

**UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH**

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**EMOTIONAL LABOR, EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES, SUPPORT, AND JOB AUTONOMY: AN  
EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN SABAH AND THE  
FEDERAL TERRITORY OF LABUAN**

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## PRELUDE

*As an employee on the front line with customers, you're the one who create the customer-service experience. You are the one who can make it or break it... That's why you must develop a service attitude... Think of it as being an actor. Actors, no matter how they feel, have to set their personal feelings aside before stepping onto the stage... Playing the role of a customer service provider is no different. To do so, you concentrate on acting cheerful, friendly, and helpful, no matter how you're feeling.*

*Myres & Blanc (1998, p. 4)*

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**ABSTRACT**

The tourism industry in Sabah has been identified as one key sector to be promoted under the Sabah Development Corridor (SDC) Blue Print (2008-2025). The main objective of this plan is to promote the state as premier tourist destination. Given that, research should focus on the hospitality industry to provide managerial implications with regard to training and development of service workforce to empower them to provide world class service. One area worthy of empirical investigations is the performance of emotional labor as part and parcel of service work. The present study was thus undertaken to examine the process of emotional labor, operationalized as surface acting and deep acting, as performed by hotel workers in Sabah and the Federal Territory of Labuan. The study also attempted to determine two consequences of performing emotional labor namely job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. Further, it investigated the role of two organizational factors (i.e., support and job autonomy) in moderating these relationships. We employed a survey questionnaire to collect data from a total of 137 front-line hotel employees. To some extent, our findings are consistent with past findings in the west. Results revealed that women engaged more in deep acting as compared to men. Results also indicated that surface and deep acting significantly predicted employee outcomes in the proposed direction. Supervisory support, coworker support, and job autonomy served as moderators but only in some instances. Interestingly, the findings on the moderated relationships provided strong support for the notion of 'reverse buffering' (Beehr, 1995).

**USAHA EMOSI, HASIL PEKERJA, SOKONGAN, DAN AUTONOMI KERJA: KAJIAN EMPIRIKAL KE  
ATAS INDUSTRI HOSPITALITI DI SABAH DAN WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN LABUAN**

**ABSTRAK**

Industri pelancongan di Sabah telah dikenalpasti sebagai satu sektor penting untuk dipromosikan di bawah Pelan Koridor Pembangunan Sabah (2008-2025). Objektif utama pelan ini ialah untuk mempromosi Sabah sebagai destinasi pelancong terpenting. Oleh yang demikian, penyelidikan sepatutnya memfokus ke atas industri hospitaliti bagi menyediakan implikasi pengurusan tentang latihan dan pembangunan tenagakerja perkhidmatan untuk memperkasa mereka dalam memberikan perkhidmatan bertaraf dunia. Satu bidang kajian empirikal yang bertepatan adalah tentang emosi para pekerja sebagai sebahagian daripada tugas perkhidmatan. Kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk menyelidik proses usaha emosi, dioperasikan sebagai “lakonan permukaan” dan “lakonan dalaman”, seperti yang dilakukan oleh pekerja-pekerja hotel di Sabah dan Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan. Kajian ini juga berusaha untuk menentukan dua akibat dari melakukan usaha emosi iaitu kepuasan kerja dan kelesuan emosi. Selanjutnya, kajian ini mengkaji peranan dua faktor organisasi (iaitu sokongan dan autonomi kerja) dalam menyederhanakan perhubungan ini. Kami menggunakan borang kaji selidik untuk mengutip data daripada sejumlah 137 orang pekerja yang berurusan terus dengan para pelanggan hotel. Dapatan kajian kami adalah konsisten dengan dapatan kajian di negara barat. Keputusan mendedahkan lebih ramai wanita terlibat dalam lakonan dalaman dibandingkan dengan lelaki. Selain itu, lakonan permukaan dan dalaman didapati mempengaruhi secara signifikan hasil pekerja seperti yang diramalkan. Sokongan penyelia, sokongan teman sekerja, dan autonomi kerja adalah pembolehubah tetapi hanya dalam beberapa situasi sahaja. Apa yang menarik perhatian adalah dapatan kajian ke atas perhubungan disederhanakan ini memberi sokongan yang kuat kepada pengertian “penimbangan terbalik” (Beehr, 1995).

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>HR</b>	<b>Human Resource</b>
<b>PCA</b>	<b>Principal Components Analysis</b>
<b>SDC</b>	<b>Sabah Development Corridor</b>

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## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Background**

The tourism industry is one of Malaysia's key industries with great potential for growth. In 2005, tourism accounted for 7% of Malaysian economy (Asia Times, 2005). To some extent, the industry has borne the brunt of the recent global economic downturn with significantly reduced tourism receipts as a result of declining confidence. Nonetheless, the government is now striving to reenergize the tourism industry to fuel the nation's economic growth. In Sabah, for instance, tourism has been identified as one of the major sectors in the state to be promoted (MALAYSIA.com, August 18, 2009) under the Sabah Development Corridor (SDC) Blueprint. The SDC is an 18-year definitive development plan from 2008 to 2025, aiming to bring significant transformation to the state of Sabah (MICE Business Asia, April 8, 2008). In particular, the Sabah government spends more than RM10 million annually to promote Sabah as premier tourism destination through various events such as trade shows. These efforts appear to bear fruits as last year alone about 2.095 million visitors came to Sabah, a five per cent increase from the previous year (MALAYSIA.com, August 18, 2009). By 2012, the tourism sector in Sabah is expected to rake in RM8 billion in tourism receipts (MICE Business Asia, April 8, 2008).

We opine that to facilitate the continued development and improvement of the tourism industry in Sabah, injecting funding into the sector alone is not enough. The efforts in terms of funding will go to waste if they are not accompanied by improvement in manpower. This hence illuminates the significance of training and development programs for service employees to empower them to provide world-class services since we aspire to be world-class tourist

destination. The tourism industry is entirely dependent on the hospitality industry (i.e., hotels and restaurants). The hospitality industry is a significant employer, with lodging/hotel playing a critical role (Page & Connell, 2006). In 2004, the Malaysian Hotel Association (MHA) Sabah Chapter was launched with the aim to further improve the quality of services in the hotel industry for Sabah and the Federal Territory of Labuan (Labuan). The greatest challenge confronting MHA Sabah Chapter now is probably addressing the issue of losing quality manpower to other countries like Singapore, New Zealand, and Macau. The overseas hotels and resorts are luring our skilled workforce in Sabah and Labuan to work for them by offering more lucrative salaries (Daily Express, October 4, 2008).

