or deep acting are displayed and expressed externally in employees’ interactions with customers, which has dominated previous research (cf. Lin & Lin, 2011). Instead, this thesis focuses on ‘true’ or actual emotions. The origin of these ‘true’ or actual emotions is located internally at the job and workplace. These emotions were studied both on the categorial level, consisting of two types of categories, positive and negative emotions (see paper IV) as well as discrete types of positive and negative emotions (see paper V). Unlike previous research that has an external (employee-customer) focus on the emotional effect on service quality, this thesis contributes to the existing knowledge by having an internal (employees’) focus. This internal focus contributes to our understanding of how emotions at the workplace have an effect on employees’ perceptions of service quality.

Papers III, IV, and V substantiate the emotional effect on service quality. Paper III (Slåtten, 2008) indicates the general effect of emotions on service quality, Paper IV (Slåtten, 2009) demonstrates the effects of categories of positive and negative emotions on service quality, and Paper V (Slåtten, 2010) shows the effects of discrete types of positive and negative emotions on service quality. Specifically, these papers have found that employees’ positive emotions at the categorial level (paper IV) and the discrete level (paper V) were both positively related to service quality. Conversely, negative emotions at the categorial (paper IV) and discrete levels (paper V) were negatively related to service quality. When comparing the effect of positive and negative emotions on categorial and discrete level, these papers find a clear pattern where negative emotions were significantly more strongly related to service quality compared with positive emotions. Specifically, employees’ negative emotions have a deleterious impact on service quality whereas positive emotions, although slighter, have a beneficial impact on service quality. Consequently, this thesis furthers our knowledge by demonstrating that there...
seems to be a spillover effect between both employees’ positive and negative emotions and service quality in service encounters.

As mentioned, unlike previous research, which has most often focused on displays or expressions of emotions, this thesis focuses on ‘true’ emotions and service quality. One way of interpreting this distinction is that these two approaches represent completely different and exclusive views. This thesis regards these two views as being complementary. Specifically, employees’ ‘true’ emotions are critical for two reasons. First, emotions are important for motivation. Barsade and Gibson (2007) state that ‘emotions create and sustain motivation’ (p.36). On the basis of previous research in emotional labour, it is reasonable to assume that ‘true’ emotions both create and maintain a person’s motivation to bring his or her behaviour into alignment with organizational expectations of emotional display. Secondly, Wright (2006) claims that a positive emotional state is able to ‘broaden’ an employee’s momentary thought-action repertoire by expanding the potential thoughts and actions that come to mind. This is important in consideration of heterogeneity, one of the decisive characteristics of frontline jobs (Parasuraman, 1985). Heterogeneity reflects the fact that no customer is exactly alike, and that each has unique needs and demands. This challenge implies that an employee must understand customers’ needs and adapt their behaviour in their interactions with them depending on the frontline perception and understanding of each individual’s customer-service script, that is, the individual customer’s expectations of what constitute ‘good service’ (Solomon et al. 1985). As Wright (2006) argues, when jobs are characterized by heterogeneity, employees with positive emotions are able to adapt positively to customers’ needs and wants. Consequently, owing to the research on ‘true’ emotions in the literature, is it reasonable to assert that employee ‘true’ emotions are fundamental to service quality.

In summary, this thesis extends the view of the emotional effects on service quality in two ways. First, in reference previous literature to emotional labour, this thesis suggests that employees’ ‘true’ emotions could motivate employees to adhere to the displaying rules of expressions that organizations have set (e.g., always smile when a new customer comes to the reception desk). Secondly, ‘true’ emotions simultaneously expand the thought-action repertoire and enables employees to enhance their performance of service quality in general (e.g., the time used to understand the customer’s needs and wants). In this regard, previous research on emotions support the suggestions that this thesis offers. For example, Staw et al. (1994) have found that emotions influence task activity and persistence. Moreover, Dunning and Story (1991) observe that positive people actually do experience
The second contribution deepens our understanding of the influence employees' appraisals of work-related conditions on service quality and the role of emotions in this relationship. This contribution corresponds to all three boxes on the left side of figure 3 labelled: ‘appraisal of work-related conditions’, ‘emotions’, and ‘quality’. Previous research has narrowed the focus to various aspects of employees' appraisals of work conditions and the relationship with employees' quality of service. An illustrative example of previous research is Chebat's (2000) study of six branches of a charter bank, which finds that managerial practices, such as training fairness, correlate with employees' pro-social behaviours that promote customers’ welfare. Similar studies can be found in the literature (cf. Chebat et al. 2003; Hartline & Ferrell 1996). Although there are examples of studies focusing on employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions (e.g., managerial practices) and employees’ quality of service, it seems that previous research has neglected to focus on the role of employees' emotions in the relationship between the appraisal of work-related conditions and employees' quality of service. As table 3 illustrates, no study on emotions in service research has explored this relationship. According to Glasø et al. (2006), ‘research on the experience of emotions at work is relatively underdeveloped’ (p. 50). Moreover, according to Kennedy-McDoll and Anderson (2002), ‘No study has attempted to develop a model of leadership style and emotions as mediators of performance’ (p. 546). Consequently, to this author’s knowledge, this is the first study that has focused on this neglected area of service research and thus it offers a unique contribution to the field of service research.

This contribution is a consideration of the influence of employees' appraisals of work-related conditions on service quality and the role of emotions in this relationship, which is described in papers III, IV, and IV (Slåtten, 2008; Slåtten, 2009; Slåtten, 2010). It was found that employees' emotions seem to have a mediating role in the relationship between different aspects related to work-related conditions and service quality. Paper IV has found that employees' (positive and negative) emotions have a (partially) mediating role in the relationship between employees' appraisals of managerial ‘reward’ and ‘support’ and service quality. Paper V suggests the same mediating role of employees' emotions by using discrete emotions of ‘joy’ and ‘frustration’ as mediating variables in the relationship.
between service quality and managerial ‘empowerment’ and ‘reward’. In contrast to papers IV and V, paper III considers how employees’ emotions mediate the relationship between four aspects related to their appraisal of the work role. The empirical study reveals that three of the four aspects are related to employees’ emotions. Moreover, paper III suggests that employees’ emotions have a mediating role in the relationship between the four aspects of the work role and employees’ perceived service quality. Paper III finds that ‘role conflict’, ‘role ambiguity’, ‘work-family conflict’, and ‘role overload’ are all negatively related to employee emotions. This empirical study reveals a significant relationship between these variables and employees’ emotions, with ‘role overload’ being the most detrimental for employee emotions. Interestingly, paper III also shows that employees’ appraisal of the ‘work-family conflict’ had the second-most adverse effect on employees’ emotions.

As illustrated in figure 3, and as suggested in papers III, IV, and IV, employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions are a generator of employees’ emotions, which they bring ‘into’ service encounters and which affect employees’ quality of service. The findings deepen our knowledge about employees in service organizations who deal directly with the customers in service encounters or occupy what is called ‘boundary-spanning roles’ (Bateson, 1989). Specifically, it contributes to theories about leadership in service organizations by showing that employees are not isolated ‘emotional islands’ but are instead part of the organization’s emotional fabric. This conclusion supports the claim made by Goleman et al. (2003) that ‘emotions are at the heart of effective management practices’. Moreover, it broadens our knowledge related to the effect of role stressors when a person is in so-called boundary-spanning position (Chung & Schneider, 2002). This thesis gives support to the following statement made by Babakus et al., (2003): ‘emotional states of employees play a critical role in determining their subsequent behaviours, including how they interact with customers’.

In summary, this thesis deepens our understanding of the influence of employee’s appraisals of work-related conditions on service quality and the role of emotions in this relationship in two ways. First, this thesis shows that employees’ emotions

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4 In this paper, role overload consists of two dimensions. The first dimension is labelled quantitative overload. This dimension refers to excessive work whereby the employee is capable of meeting the role demand, but there are too many (perhaps conflicting) role demands. The second dimension is labelled qualitative overload. This dimension refers to an employee’s inadequate skills and abilities, and even if more time and resources were made available, these would not help because more training and education would be required before the employee could meet the demands of the role.
have a mediating role in the relationship between the three managerial practices: (i) ‘reward’, (ii) ‘support’, (iii) ‘empowerment’, and employees’ quality of service. Secondly, this thesis also suggests that employees’ emotions have a mediating role in the relationship between four work-role aspects: (i) ‘role conflict’, (ii) ‘role ambiguity’, (iii) ‘work-family conflict’, (iv) ‘role overload’, and employees’ quality of service. Consequently, this thesis contributes to our understanding of these critical factors related to the ‘people’ element in services marketing mix (cf. Zeithaml et al., 2008). Moreover, it contributes by deepening our insights on the role of emotion in service-quality management, which is a relatively new debate and discussion within the field of service research (cf. Cronin, 2003; Edvardsson, 2005a; Wong, 2004).

4.3 Research contributions – the perspective of customer’s on emotions in service encounters

The contribution of this thesis with respect to the customer’s perspective on emotions in service encounters is composed of two aspects: (i) an extended understanding of customers’ appraisals of service quality on customers’ positive emotions and loyalty, and (ii) a deepened knowledge of customers’ negative emotions in negative service encounters. Each of these two contributions is discussed in the following three sections.