Given the above, it is timely for hotels in Sabah and Labuan to take constructive measures to address the impending problem. For starters, hotel managers can look into specific work aspects of their workforce such as how the employees manage their emotions in the workplace and the outcomes of the process. The focus on emotion management is particularly relevant given the fact that to remain courteous and friendly even when having to deal with demanding and difficult customers is part and parcel of hospitality employees' job. Emotional labor—the performance of various forms of work emotion in the context of paid employment (Hochschild, 1983) is commonplace in this kind of service work situation (Kim, 2008). This concept first appeared in Hochschild's (1983) book, *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Feeling*. The author contended that emotion management was detrimental to service employees because their emotions were now mandated by the organization. Conversely, the regulated emotional display was thought to benefit the organization.

Indeed, past research has provided strong evidence that the performance of emotional labor has negative consequences on individuals such as emotional exhaustion and intention to quit. It would be worthwhile to examine whether the findings in the west reflect the situation in east Malaysia.

### **1.1 Research Problem**

As noted earlier, service employees play a highly instrumental role in facilitating the success and continued growth of the hospitality industry. As such, knowledge on service workers' emotional labor process and how it eventually influences their outcomes is of utmost importance. The book, *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Feeling* (Hochschild, 1983) has spurred an influx of research on the topic of emotional labor among researchers in the west. Yet, it remains an area that has been largely unacknowledged in the Malaysian setting. Hence, research into the emotional labor process as performed by service employees is not only timely but also much needed in Malaysia, particularly in view of the current scenario in the hospitality sector in Sabah and Labuan.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The primary aim of the study was to ascertain the relationship between the process of emotional labor and employee outcomes. Additionally, the study hoped to investigate the moderating effects of organizational factors on the proposed relationships. Specifically, this study embarked on the following objectives:

- (a) To examine the relationships between emotional labor (i.e., surface and deep acting) and employee outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion) of front-line hotel employees;

- (b) To investigate the moderating role of organizational variables (i.e., supervisory /coworker support and job autonomy) on the proposed relationships; and
- (c) To make recommendations on best practices in minimizing, if not eliminating, the adverse consequences of emotional labor.

### **1.3 Scope of the Research**

The current study was carried out on a sample of employees, representing hotels located in Sabah and Labuan. The hotels selected were those that have 100 rooms and above, giving a total of 26 hotels that made up the sampling frame. The unit of analysis was individual hotel employees who were front-line staff working in various departments such as front-desk, food and beverage, and concierge.

### **1.4 Significance of the Research**

The findings of the study will be significant in providing useful insights into the process of emotional labor as experienced by hotel employees in Sabah and Labuan, and whether there are noteworthy differences between east Malaysian hotel employees and their western counterparts in terms of emotional labor and work outcomes.

The findings of this study hold important implications in both theoretical and practical aspects. At theoretical level, this research can further confirm the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes as reported in previous studies. It further adds to the literature stream by incorporating organizational variables as possible moderators on the proposed relationship. Specifically, the findings would help to shed some light on possible outcomes and performance techniques of emotional labor in a sample of east Malaysian hotel employees. The hospitality

industry can also be better informed about measures that can be taken to mitigate the adverse outcomes that can prove costly to employees as well as the organization. Simply put, enhancement of knowledge in this area will lead to more effective employee training of the “best way to act”, and improved psychological well-being of hotel workers.

## **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

This section provides both conceptual and operational definitions with regard to the terms employed in the present study.

### **Emotional Labor**

Emotional labor is the expression of organizationally desired emotions by service employees during service encounters (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Two techniques of emotional labor are: (a) surface acting, which is the expression of emotions that are not felt; and (b) deep acting which deals with the modifications of emotions to comply with the organization’s display rules (Gross, 1998).

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a general assessment of how an employee feels about his or her job (Gattiker & Larwood, 1988).

### **Emotional Exhaustion**

A key component of burnout, emotional exhaustion is a stress outcome that occurs when an employee is the state of depleted energy (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986).



## **Support**

There are two sources of support—supervisory support and coworker support. Supervisory support is support coming from the immediate superior of an employee. Coworker support is support provided by coworker(s).

## **Job Autonomy**

Job autonomy is defined as the level of independence and discretion that an employee enjoys in carrying out his or her job (Hackman & Oldham, 1975).

### **1.6 Summary and Organization of Remaining Chapters**

Emotional labor is a relatively under-researched topic in the context of Malaysia. The primary intent of this study was hence to address the research gap. The study examined the emotional labor process, as performed by hotel employees working in Sabah and Labuan, and how it influenced employee outcomes such as job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. The study was also aimed at investigating the role of two organizational factors, i.e., support and job autonomy on the proposed relationships. The current chapter has provided the background literature on this topic. It has also highlighted the research problem, objectives, scope, and significance of the study. The chapter closes by providing definition of the key terms employed for purposes of the study. The organization of the remaining chapters in this report is in the following manner.

Chapter Two reviews the extant literature on the study variables that include emotional labor, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, support, and job autonomy. The information gleaned was used to support the theorized relationships.

The research methodology is the main focus of Chapter Three. Specifically, the chapter discusses the measures used in the survey questionnaire and presents the statistical analyses employed.

Results of the various analyses conducted are discussed at length in Chapter 4. Implications of the findings on managerial practices and future research are also highlighted.

The concluding chapter, Chapter Five, recapitulates the research objectives and findings. It also highlights areas for future research in light of the limitations of the study.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter surveys related literature on the variables of interests that include emotional labor, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, support, and job autonomy. The hypotheses for the current study are also presented.

#### 2.1 Emotional Labor

There is a generally held belief that there is no place for emotions in today's rational, task-oriented work environments. Mann (1997) points out that emotions and their expression are, in fact, controlled and managed in organizations by a wide range of formal and informal means (known as display rules), ensuring that certain emotions are expressed while others are suppressed. Very often, employees are expected to conform to these expectations about emotional display even when they conflict with inner feeling. When this conflict results in individuals suppressing genuine emotion or expressing fake emotion, the work or effort involved in doing so is termed "emotional labor".

As noted earlier, the expression "emotional labor" was first coined by Hochschild (1983) and since her seminal work on this topic, the term was frequently used in discussions among women, and appears all the more in scientific literature. It is, however, a relatively new term in the organization setting. Nevertheless, this concept has been variously defined in the literature. Grandey (2000) views emotional labor as "the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organizational goals" (p. 97). Others (e.g., Gardner & Martinko, 1988; Grove &

Fisk, 1989) suggest that emotional labor is a type of impression management by which an individual attempts to direct his/her behavior to enhance social perceptions of himself/herself or foster a certain interpersonal desired climate (Johnson, 2004). Taking this definition a little further, Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) propose that displayed emotions can be used by an individual as a form of strategic manipulation and control to shape and influence a target's behavior. Similarly, Hochschild (1983), in a study of airline attendants, defines it as "invoking or suppressing personal feelings in order to display appropriate job related emotions in an attempt to yield customer responses" (p. 14). It has been said that emotional labor portrays two main characteristics: face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact; and desires a certain emotional state in clients. For purposes of the present study, we define emotional labor as the expression of organizationally desired emotions by hotel workers during interpersonal transactions or encounters with customers (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983).