4.3.1 Extended understanding of customer’s appraisals of service quality on customers’ positive emotions and customer loyalty

The first contribution, the customers’ perspective on emotions in service encounters, extends our understanding of customers’ appraisals of service quality on customers’ emotions and loyalty. This contribution match all three boxes on the right side of figure 3 labelled: ‘human and non-human quality appraisal’, ‘emotion’, and ‘behaviour’. Previous research on emotions in service encounter from the customer’s perspective has been limited in three ways. First, there has been little research on customers’ emotions in service encounters that has used tourist attractions as a context (Bigié et al. 2005; McGoldrich & Pieros, 1998). Secondly, previous research seems to have narrowed its focus to exploring the customers’ appraisals of service quality based on human factors. Mattila and Enz (2002), for example, are typical in that they focus on the influence of the service provider’s performance in relation to front-line employees and customers’ expressed emotions such as eye contact, smiling, thanking behaviours. Consequently, customers’ appraisal of non-human factors of quality (e.g., aesthetics) seems to be neglected. Secondly, previous research has most often studied emotions at the
categorial level. An illustrative example of this characteristic is the study by DeWitt et al. (2007). In their study on customers' loyalty following service recovery, the category of positive emotions comprises such discrete emotions as 'enjoyment', 'joy', 'pleasure', 'happiness', and the category of negative emotions consists of discrete emotions such as 'enraged', 'incensed', 'furious', 'irate', and 'distressed'. There is an marked tendency in the service research to study emotions on the categorial level (cf. Bignè et al. 2008; Johnson et al. 2009; Ladhari, 2009; Nyer, 1997; Menon & Dube, 2004; Slåtten et al. 2011; Yu and Dean, 2001; White, 2006; Wong, 2004). However, the study of emotions on the discrete level seems to have been more or less neglected in service research. A focus on discrete types of emotions is useful for two reasons. First, certain discrete emotions are especially relevant in certain contexts or situations (Verbeke & Bagozzi, 1998; Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998). Secondly, discrete types within the same category of emotions sometimes have different causes and effects. For example, Fox and Spector (1999) find that the two discrete negative emotions of 'frustration' and 'aggression' have different links to counterproductive work behaviours. Moreover, Krehbiel and Cropanzano's (2000) study of the effects of procedural justice and outcome favourability on four discrete positive and four discrete negative emotional responses has found that 'anger', 'frustration', 'guilt', 'anxiety', 'happiness', 'joy', 'disappointment', and 'pride' were all differently associated with procedural justice and outcome favourability. Other studies support the observation that discrete positive and negative emotions correlate differently with other variables (cf. Lewis, 2000; Mattila & Ro, 2008; Mattson et al., 2004). Consequently, there are good reasons for focusing on discrete emotions, even though little research has been undertaken in this area of service research.

On the basis of the three aforementioned aspects that has been dominant in previous research, this thesis extends previous research in two ways. First, in contrast to previous research on customers' emotions in service encounter, which is most often limited to studying the appraisals of the human dimension of quality offered by service firms, this, thesis includes customers' appraisal of non-human quality factors as well as their appraisals of quality of humans and their relationship with customers' emotions. Specifically, the two factors of quality appraisal were 'interaction' (a human factor of quality) and 'design' (a non-human factor of quality). The inclusion of both made it possible to compare which of the two has most impact on customers' emotions. Secondly, unlike the tendency in previous service research to study emotions at the categorial level, this thesis studied emotions on the discrete level. Thirdly, a tourist attraction was used as context to study customers' discrete emotions. Previous research has emphasized that tourist
attractions are appropriate for the study of customers’ emotional reactions (Otto & Ritchie, 1996; Vittersø et al. 2000). Specifically, this thesis focuses on one discrete type of emotion, labelled as ‘joy’. Studies of people’s psychological well-being regard ‘joy’ (sometime termed as ‘joyous’) as the highly positive pole that captures a hedonic or pleasantness-based description (Wright et al., 2007). According to previous research, some emotions are especially relevant in certain contexts, and thus this study chose the discrete positive emotion of ‘joy’ because it was reasonable to assume that customers visiting tourist attractions consciously seek to experience this type of emotion. Consequently, in tourist attractions the emotional reaction of ‘joy’ is an important customer goal.

Paper I describes the contribution concerning customers’ appraisals of service quality on customers’ positive emotions and customers’ loyalty (Slåtten et al. 2009). As illustrated in figure 3, customers’ emotional reaction of ‘joy’ is something they bring with them ‘out of’ the service encounter and it has behavioural effects on customer loyalty. Moreover, this study finds that customers’ appraisals of ‘interaction’ and ‘design’ are able to trigger emotional reactions of ‘joy’. Consequently, customers’ appraisals of both human and non-human factors of quality constitute a driver of customers’ emotion of ‘joy’. However, the comparison of the strengths of human and non-human factors of quality in relation to ‘joy’, this study finds that the latter, that is, ‘design’, was clearly the most influential.\(^5\) Moreover, customer reactions of ‘joy’ had a mediating role in the relationship between ‘design’ and customers’ loyalty but it did not mediate ‘interaction’. Consequently, customers’ appraisals of (the non-human factors of quality) ‘design’ appears to be a crucial factor in relation to ‘joy’ and customers’ loyalty in hedonic attractions. The finding is supported by Bitner (1992), who states that ‘design is apt to influence customer attitudes towards service providers in all service settings’. Moreover, it supports Lazarus’ (1991) statement that ‘emotions are affected by the appreciation of the environment’.

According to Shostack (1985), a service encounter can be defined as ‘a period … during which a consumer directly interacts with a service’ (p. 243). This definition encompasses all aspects of the service firm that may affect customers’ emotions. Customers often seek experiences that evoke positive emotions in service encounters. This is especially true for customers visiting tourist attractions (Otto & Ritchie, 1996; Yuan & Wu, 2008). However, little research has focused on

\(^5\) In the study by Slåtten et al. (2009) the regression weight of ‘design’ was 0.400 and the regression weight of ‘interaction’ was 0.184.
customers’ emotions in service encounters at tourist attractions (Bignè et al. 2005; McGoldrich & Pieros, 1998). This thesis thus answers the call for more research that makes use of attractions as the empirical context. Moreover, it makes a contribution to the literature that focuses on the importance of engagement in customer experiences. Pine and Gilmore (1998) state that customers’ experiences touch on ‘… events that engage individuals in a personal way’ (p. 12). This thesis enhances our understanding of service-quality factors and emotional experiences or reactions that have a tendency to be stored especially well in memory. Johnston and Clark (2001) refer to these instances as ‘mental imprints’. In view of the strong linkage between customers’ emotional reactions of ‘joy’ and loyalty, this thesis also contributes to the literature on the role that customers’ emotions have in relation to customer loyalty.

In summary, this thesis extends in two ways our understanding of customers’ appraisal of service quality on customers’ positive emotions and loyalty. First, it shows that customers’ perceptions of non-human factors of service quality, namely, ‘design’, are more able to create emotional reactions of ‘joy’ compared with human factors of quality, namely, ‘interaction’, in tourism attractions. Secondly, this thesis also shows that the discrete type of emotion of ‘joy’ mediates the relationship between ‘design’ and customers’ loyalty. Consequently, it emphasizes the important role of ‘joy’ in the relation between customers’ perceptions of service quality and customers’ loyalty in tourism attractions. This thesis, then, supports Johnson and Stewart’s (2005) view of the cognitive perspective on emotions as a ‘relevant approach for understanding the emotional responses of consumers in the marketplace’ (p.3).

### 4.3.2 A deepened knowledge of customers negative emotions in negative service encounters

The second contribution is a deepened knowledge of customers’ negative emotions in negative service encounters. This contribution involves the box on the right side of figure 3 labelled: ‘emotions’. There has been extensive research on the best ways of handling complaints when customers have experienced a negative customer encounter (cf. e.g., Stauss & Seidel, 2004). In previous research on negative encounters, much focus has been on customers’ negative emotional reactions to firms’ service-recovery actions. Often the content of negative emotion has been limited to a number of negative emotions (Tronvoll, 2011). An illustrative example of this tendency is the study of DeWitt et al. (2008). In their study of customers’ reactions to firms’ service-recovery actions, the negative emotions construct
comprised five discrete emotions, ‘enraged’, ‘incensed’, ‘furious’, ‘irate’, and ‘distressed’. Moreover, these emotional reactions often seem to have been related to customers’ perceptions of justice in service-recovery situations. Again in DeWitt et al. (2008), there is, among other research relations, a focus on customers’ negative (and positive) emotional reactions as a result of their perception of justice of the firm’s recovery of service. Specifically, they combined three dimensions of justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) into a single, overall construct of the perception of justice. Secondly, most studies on negative emotions have. Clearly, it is important to understand the customer’s emotional reaction to the perception of justice in service-recovery situations. There is, however, another essential area, one that is perhaps more fundamental. This is the range or set of negative emotions that customers’ experience in negative service encounters that leads to customers’ complaining. What exactly are the negative emotions that customers’ experience in negative service encounters has been overlooked (one exception is Tronvoll, 2011). Another aspect that follows this is whether the service recovery by firms is able to diminish negative emotions that customers continue to experience even after the service-recovery actions of service firms have been completed. Consequently, there appears to be no previous research that has focused simultaneously on the negative emotions involved in customers’ service experiences and the follow-up processes of service recovery by firms.

In respect of the gaps in previous service research that has hitherto been neglected, this thesis deepens our knowledge of service recovery in three ways. First, it identifies the range of emotions that customers have when experiencing unfavourable service encounters. Secondly, it locates the sources of these negative emotions. Thirdly, it reveals whether customers’ negative emotions diminish after the service recovery by firms. Paper II (Sværi et al. 2011) describes the contribution with reference to these three aspects. Using customers in tourism industry as the context, this study finds that the range of negative emotions in negative service encounters in total consist of nineteen discrete emotions ‘fear’, ‘worry’, ‘anxiety’, ‘nervousness’, ‘anger’, ‘irritation’, ‘rage’, ‘shame’, ‘guilt’, ‘regret’, ‘embarrassment’, ‘sadness’, ‘loneliness’, ‘unhappy’, ‘depression’, ‘discouragement’, ‘frustration’, ‘disempowerment’, and ‘distress’. Moreover, this study traces these nineteen negative emotions to three types of sources: (i) the customer’s own fault, labelled as ‘self’; (ii) the fault of the company providing the service, labelled as ‘other’ and (iii) incidents beyond the customers’ and company’s control, labelled ‘situational’.