In a review of theory and past research on emotional labor and its contributions to sociological understandings of employees and jobs, Wharton (2009) noted that the emotional labor literature can be divided into two major streams of research. The first considers emotional labor as a vehicle to understand the organization, structure, and social relations of service jobs. The second, on the other hand, emphasizes the emotional labor process and its consequences. It is the second stream of research that guides the current study to explore surface and deep acting as emotional labor process and how these acting methods subsequently influence employee outcomes. That being said, the ensuing sections will delineate emotional labor as a process and will also discuss its consequences on employee outcomes.

## 2.2 Dimensions of Emotional Labor

Over the years, emotion work has churned out various perspectives of emotional labor, ranging from two dimensions to multi-dimensions. In exploring how it was incumbent upon service agents to manage their emotions as part of the job, Hochschild (1983) describes two main techniques of managing one's emotions—*surface acting* and *deep acting*. Surface acting relates to managing observable expressions, whereas deep acting corresponds to managing feelings. In other words, feelings are changed from the “outside in” in surface acting (faking feelings), whereas feelings are changed from the “inside out” in (active) deep acting (modifying inner feelings) (Kim, 2008). Hochschild (1983) also acknowledges another technique known as passive deep acting by which employees' feelings are spontaneously felt and displayed with no conscious effort. There is still an ongoing debate on whether the third technique should be included in the conceptualization of emotional labor since it lacks the process of internal dissonance and conscious effort (Mann, 1999). For instance, Kim (2008) contends that deep acting is synonymous with active deep acting (involving individuals' internal dissonance and effort) rather than passive deep acting. This suggests that emotional labor is best viewed as a two-dimensional construct consisting of only surface acting and deep acting.

In a similar vein, Grandey (2000) proposes that both processes of surface and deep acting correspond to the description of emotional labor as emotional regulation. To her, surface acting is emotional dissonance. On the other hand, deep acting is emotional regulation. Grandey (2000) goes further to argue that these two dimensions alone can be used to operationalize emotional labor based on three justifications. First, surface and deep acting can result in both positive and negative outcomes. Thus, positive outcomes such as customer service performance and increased personal accomplishment as well as negative outcomes such as emotional

exhaustion can be adequately explained. Second, organizational training and stress management programs can be accordingly designed in light of the possible differential outcomes of these two processes of emotional labor. Finally, by conceptualizing emotional labor as two-dimensional, we can link this model to an established model of regulation (Gross, 1998) that consequently facilitates expansion of this research area.

Yet, there are other researchers (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1996) who prefer to perceive emotional labor as a multi-dimensional concept. For instance, Morris and Feldman (1996) opine that emotional labor is comprised of four dimensions: *attentiveness to display rules*, *frequency of emotional display*, *variety of emotions to be expressed*, and *emotional dissonance*. Display rules are related to societal, occupational, and organizational norms (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). The higher the attentiveness to display rules of the organization, the more psychological effort and physical stamina is required of employees. The frequency of emotional display is another important indicator because the more often an organization requires socially appropriate emotional displays, the greater demand for emotional labor. Short interactions with customers require less emotional effort (Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988; Rafaeli, 1989) as opposed to longer interactions which have been found to result in a higher possibility of employee burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993).

Emotions expressed in the organization setting can be categorized as positive, negative, or neutral (Wharton & Erickson, 1993). The wider range of emotions to be expressed, the more emotional labor is required of the employee. This corresponds to the third dimension of variety of emotions. Emotional dissonance makes the fourth dimension of emotional labor that represents the discrepancy between genuinely felt emotions and organizationally prescribed

emotions (Middleton, 1989). This conflict in turn contributes to more difficult emotional labor given that it requires greater control and management of behavior. For instance, in the case of a sales person lacking of commitment to a particular product that subsequently warrants him to exert considerable emotional effort in order to display positive emotions necessary to effectively sell that product (Johnson, 2004).

Despite the rigorous measure of emotional labor proposed by Morris and Feldman (1996), the content validity of their scale was perceived to be inconsistent with Hochschild's (1983) acting paradigm (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). In an effort to better represent Hochschild's (1983) scale, Kruml and Geddes (2000) recommend two dimensions—*emotive dissonance* and *emotive effort*. The first factor reflects surface acting and passive deep acting; the second captured active deep acting.

On the other hand, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) and Brotheridge and Lee (2003) restructured emotional labor into two categories: *job-focused* and *employee-focused*. Each category has, along with surface and deep acting, other sub-constructs such as frequency, intensity and variety, and duration. More recently, Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005) contended that spontaneous and genuine emotions, acknowledged by Hochschild (1983) as passive deep acting, should be included in the emotional construct and as such presented a three-dimensional construct: surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions.

In spite of the varying conceptualization of emotional labor, it is generally accepted that job-related variables such as frequency, intensity, variety are not emotional labor itself but its antecedents (Kim, 2008). What is regarded as true components of emotional labor are the two

techniques of emotional labor, surface and deep acting. This view is consistent with that of Grandey (2000) presented earlier. That being said, the current study operationalizes the process of emotional labor as surface and deep acting. This corresponds with the notion that emotional labor is synonymous with emotional regulation as proposed in Gross' (1998) model. Accordingly, surface acting represents the expression of emotions that are not felt, whereas deep acting in a "good faith" deals with the modification of emotions to comply with the organization's display rules (Johnson, 2004).

### **2.3 Consequences of Emotional Labor**

Previous work in the area of emotional labor consistently supports the notion proposed by Hochschild in 1983 that emotional labor does and can have both functional and dysfunctional consequences for the individual and the organization. In a similar vein, Kim (2008) regards emotional labor to have double-edged effects: It can have positive influence on organizational success but negative impact on employees' well-being.

At the organizational level, for instance, there has been a growing connection of emotional labor to economic trends (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990) such that surface acting and deep acting enable employees to successfully achieve organizational goals (Johnson, 2004). Specifically, it has been reported that emotional labor influences perception of service quality (Bowen, Siehl, & Schneider, 1989), affects customer loyalty, repeat business, financial gains (Heskett, Schlesinger, & Sasser, 1997), client satisfaction and organizational productivity (Meier, Mastracci, & Wilson, 2006). On the other hand, research conducted at the individual level has typically demonstrated that emotional labor can affect workers' well-being (Johnson & Spector, 2007), job satisfaction (Jones, 1998; Yang & Chang, 2008), emotional exhaustion (Johnson &



Spector, 2007; Kim, 2008), organizational commitment (Abraham, 1999; Yang & Chang, 2008), intent to leave (Abraham, 1999), turnover (Meier et al., 2006), work-family conflict (Seery, Corrigan, & Harpel, 2008), and so forth. Generally, the influence of emotional labor on employee outcomes such as health, psychological well-being and work attitudes has generally been reported to be less favorable. However, some studies (e.g., Adelman, 1995; Johnson, 2004; Wharton, 1993) have reported otherwise. For instance, Wharton (1993) did not find a negative relationship but a positive relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction. Wharton's (1993) argument is that the positive or negative outcome of emotional labor on employee outcomes depends on the performance technique which the employee chooses to use. For instance, some researchers (Gross, 1989; King & Emmons, 1990; Smith, 1992) reported that suppressing negative emotions (i.e., surface acting) over time can cause a variety of ailments such as high blood pressure and cancer. Conversely, the expression of positive emotions (i.e., deep acting) may bring about physiological changes that can in turn enhance employees' well-being (Zajonc, 1985).