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6 See Tronvoll (2008) p. 27 for a good explanation of the content of these three dimensions of justice.
Another finding is that the higher the initial valence level of the negative emotions that customers experience, the higher it remains even after the following service-recovery process by firms. In other words, customers’ negative emotions in service encounters tend to diminish, but only to some extent. Consequently, one can deduce that even though emotions vary in strength over time, negative emotions may remain unchanged from the time that the negative incidents occurred until well after service-recovery processes have taken place.

All firms strive to offer ‘zero-defects’ services and favourable customer experiences. However, owing to the nature of services, failures in service encounters cannot be completely eliminated, because there are a variety of factors that may have an impact on the customers’ experience. This thesis contributes theoretically to the service-recovery literature by identifying three distinct sources that form the basis of customers’ experiences of negative service in service encounters. In a broader perspective this thesis contributes to the call made by Bagozzi et al. (1999) for more research on how emotions relate to each other.

To recapitulate, this thesis deepens our knowledge of customers’ negative emotions in negative service encounters in two main ways. First, it shows that customers’ negative emotions can be attributed to three sources: (i) ‘self’, (ii) ‘other’, and (iii) ‘situational’. Secondly, it reveals that negative emotions may remain unchanged well after the firm has completed its service-recovery processes. Consequently, this thesis constitutes a major research contribution since it deepens our knowledge and understanding of negative emotions in negative service experiences and the responding process of service recovery.

4.4 Overall contribution – emotions in service encounters

The contribution of this thesis on emotions in service encounters from both an employee’s and a customer’s perspective in service encounters may be summarized as an extended knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters for service relationships. This overall contribution is discussed in the following sections.

4.4.1 An extended knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters for service relationships

This thesis has studied service encounters from the employee’s and the customer’s perspective separately. Although this thesis has not studied the direct interaction between employees and customers, it makes an overall contribution of an extended
knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters for service relationships. This contribution is illustrated by the grey colour box in figure 3 in its totality.

An overarching goal for service firms with regard to service encounters is that employees' actions and customers' reactions should be positively related. Specifically, from a managerial perspective, a natural goal would be that employees' actions evoke customers' positive reactions with respect to customers' satisfaction and commitment to the service firm. In other words, the goal is to build relationships with customers. The importance of relationships is well documented in the literature. According to Gremler and Gwinner (2000) 'few businesses can survive without establishing solid relationships with their customers' (p. 82). Not surprisingly, previous research has to a large extent focused on different factors involved in building relationship with customers (cf. e.g., Morgan & Hunt, 1994). However, there seems to be less research focusing on the role emotions in service encounters in relation to building relationships. This thesis contributes to extending our knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters in what can be labelled as building service relationships (Berry 1983), where service relationships refer to relationships with customers of service firms.

Building service relationships does not come automatically; it is something that develops over time. According to Shostack (1985), service encounter is 'a period … during which a consumer directly interacts with a service' (p. 243). Customers' experiences during these service encounters contribute positively or negatively to the customers' overall satisfaction and willingness to patronize the organization in the future (Bolton & Drew, 1992). The foundation for establishing a service relationship is thus built on these encounters (Bittner, 1995). According to McCallum and Harrison (1985), service encounters are 'first and foremost social encounters’ (p. 35). Social encounters signify that service encounters involve human beings (employee and customer) interacting with each other. From an employee's perspective, to maintain a service relationship each encounter becomes critical and is a test of service quality to customers. If the employee does not provide a service of sufficient quality, the customer will patronize elsewhere (Gutek et al. 1999). Consequently, a customer's perception of employees' quality of service is related to the continuation or termination of service relationships.

This thesis suggests that employees' emotions are essential for customers’ service relationships. Specifically, it proposes that employees’ emotions are both directly and indirectly related to service relationships. First, papers IV and V (Slåtten, 2009, Slåtten, 2010) find that both employees’ positive and negative emotions are related
to employee-perceived service quality. Furthermore, positive emotions are positively related while negative emotions were negatively related to employee-perceived service quality. Previous research has shown that there is a ‘psychological closeness’ (Schung & Schneider, 2002, p. 73) between employees and customers. ‘Psychological closeness’ means that employees’ perceptions of service quality correlate highly with customer-perceived quality. On the basis of previous research on ‘psychological closeness’ one could argue that employees’ emotions are directly related to customers’ perceptions of service quality. Specifically, this thesis suggests that employees’ positive emotions positively contribute to customers’ perception of service quality, while employees’ negative emotions contribute negatively to customer perceptions of service quality. Secondly, this thesis also suggests that employees’ emotions are indirectly linked to customers’ emotions in service encounter. As can be seen in figure 3, employees’ and customers’ emotions are within the grey-coloured area, symbolizing an ‘emotional closeness’ in service encounters between these two actors. Consequently, there is a spillover effect between employees’ emotions (customers’ perception) and customers’ emotions. In line with the illustration in figure 3, one might argue that customers’ favourable perceptions of service quality are linked to customers’ positive emotions, while customers’ unfavourable perceptions are linked to customers’ negative emotions. Depending on whether they are positive or negative, emotions contribute to the customer’s decision either to maintain or terminate the service relationship with the service firm.