As a matter of fact, the majority of past research assessing the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes demonstrates that deep acting leads to more favorable outcomes than does surface acting (Kim, 2008). However, empirical findings in other studies remain conflicting (Van Dijk & Kirk, 2006). For instance, Brotheridge and Lee (2003) and Grandey (2003) did not find support for the association between deep acting and emotional exhaustion. Given these conflicting findings, this study attempts to shed more light on the relationships between two performance techniques of emotional labor (i.e., surface and deep acting) and two employee outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion). Drawing evidence from an

east Malaysian sample, it also investigates the possible moderating role of organizational factors (i.e., support and job autonomy) on the proposed relationships.

### 2.3.1 Job satisfaction

Grandey (2000) identified job satisfaction as one of the two long-term consequences of emotional labor that deals with employee well-being. Job satisfaction is a general assessment of how an employee feels about his/her job. As noted previously, research on the consequences of emotional labor on job satisfaction has reported positive and negative associations. A few studies (e.g., Johnson, 2004), on the other hand, could not find any significant relationships between surface and deep acting with job satisfaction. Nonetheless, most research (e.g., Abraham, 1998; Morris & Feldman, 1997) typically shows that employees with a high level of emotion regulation are likely to be less satisfied with their jobs. However, a few studies (e.g., Adelman, 1995; Wharton, 1993) have noted contradictory results such that emotional labor is positively associated with job satisfaction.

As mentioned previously, these conflicting findings can be explained by the techniques of emotional labor employed. For instance, surface acting can lead to feelings of inauthenticity and consequently job dissatisfaction (Abraham, 1998; Morris & Feldman, 1997). Conversely, when employees engage in deep acting this may result in feelings of personal accomplishment and by extension, job satisfaction (Johnson, 2004). This is particularly true for those who express genuine emotions at work compared to those who fake their emotions. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Emotional labor is related to job satisfaction such that surface acting is negatively related to job satisfaction, whereas deep acting is positively related to job satisfaction.

### 2.3.2 Emotional exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is one key component of burnout (Maslach, 1982). It is a stress outcome that occurs when an employee is in the state of depleted energy. This state is consequential when an employee is emotionally overextended in interactions with customers with little resource to recuperate from the drain on emotional resources (Jackson et al., 1986).

Previous research (e.g., Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Kruml & Geddes, 2000) has demonstrated that emotional labor is likely to lead to increased emotional exhaustion, particularly in the case when an employee's feelings do not match the display roles and as such the employee has to engage in surface acting to display the expected emotions. For instance, Kruml and Geddes (2000) found that employees who perform surface acting tended to be more emotionally exhausted than those who prescribed to display rules by deep acting. A study by Johnson (2004) similarly confirmed that both surface and deep acting contributed to emotional exhaustion in the expected direction.

Kim's (2008) study, however, only managed to establish the positive influence of surface acting but not that of deep acting on emotional exhaustion. These findings are justifiable based on the following reason. Emotional dissonance or surface acting has been said to be a form of role conflict (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987) because it involves a clash between the needs and principles of the employee and the requirements of others within the same role (Kahn, 1964; cited in Johnson, 2004). Since role conflict has been suggested as a key determinant of emotional exhaustion (Jackson et al., 1986), engaging in surface acting which results in emotional dissonance may lead to higher levels of emotional exhaustion. The reverse would be true for the performance of deep acting. Given that, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Emotional labor is related to emotional exhaustion such that surface acting is positively related to emotional exhaustion, whereas deep acting is negatively related to emotional exhaustion.

## **2.4 The Moderating Role of Organizational Factors**

In recent years, there have been calls for emotion research to examine organizational factors that can possibly influence the level of emotional labor required (Grandey, 2000; Johnson, 2004). In heeding these research calls, this study investigates the role of two organizational factors—support and job autonomy in moderating the impact of emotional labor on employee outcomes.

### **2.4.1 Support**

Two potential sources of social support in the organization can come from the supervisor and coworkers. It is worth noting that this study distinguishes between supervisory support and coworker support so that the role of social support as a moderator can be examined more closely. In the context of the current study, supervisory and coworker support should help to create a positive working environment, which by extension should minimize the need to engage in emotional labor when the display rules are positive (Erickson, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1985). Cohen and Wills (1985) suggest that support enables individuals cope better with job stressors and to enhance their sense of personal control.

Beehr (1995) presents a contradictory view that high levels of support could instead prove detrimental such that it can contribute to positive relationship between job stressors and individual strains, which he labeled as 'reverse buffering.' In other words, supervisory and

coworker support may not necessarily buffer the effects of job stressors on individuals. A recent study by Johnson (2004) has in fact supported Beehr's (1995) notion of 'reverse buffering' in that individuals with high coworker support experienced a decrease in job satisfaction as emotional labor increased.

Nevertheless, past research typically found that strong supervisory and coworker support can help to lessen the strain associated with emotional labor (e.g., Abraham, 1998; Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayana & Schwartz, 2002; Erickson, 1991; Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002). For instance, Baruch-Feldman et al. (2002) reported that supervisory support was linked to job satisfaction in a sample of traffic enforcement agents. Abraham (1998) similarly found that with high support there was a slight increase in job satisfaction when emotional dissonance was high.

Hence, the following is proposed:

**H3: Support moderates the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes.**

*H3a: Supervisory and coworker support moderate the relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction. For individuals with high levels of supervisory and coworker support, there will be no differences in job satisfaction whether emotional labor is high or low. For those with low levels of supervisory and coworker support, job satisfaction will be low when emotional labor is high, and job satisfaction will be high when emotional labor is low.*

*H3b: Supervisory and coworker support moderate the relationship between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion. For individuals with high levels of supervisory and coworker support, there will be no differences in emotional exhaustion whether emotional labor is high or low. For those with low levels of supervisory and coworker support, emotional exhaustion will be high when emotional labor is high, and emotional exhaustion will be low when emotional labor is low.*

#### 2.4.2 Job autonomy

Autonomy is defined as the level of independence and discretion that an employee enjoys in carrying out his/her job (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Hackman and Oldham (1975) found a positive relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction. This is because with job autonomy, a service worker can determine the extent to which she can modify the organization's display rules to suit her personality and interpersonal style (Morris & Feldman, 1996), thus alleviating the effects of job stress, and by extension her job satisfaction is increased. Conversely, service workers holding jobs that lack autonomy regarding the expression of emotions can experience more job stress. A good case in point would be a flight attendant requiring to express positive emotions even to obnoxious and threatening passengers when in actual fact, given a choice, the flight attendant would prefer to show her true nasty feelings to her difficult passengers (Hochschild, 1983).

A more recent study by Avella (2009) similarly reported that employees with high autonomy reported high levels of affective well-being and job satisfaction as the level of deep acting increased. In a similar vein, Johnson and Spector (2007) and Erickson (1991) found that autonomy served to alleviate negative outcomes for those who frequently used emotional labor strategies.

Hence, when job autonomy is available to an employee, he/she can engage in expressive behavior that matches his/her affective state regardless of the organizational display rules. This may lead to higher job satisfaction and lower level of emotional exhaustion. Wharton's (1993) study has demonstrated that even in jobs that require high levels of emotional labor (i.e.,

performance of surface acting), job autonomy can serve as an effective means to reduce the negative impact of such emotional labor. Thus, we hypothesize that:

**H4:** Job autonomy moderates the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes.

*H4a: Job autonomy moderates the relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction. For individuals with high levels of job autonomy, there will be no differences in job satisfaction whether emotional labor is high or low. For those with low levels of job autonomy, job satisfaction will be low when emotional labor is high, and job satisfaction will be high when emotional labor is low.*

*H4b: Job autonomy moderates the relationship between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion. For individuals with high levels of job autonomy, there will be no differences in emotional exhaustion whether emotional labor is high or low. For those with low levels of job autonomy, emotional exhaustion will be high when emotional labor is high, and emotional exhaustion will be low when emotional labor is low.*

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter reiterated the objectives of the current study, i.e., to (a) investigate the influence of emotional labor on employee outcomes; and (b) examine the role of organizational factors in moderating the hypothesized relationship. It also surveyed past research before presenting four main hypotheses formulated for empirical investigations in the current study.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The present chapter deliberates on the methodology adopted for purposes of the study. The following topics are reviewed in turn: sample and procedure, pilot study, and measures. The chapter finally presents the statistical analyses utilized to examine the data.

#### **3.1 Sample and Procedure**

The target population of the research was employees working in hotels located in the state of Sabah and Labuan. Specifically, the sampling frame was comprised of hotel workers representing 22 hotels located in Sabah and 4 hotels in Labuan. It should be noted that only hotels with 100 rooms and above were targeted for purposes of data collection to minimize selection bias. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data for empirical verifications. The methodology employed for this study will be discussed in greater detail in the ensuing sections.

Prior to actual data collection, we conducted a pilot test in which 15 employees from one single hotel participated. Based on the findings of this pilot study, the survey questionnaire was accordingly modified. One noteworthy change made to the survey questionnaire was that it was translated from the English language to the Malay language since a number of respondents expressed their preference to answer in Malay. As such, responses from this pilot study were not included in the final database to prevent possible bias due to lack of comprehension of the questionnaire items which were formerly written in English. It should also be mentioned that



the translation of the questionnaire items was appropriated using Brislin's (1970) back translation method.

Before embarking on actual data collection, we established initial contacts with the human resource (HR) officers of the targeted hotels via telephone and email. During these contacts, the HR officers were briefed on the objective of the study. Their willingness to participate in the study was also determined. We employed the "drop and collect" method in distributing the research questionnaires to the respective participant hotels. This method entailed the researchers to make personal visits to the 16 hotels that had agreed to participate in this study. Questionnaires were given to the contact persons who would then distribute the questionnaires to their respective front-line workers. The HR officers of these hotels were told to distribute the survey questionnaires only to those employees who engaged in a significant amount of customer interactions as part of their job as front-line service workers.

Souvenirs were also provided as a token of appreciation to respondents as well to encourage participation. Upon an agreed time, the researchers returned to the participant hotels to collect the completed questionnaires from the contact persons. Table 1 shows a list of participant hotels that are identified by alphabets, and the corresponding number of questionnaires from each establishment that contributed to the study's database. The table shows that a total of 170 questionnaires were distributed to the 16 participant hotels of which 12 were located in Sabah (Hotel A to Hotel L) and 4 were in Labuan (Hotel M to Hotel P). At the end of the data collection period, a total of 139 questionnaires were obtained, giving a response rate of 81.76%. Of this, two sets of questionnaire were rendered non-usable due to incomplete demographic information.

**Table 1: Participant hotels and distribution of questionnaires**

Participant hotel	No. of questionnaires distributed	No. of questionnaires collected	No. of usable questionnaires
A	8	8	8
B	17	17	17
C	15	9	8
D	10	10	10
E	10	6	6
F	10	8	8
G	10	8	7
H	10	6	6
I	10	10	10
J	10	6	6
K	10	8	8
L	10	10	10
M	10	8	8
N	10	7	7
O	10	10	10
P	10	8	8
TOTAL: 16	170	139	137

*Note:* Hotels A – L are located in Sabah; Hotels M – P are located in Labuan.

**3.2 Measures**

The questionnaire used for the present study is comprised of measures adopted from various sources. These measures will be discussed in turn in this section. It should be noted that the items in Section A of the questionnaire were jumbled up in a deliberate attempt to prevent response bias (see Appendix A for sample questionnaire).

### 3.2.1 Emotional labor

Consistent with the conceptualization of emotional labor for purposes of this study, two dimensions of emotional labor from Brotheridge and Lee's (1998) 6-dimensional scale was adopted. Accordingly, the emotional scale we employed consisted of 6 items with 3 items for each dimension of surface and deep acting. Brotheridge and Lee (1998) reported good coefficient alpha values for these dimensions: surface acting ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and deep acting ( $\alpha = .89$ ). These dimensions were measured on a five-point Likert response scale (1 = Never to 5 = Always). A sample item for the subscale of surface acting reads, "I pretend to have emotions that I don't really have," whereas "I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others" represents an item from the deep acting subscale. Higher scores on each of the subscales suggest higher levels of emotional labor.

### 3.2.2 Job satisfaction

The measure of job satisfaction consists of three items that assess overall satisfaction with the job on a five-point Likert response scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). A sample item is "All in all, I am satisfied with my job." This scale is taken from the job satisfaction subscale of Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. This subscale has been found to have a high alpha of .93 (Grandey, 2003).

### 3.2.3 Emotional exhaustion

The nine items to assess emotional exhaustion were taken from emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). This subscale was reported to have high internal consistency reliability ( $\alpha = .91$ ) (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). A five-point

Likert response scale was used (1 = Never to 5 = Always). “I feel burned out from my work” is a item from this measure.

### 3.2.4 Organizational factors

This study examined two organizational factors—support (supervisory and coworker support) and job autonomy as potential moderators in the proposed model.