In summary, this thesis contributes to an extended knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters in two ways: First, it suggests that employees’ emotions are directly related to customers’ perceptions of service quality. Secondly, it proposes that employees’ emotions are indirectly related to customers’ emotions, and thus constitute an ‘emotional closeness’ between the two actors in service encounters. Overall, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the role of emotions in service encounters for service relationships.

4.5 Summary and final comments on research contributions

The aim of this thesis is to enhance our knowledge of emotions in service encounters from both an employee’s and a customer’s perspective. The contributions made depend on which perspective we take when studying emotions in service encounters.
From an employees’ perspective the contribution of this thesis can be divided into two parts. First, it extends our understanding of the emotional effect on service quality. Specifically, in reference to the previous literature on emotional labour, this thesis suggests that employees’ ‘true’ emotions could motivate employees to follow the display rules of expression that the organizations have set. Moreover, emotions are related to employees’ performance of service quality in general. Secondly, this approach deepens our understanding of the influence of employees’ appraisals of work-related conditions on service quality and the role of emotions in this relationship. Specifically, this thesis shows that employees’ emotions have a mediating role in the relationship between the three managerial practices – (i) ‘reward’, (ii) ‘support’, and (iii) ‘empowerment’ – and employees’ quality of service. Moreover, this thesis also proposes that employees’ emotions have a mediating role in the relationship between four work-role aspects – (i) ‘role conflict’, (ii) ‘role ambiguity’, (iii) ‘work-family conflict’, and (iv) ‘role overload’ – and employees’ quality of service.

From a customer’s perspective, the contribution of this thesis can likewise be divided into two parts. First, it extends our understanding of customers’ appraisal of service quality on customers’ positive emotions and loyalty. Specifically, it shows that customers’ perceptions of non-human service factors of quality, namely, ‘design’, are more able to create emotional reactions of ‘joy’ compared with human factors of quality, namely, ‘interaction’, at tourism attractions. Moreover, it also shows that the discrete type of emotion of ‘joy’ mediates the relationship between ‘design’ and customers’ loyalty. Secondly, this thesis deepens our knowledge of customer’s negative emotions in negative service encounters in two main ways. Specifically, it shows that customers’ negative emotions can be attributed to three sources: (i) ‘self’, (ii) ‘other’, and (iii) ‘situational’. Moreover, it reveals that negative emotions may remain well after firm’s execution of service-recovery processes.

Although this thesis has not studied the direct interaction between employees and customers, it makes an overall contribution by extending out knowledge of the role of emotions in service encounters for service relationships. Specifically, this thesis suggests that employees’ emotions are directly related to customers’ perceptions of service quality. Moreover, it suggests that employees’ emotions are indirectly related to customers’ emotions, and thus constitute an ‘emotional closeness’ between the two actors in service encounters.
In summary, this thesis has extended the existing research on emotions that has hitherto been relatively neglected, and it contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion about the impact and role of emotions in service research.

### 4.6 Managerial implications

The main managerial implication that can be drawn from this thesis is that it is important to take emotions in service encounters seriously. Emotions are a central element in service-quality management (Cronin, 2003). Generally, managers should develop the necessary tools to reveal the emotional state in respect of the type of emotions present (whether they are positive or negative) and at the same time to identify what causes and effects these types of emotions may have. As this thesis has shown, managers would do well to focus on emotions of both the customer and the employee. On the basis of this thesis four managerial implications can be emphasized. The first two relate to emotions in service encounters from an employee’s perspective and the other two relate to emotions in service encounters from a customer’s perspective.

First, customer-contact employees are critical assets for service organizations due to the interactive nature of service delivery in service encounters (Chung & Schneider, 2002; Hartline et al., 2000). This thesis has, therefore, important practical implications for managers’ decisions and practices with regard to employees. One general and consequential implication of this study is the importance of measuring employees’ (positive and negative) emotions. The measurement of these mental states, which arise from cognitive appraisals of events or of one’s thoughts, can be a good predictor of an employee’s personal evaluation of the service quality that he or she delivers to customers. Consequently, the lesson to be learnt is that it is crucial for managers to include questions about emotions in employee surveys. It is only when managers have information on the imperative question about how employees feel about managerial practices can they gain make an informed decision of whether or not one should uphold or change existing practices in the future. Although the use of employee surveys to gain information about employees’ emotions would without doubt be helpful, it is reasonable to assume that more measures are needed to capture information about employees’ emotions on a day-to-day basis. In this case it probably would be useful, or even necessary, to enhance the manager’s ability to read social situations and emotional cues. Consequently, training the manager’s ability to observe employees’ emotional reactions to managerial practices is essential. It is especially important to train the manager to observe non-verbal cues of emotions. According
to Riggio and Reichard (2008) ‘nonverbal cues of emotions, unlike verbal statements, are subtle and occur outside of normal spheres of awareness’ (p. 169). Useful initiatives that may help managers to develop their ability to observe could include training programmes and workshops that incorporate role-playing scenarios, reviewing videotaped performances, or keeping a diary of emotional situations and reflecting upon them. Targeted managerial training using workshops and exercises would probably improve managers’ ability to capture information about employees’ emotions on a daily basis, and, consequently, contribute to upholding or developing a positive emotional climate in the workplace (Brotheridge & Lee, 2008).