#### 3.2.4.1 *Supervisory support*

The nine-item supervisory support measure was adopted from Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) scale which notably has a high coefficient alpha of .93. This measure assesses the level of supervisory support using a five-point Likert response scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). A sample item is “My supervisor supports my attempts to acquire additional training or education to further my career.”

#### 3.2.4.2 *Coworker support*

The levels of coworker support were gauged using 4 items from Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison and Pinneau’s (1980) measure. A sample item reads, “My coworkers go out of the way to make my work life easier for me.” Similarly a five-point Likert response scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree) was employed. An acceptable alpha of .79 was reported for coworker support scale (Repeti & Cosmas, 1991).

#### 3.2.4.3 *Job autonomy*

We assessed the levels of job autonomy on a five-point Likert response scale (1= Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree) using 3 items in the job autonomy subscale of the Job Diagnostic Survey.

Survey (Idaszak & Drasgow, 1987). A sample item is “The job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.” Fields (2002) reports alphas that range from .68 to .77 for this scale.

### 3.2.5 Demographics

A series of demographic items were included at the end of the questionnaire. The items include gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, job title, organizational level, job tenure, and organizational tenure.

Table 2 presents the different measures employed in the current study, and the sections in which they appear in the survey questionnaire.

**Table 2: Summary of questionnaire**

Section	Measures	No. of items	Source
I	Emotional Labor		Brotheridge & Lee (1998)
	- Surface acting	3	
	- Deep acting	3	
II	Job Satisfaction	3	Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire
III	Emotional Exhaustion	9	Maslach & Jackson (1986)
IV	Supervisory Support	9	Greenhaus et al. (1990)
V	Coworker Support	4	Caplan et al. (1980)
VI	Job Autonomy	3	Idaszak & Drasgow (1987)
VII	Demographics	14	Self-developed

### 3.3 Statistical Analyses

The data collected were processed and analyzed using *Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 12.0 for Win98NT*. The analysis of the data was done in three phases.

Phase I of the analyses looked at the respondents' overall profile. Phase II consisted of factor analyses, whereas Phase III was concerned with hypotheses testing. Specifically, the statistical tools utilized in the three phases included:

- (a) Descriptive statistics to describe the respondents' characteristics;
- (b) Factor and reliability analyses to ensure goodness of measures;
- (c) Test of differences to determine the differences in emotional labor with respect to demographic variables;
- (d) Regression analysis to examine the effects of emotional labor on employee outcomes; and
- (e) Hierarchical regression analysis to test the moderating effect of organizational factors on the relationships between emotional labor and employee outcomes.

### 3.4 Summary

This chapter has provided a review of the methodology employed in the current study. Specifically, it discussed the research design, sample and procedure, questionnaire, and measures employed in the study. Additionally, this chapter has detailed the statistical analyses that were used to seek empirical justifications for the postulated hypotheses. The next chapter will provide the results of the analyses.

## **Chapter 4**

### **RESULTS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter details the various analyses conducted, and discusses the results of these analyses. The first part of the chapter is concerned with descriptive statistics and results of the analyses done to establish the goodness of measures for the study variables. In the later part, statistical results of the hypotheses testing are reviewed at length. Finally, the overall findings are recapitulated.

#### **4.1 Sample Profile**

Descriptive statistics were obtained to describe the sample characteristics. The following table, Table 3, summarizes the findings. As shown in the table, participants held jobs ranging from front office assistants to workers in various food and beverages outlets in the hotels. The respondents were mainly concentrated on low organizational level (117 or 85.4%).

There were more women (78 or 56.9 %) than men (59 or 43.1%), suggesting the actual representation of female workers in the service sector. It is well documented that women are more likely to work in services industry (Bird & Sapp, 2004; Jordan, 1997) and the majority of them are in fact located in subordinate posts in most service sectors (Richter, 1995). With respect to ethnicity, Bumiputeras made up the majority of the sample (120 or 87.6%). This is followed by Chinese (6 or 4.4%), Indians (2 or 1.5%), and 9 or 6.5 per cent classified themselves as Other.

**Table 3: Demographic profile of respondents**

Demographic Variable	Category	(N = 137)		
		Frequency	Percentage	
Gender	Female	78	56.9	
	Male	59	43.1	
Ethnicity	Bumiputera	120	87.6	
	Chinese	6	4.4	
	Indian	2	1.5	
	Other	9	6.5	
Marital status	Single	91	66.4	
	Married	39	28.5	
	Separated/ Divorced	7	5.1	
Educational level	High school and below	91	66.4	
	Diploma	31	22.6	
	Degree and above	11	8.1	
	Other qualification	4	2.9	
Organizational level	Low	117	85.4	
	Middle	20	14.6	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum      Maximum
Age (in years)		25.6	4.83	18      47
Organizational tenure (in years)		2.08	3.19	.08      29
Job tenure (in years)		2.17	3.15	.08      26

At the time of the research, most of the respondents were single (91 or 66.4%), whereas 39 (or 28.5%) were married, and 7 (or 5.1%) were either separated or divorced. In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of the respondents had high school (or below) (91 or 66.4%). There were also some diploma holders (31 or 22.6%), degree holders (11 or 8.1%), and the remaining obtained other qualifications (4 or 2.9%).

Ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 47 years, with an overall mean age of 25.6 years. Average organizational tenure for this sample was approximately 2.08 years, with the range from approximately 10 months to 29 years. The mean job tenure was 2.17 years. These



statistics indicate that the sample was generally young employees with relatively minimum working experience.

**4.2 Principal Components Analysis**

Three sets of principal components analysis (PCA) were separately performed for the multi-item scales in order to verify the discriminant validity of the instrument used. The first set involved the predictor variables, surface and deep acting. The second involved all items from the criterion variables which are job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, and finally the moderating variables (i.e., support and job autonomy). Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed using indicators that include coefficients, the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin, and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity. It was also predetermined that selected items within a factor must have factor loadings greater or equal to .50, and cross loadings with other factors that are less than .35 (Igbaria, Iivani, & Maragahh, 1995). In the case when an item does not meet this rule of thumb, it will be according dropped from subsequent analyses.

As mentioned earlier, the emotional labor scale (consisted of two dimensions—surface and deep acting) was subjected to PCA using varimax rotation. As expected, the rotated solution revealed the presence of two components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining a total of 67.89 per cent of the variance. The first component, deep acting, contributed 36.45 per cent, whereas the second, surface acting, contributed another 31.44 per cent. All items were retained as they loaded substantially on the appropriate, a priori factors. Table 4 has the results.

Table 4: Emotional labor: Rotated factors, item loadings, and reliabilities

Items	Factors	
	I	II
<b>Factor I: Deep Acting</b>		
DA2: I try to actually experience the emotions that I need to display to others.	<u>.90</u>	.13
DA1: I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others.	<u>.84</u>	.11
DA3: I really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job.	<u>.80</u>	.09
<b>Factor II: Surface Acting</b>		
SA3: I hide my true feelings about a situation.	.14	<u>.83</u>
SA2: I pretend to have emotions that I don't really have.	.02	<u>.82</u>
SA1: I resist expressing my true feelings.	.15	<u>.70</u>
Eigenvalue	2.57	1.50
Variance (%) (Total: 67.89%)	36.45	31.44
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin MSA	.68	
Barlett's test of sphericity	239.46**	
Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)	.81	.70

Note: N = 137; \*\*p < .01; Underlined loadings indicate the inclusion of those items in the factor; DA = Deep acting; SA = Surface acting.

The second set of PCA was conducted on both job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion scales. Again, varimax rotation was performed to aid in the interpretation of the components, resulting in a two-factor solution that constituted job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion components (see Table 5). One item was eventually dropped from the job satisfaction component to give a higher alpha value, whereas 3 items were dropped from the emotional exhaustion scale due to high cross loadings. The total variance explained was 61.63 per cent with emotional exhaustion component contributing to 42.25 per cent while the component of job satisfaction contributing another 19.38 per cent.

**Table 5: Job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion: Rotated factors, item loadings, and reliabilities**

<u>Items</u>	<u>Factors</u>	
	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>
<b><u>Factor I: Emotional Exhaustion</u></b>		
EE5: I feel burned out from my work.	<u>.85</u>	-.17
EE2: I feel used up at the end of the day.	<u>.79</u>	-.04
EE1: I feel emotionally drained at work.		
EE3: I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	<u>.78</u>	-.22
EE8: Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	<u>.66</u>	-.21
EE7: I feel I am working too hard on my job.	<u>.62</u>	.01
<b><u>Factor II: Job Satisfaction</u></b>		
JS2: All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	-.01	<u>.86</u>
JS3: In general, I like working here.	-.16	<u>.83</u>
Eigenvalue	3.38	1.55
Variance (%) (Total: 61.63%)	42.25	19.38
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin MSA	.81	
Bartlett's test of sphericity	376.85**	
Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)	.85	.64

*Note: N = 137; \*\*p < .01; Underlined loadings indicate the inclusion of those items in the factor; EE = Emotional Exhaustion; JS = Job Satisfaction.*

Finally, three other multi-item scales namely job autonomy, supervisory support, and coworker support were subjected to PCA with varimax rotation. The rotated solution revealed three distinct components that collectively explained 60.14 per cent of the variance. Factors one, two, and three contributed to 30.15 per cent, 17.07 per cent, and 12.92 per cent of the variance, respectively. It should be noted that all coworker support and job autonomy items were retained in the appropriate factors. However, one item from the supervisory support factor had to be removed due to high cross loading. Table 6 presents the results.

Table 6: Job autonomy and support: Rotated factors, item loadings, and reliabilities

		Factors		
Items		I	II	III
<b>Factor I: Supervisory Support</b>				
SS7:	My supervisor supports my attempts to acquire additional training or education to further my career.	<u>.81</u>	-.01	.14
SS5:	My supervisor gives me helpful feedback about my performance.	<u>.77</u>	.05	.06
SS9:	My supervisor assigns me special projects that increase my visibility in the organization.	<u>.76</u>	.13	.02
SS3:	My supervisor informs me about different career opportunities for me in the organization.	<u>.76</u>	.05	-.10
SS4:	My supervisor makes sure I get the credit when I accomplish something substantial on the job.	<u>.76</u>	.30	-.16
SS2:	My supervisor cares about whether or not I achieve my goals.	<u>.75</u>	.19	.14
SS6:	My supervisor gives me helpful advice about improving my performance when I need it.	<u>.74</u>	-.02	.08
SS1:	My supervisor takes time to learn about my career goals and aspirations.	<u>.51</u>	.20	.18
<b>Factor II: Coworker Support</b>				
CS3:	I can rely on my coworkers when things get tough at work.	.01	<u>.87</u>	-.07
CS1:	My coworkers go out of their way to make my work life easier for me.	.14	<u>.78</u>	.11
CS4:	My coworkers are willing to listen to my personal problems.	.30	<u>.69</u>	.03
CS2:	It is easy to talk to my coworkers.	.04	<u>.69</u>	.13
<b>Factor III: Job Autonomy</b>				
JA1:	I decide on my own how to go about doing the work.	-.09	.05	<u>.81</u>
JA2:	The job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	.16	-.59	<u>.78</u>
JA3:	The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work.	.12	.17	<u>.72</u>
Eigenvalue		5.06	2.10	1.85
Variance (%) (Total: 60.14%)		30.15	17.07	12.92
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin MSA			.81	
Bartlett's test of sphericity			874.21**	
Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)		.88	.78	.68

Note: N = 137; \*\*p < .01; Underlined loadings indicate the inclusion of those items in the factor; SS = Supervisory Support; CS = Coworker Support; JA = Job Autonomy.

### 4.3 Correlations

As a preliminary test, the Pearson correlation values between the study variables were computed (see Table 7). The relationships between the variables of interest could be established, although most variables were not significant except for surface acting which was positively related to emotional exhaustion ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ). Deep acting, on the other hand, was positively related to job autonomy ( $r = .29, p < .01$ ) but negatively related to gender ( $r = -.18, p < .02$ ). In addition, there was a significant and positive relationship between job autonomy and job satisfaction ( $r = .24, p < .01$ ). As expected, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion were negatively related ( $r = -.46, p < .01$ ).

**Table 7: Descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations and Cronbach’s coefficients alpha among study variables**

Factors	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>Predictors</u>												
1 SA	3.08	1.06	<b>.81</b>									
2 DA	3.34	.98	<b>.25**</b>	<b>.70</b>								
<u>Moderators</u>												
3 SS	3.62	.70	-.10	.08	<b>.88</b>							
4 CS	3.40	.79	-.10	.05	<b>.35**</b>	<b>.78</b>						
5 JA	3.77	.72	.04	<b>.29**</b>	.12	.14	<b>.68</b>					
<u>Criterion</u>												
6 JS	3.81	.71	-.13	.11	.14	.10	<b>.24**</b>	<b>.64</b>				
7 EE	2.84	.83	<b>.21**</b>	-.05	.03	.01	-.06	<b>-.46**</b>	<b>.85</b>			
<u>Demographics</u>												
8 Gender	-	-	.11	-.18*	.12	.00	-.10	-.03	.13	<b>SIM</b>		
9 Age	25.62	4.83	-.08	.02	.13	.08	.16	.21*	-.14	.07	<b>SIM</b>	
10 Job tenure	2.08	3.19	-.03	-.06	.07	.11	.06	.09	.04	.11	<b>.50**</b>	<b>SIM</b>

*Note: N = 137; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; Diagonal entries in bold indicate Cronbach’s coefficients alpha; SIM=Single item measure; SA=Surface acting; DA=Deep acting; SS=Supervisory support; CS=Coworker support; JA=Job autonomy; JS=Job satisfaction; EE=Emotional exhaustion; Age and job tenure (in years).*

It should also be noted that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for all study variables exceed the threshold value of .60, suggesting internal consistency and as such the reliability of the scales.