Secondly, although managers should focus on how their managerial practices are linked to employees’ emotions, managers should at the same time be focused on how employee experience how well they are able to fulfil the expectations tied to their role position (e.g., their role as frontline service employees). If a person in a particular role is not able to fulfil these expectations, this person will experience stress (Weatherly & Tansik, 1992). The results in paper III suggest that there is a negative spillover effect between an employee’s falling short of the expectations associated with the position, an employee’s positive emotions, and an employee’s personal evaluation of the service quality that he or she delivers to customers. Consequently, an important managerial implication is to identify the different factors of role stress present in different positions and systematically to control these factors, and most importantly take the necessary steps to keep them at a (positive) satisfactory level. In this sense managers should remember the aphorism reportedly made by the founder of the Marriott hotel chain: ‘You can’t make happy guests with unhappy employees’ (quoted in Hostage, 1975).

Thirdly, one key managerial implication that can be derived from this thesis is the importance of managers’ taking customers’ emotions into consideration when measuring their experiences with service encounters. Specifically, managers benefit from this information because emotions (e.g., emotions of joy) act as a source of information that customers use in the formation of their attitudes. The managerial lesson here is that emotions are strongly linked to decision-making processes with regard to loyalty (Barsky & Nash, 2002), and thus gives valuable information that can help one to predict customers’ willingness to recommend the service offered to other people. An arguably more fundamental managerial lesson is the importance of understanding what experiences in service encounters are able to touch the customers’ emotions in a positive way. This implication is particularly relevant for managers of hedonic services (e.g., tourism industry), where it is reasonable to
assume that positive emotions are at the core of their product or service (Yuan & Wu, 2008). Managers must strive to orchestrate or to stimulate customers’ positive emotional reactions to be successful (Haeckel et al., 2003).

Fourthly, what managers want to know when customers’ experience negative service encounters is the source of those negative emotions in service encounters. Specifically, on the basis of the results in this thesis, managers should remember that there are three distinct sets of negative emotions that can be expected, which reflect who or what caused the negative service encounter. These sources are ‘self’, ‘other’, and ‘situational’. The emphasis on negative service encounters is often placed solely on the mistakes done by the company, or the ‘other’ source. Yet this source is only one of three that might cause the negative situation in the service encounter. Managers should recognize that sometimes the negative emotions that arise are related to the customer, or ‘self’. Moreover, sometimes neither the company nor the customer is to blame, but it is ‘situational’ factors that trigger negative emotions (e.g., weather). When the company causes a negative incident, the company should be prepared to deal with angry or aggressive customers, and to try to calm both them and the situation down. If the customer is to blame, there will still be an emotional reaction. Having unhappy customers struggling with regret, sadness or depression after interacting with the company is not appropriate for the customer-firm service encounter. Thus, even when the customer actually is to blame, there should nevertheless be a strategy for alleviating the negative situation. Still, there are situations beyond the customer’s or the company’s control, and fear, worry, anxiety, and nervousness can be expected. The company should, therefore, have a prepared strategy for making sure that its customers are not worried unnecessarily. Being prepared for these three dimensions of emotion related to ‘self’, ‘other’, and ‘situation’ should enable the company to have more successful tactics of service recovery. The company should be aware that the results of blaming either the customer or a situation beyond the customer’s control might trigger a range of unexpected and unwanted negative emotions, and thus make the service-recovery process more complicated, or, at worst, futile. Managers who strive to identify the true source of the negative service encounter and then to take the appropriate service-recovery actions are most able to maintain the customers’ loyalty to the service firm.
4.7 Future Research

The research on emotions in service encounters both from an employee’s and a customer’s perspective remains in its early stages. There is a significant need for more theoretical and empirical research.

First, this study has examined the general effect of positive and negative emotions (see paper IV) and a certain range of discrete types of emotions such as ‘joy’ and ‘frustration’ (see paper V). Yet more research is warranted in both these areas. For example, further research should focus on other positive emotions than those investigated in this thesis, such as ‘proud’, ‘happiness’, ‘interest’, ‘contentment’, and ‘optimism’ that employees might experience and the effects of discrete types of positive emotions. Positive emotions open up a person’s mind to thinking in different ways and lead a person to be more effective (Fredrickson, 1998). Research has also found that different emotions lead to different responses (Mattila & Ro, 2008). The applicability of this observation to the quality of customer service is unmistakable. Consequently, more research focusing on which facets of employees’ positive emotions that drive service quality in service encounters is needed.

Secondly, according to the logic and sequence described in service profit chain, employees are of fundamental importance for service quality (Heskett et al., 1994; 2003). More knowledge is needed to enhance our insight of the role of emotions in service encounters. How different managerial practices and leadership styles are linked to employees’ emotions is of interest. This study has only focused on a few managerial practices such as ‘reward’, ‘support’, and ‘empowerment’ (see papers IV and V). Future research could include other relevant managerial indicators such as ‘managerial training’, ‘visible leadership’, ‘servant leadership’, and ‘transformational leadership’. Schneider (1980), for example, distinguishes between two types of managers, the ‘service enthusiasts’ and the ‘service bureaucrats’. Managers who qualify as ‘service enthusiasts’ establish flexible policies and procedures that result in the promotion of elaborate and malleable service scripts. On the other hand, ‘service bureaucrats’ enforce the compliance to rigid service scripts based on system maintenance, which are routine to uniform operating procedures and guidelines. A focus on these two types of managerial styles, employees’ emotions, and service quality in service encounters would be a fruitful area for further research.

Thirdly, Johnston and Clark (2001) define customers’ experiences as processes that create cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses, and these result in a
‘mental mark’, or a memory. This study has demonstrated that customers’ positive emotional responses in service encounters are closely linked to behavioural responses in a tourist-attraction context (see paper I). However, there is a need for research focusing on positive emotional responses when consumers are involved in other types of service contexts (e.g., hospital services). Such research will enhance our understanding of customers’ positive emotion in relation to the type of service context. With reference to the focus on different service contexts, it would give us insight into a construct related to positive emotions, namely, customer engagement. Pine and Gilmore (1998) state that customers’ experiences touch on: ‘…events that engage individuals in a personal way’. In this area it is important to understand better how customers’ engagement is linked to customers’ positive emotions. This kind of research would increase our knowledge on how positive emotions are linked to such factors as customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Fourthly, in the area of customers’ negative emotions, more research is needed. This study has examined and evaluated negative emotions regarding customers’ negative service experiences, and has identified three sources reflecting who or what is the cause of the situation in the service encounter. These were labelled the SOS construct, referring to ‘Self’, ‘Other’, and ‘Situational’, as sources of negative emotions (see paper II). Further research should elaborate on this finding and study the effects of the SOS construct of negative emotions on such variables as complaining behaviours, satisfaction, and repurchase intention. A limitation is, however, that the SOS construct has only been tested on a sample consisting of customer-firm service encounters in the Norwegian tourism industry, which may indicate less applicability and generality in other countries, cultures or contexts. With this potential limitation in mind, further research should test the SOS construct in other contexts that differ from, or alternatively are similar to, the one surveyed in this study. Consequently, such research would help to answer whether the SOS construct is relevant to negative emotions in other kinds of service encounters, and this would be an important contribution the service-recovery literature in service research.
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Emotions in service encounters
from the perspectives of employees
and customers

The overall aim of this thesis is to contribute to deepening and extending our understanding and knowledge of emotions in service encounters by studying it from the two most central human actors in service encounter: (i) the service firm’s employees and (ii) the customer of this firm. This dissertation consist of five separate papers that conceptualize and empirically investigate how different appraisals by employees and customers generate positive and negative emotions, and how types of emotions in service encounters are linked to patterns of behavioural responses. The methods used for gathering data involved interviews and questionnaire studies of various service firms.

This dissertation has sought to offer two main contributions. First, this thesis presents an extended understanding of employees’ emotions in service encounter and their effect on employees’ perceptions of service quality. One of the chief findings is that work-related conditions such as employees’ perception of their working role and managerial practices are related to both positive and negative emotions in service encounters. Moreover, the findings indicate that there exists a spill-over effect between employees’ experiences of emotions and employees’ perceptions of the delivery of service quality in service encounters. Secondly, this thesis also contributes to furthering our understanding of the customer’s appraisal of service quality with respect to customers’ positive emotions in service encounters as well as to deepening our understanding of negative emotions when customers experience a negative service encounter. Specifically, it was found that both human and non-human service-quality factors are able to trigger customer’s positive emotions in service encounters. Positive emotions were strongly related to behavioural responses such as customer loyalty. When a customer experiences negative emotions in service encounters as a result of negative experience, the findings point to three sources of these negative emotions: (i) ‘self’ (the customer’s own fault), (ii) ‘other’ (the fault of the company), and (iii) ‘situational’ (the fault is beyond the customer’s and company’s control). Another finding is that customers’ negative emotions in service encounters tend diminish but only to some extent, even after the service firm has set into motion a process of service recovery.

In summary, this thesis contributes to our understanding of emotions in service encounters and contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion in service research about the role of emotions in this context.