#### 4.4 Tests of Differences

Several researchers (e.g., Domagalski, 1999; Hochschild, 1983; Johnson & Spector, 2007; Kruml & Geddes, 2000) reported that there are differences with respect to emotional labor across a number of demographics notably gender, age and tenure. For instance, Johnson and Spector (2007) found that females tended to experience negative consequences when engaging in surface acting. Kruml and Geddes (2000) noted that new workers experienced more emotive dissonance or effort. Other studies (Hochschild, 1983; Kruml & Geddes, 2000) reported that older employees are more able to control their emotions and express appropriate emotions. Given that, we conducted some analyses to determine if these differences were present in our sample.

##### 4.4.1 Differences in emotional labor by gender

The differences in emotional labor process were explored in terms of gender. An independent-samples *t*-test was employed for this purpose. The results offered no support for significant differences in the mean scores of surface acting for males and females. On the contrary, there was evidence of significant difference between males and females with regard to performance of deep acting. In other words, female employees ( $M = 3.49$ ) were found to engage in deep acting more than their male counterparts ( $M = 3.15$ ). Table 8 summarizes the test results.

**Table 8: Differences in emotional labor by gender**

Emotional Labor	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -value
<i>Surface Acting</i>				
Female	78	2.98	1.02	-1.33
Male	59	3.22	1.10	
<i>Deep Acting</i>				
Female	78	3.49	.94	2.07*
Male	59	3.15	1.00	

Note: *N* = 137; \**p* < .05.

**4.4.2 Differences in emotional labor by age**

Similarly, an independent-samples *t*-test was employed to examine whether there were significant differences between younger and older workers with regard to their emotional labor process. To appropriate the data for this test, age (being a continuous variable) was first collapsed into two groups of young and old. This was done using the “median split” method that is to divide the sample into two groups, using the median as the cut-off point. The *t*-test results revealed that young and old employees were not statistically different with regard to their performance of surface and deep acting. A summary of the results can be found in Table 9.

**Table 9: Differences in emotional labor by age**

Emotional Labor	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -value
<i>Surface Acting</i>				
Young employees	78	3.10	1.12	.20
Old employees	59	3.06	.98	
<i>Deep Acting</i>				
Young employees	78	3.27	1.03	-1.02
Old employees	59	3.44	.90	

Note: *N* = 137; \**p* < .05.

4.4.3 Differences in emotional labor by job tenure

To determine whether emotional labor process differs in terms of job tenure, the same procedure described in the preceding section was repeated. The *t*-test results demonstrated that there was no statistical difference between new and old employees with respect to their choice of acting processes. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Differences in emotional labor by job tenure

Emotional Labor	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -value
<i>Surface Acting</i>				
New employees	75	3.05	1.02	-.36
Old employees	62	3.12	1.11	
<i>Deep Acting</i>				
New employees	75	3.39	.98	.63
Old employees	62	3.28	.98	

Note: *N* = 137; \**p* < .05.

4.5 Regression Analyses

A series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the study hypotheses. Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998) offer a few basic assumptions that have to be first met before the regression results can be considered free from distortion and bias. First, influential outliers have to be identified and omitted. For a sample size of 137, all observations outside the range of 3 standard deviations should be considered as outliers (Hair et al., 1998) and be consequently dropped from the regression. Casewise diagnostics is utilized for this purpose. Second, residuals scatterplot and the normal probability plot are requested as part of the analysis to confirm the normality and linearity of data. Thirdly, homoscedascity and independence of the error terms have to be determined. Finally, multicollinearity problem is



detected using diagnostics such variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). These assumptions were observed for purposes of this study.

4.5.1 The relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes

To determine the consequences of emotional labor, two multiple regression analyses were run; each for every outcome variable (i.e., job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion). In the first analysis, job satisfaction was regressed on surface and deep acting. The initial regression revealed three influential outliers that were eliminated from subsequent analyses. As shown in Table 11, surface and deep acting significantly predicted job satisfaction in the proposed direction. Specifically, surface acting was negatively related to job satisfaction ( $\beta = -.21$ ;  $p = .02$ ), whereas deep acting positively influenced job satisfaction ( $\beta = .16$ ;  $p = .08$ ).

Table 11: Regression Results: The relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes

<u>Criterion Variables</u>	(N = 134) Job Satisfaction		(N = 135) Emotional Exhaustion	
	Std. Beta	t-value	Std. Beta	t-value
<u>Predictors</u>				
Surface Acting	-.21	-2.39**	.22	2.41**
Deep Acting	.16	1.80*	-.16	-1.81*
R <sup>2</sup>	.05		.08	
F	3.53**		3.68**	

Note: \*\* $p < .05$ ; \* $p < .10$ .

Although the resultant model was fit ( $F = 3.53$ ;  $p = .03$ ), the  $R^2$  value was a mere .05, indicating that the two acting processes could only explain 5 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction. The reason could be due to the construct of job satisfaction that was employed in this study. It

only consisted of 2 items after factor analysis and possibly could not adequately capture the full impact of surface and deep acting.

In the second analysis, emotional exhaustion was regressed on both surface and deep acting. Two outliers were detected and accordingly removed. Again, the results indicated that surface and deep acting were significant predictors of emotional exhaustion (see Table 11). Surface acting was positively linked to emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = .22$ ;  $p = .02$ ), whereas deep acting negatively predicted emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = -.16$ ;  $p = .07$ ). The ANOVA table shows that the model as a whole was significant ( $F = 3.68$ ,  $p = .03$ ). The variance in emotional exhaustion explained by the two acting processes at 8 per cent was slightly higher than that in the first model for job satisfaction. Based on the above results, Hypotheses 1 and 2 are substantiated.

#### 4.5.2 The moderating role of organizational factors

A three-step hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effects of two organizational factors on the proposed relationships. This analysis was performed separately for each outcome variable namely job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. To reiterate, Step 1 involved the entering of the predictor variables (i.e., surface acting and deep acting). In Step 2, the proposed moderator (supervisory support/coworker support/job autonomy) was added to the equation. Finally, Step 3 saw the inclusion of the interaction terms.

##### 4.5.2.1 Support

Table 12 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regressions for the moderating effects of supervisory support on the relationships between emotional labor and employee outcomes. Initial analysis revealed one outlier which was removed from the subsequent regression. The

results indicated that as expected supervisory support had significant and positive influence on job satisfaction ( $\beta = 1.16; p = .00$ ).

However, as a moderator, supervisory support significantly moderated only the relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction ( $\beta = -1.90; p = .01$ ). The direction of the relationship was rather unexpected. The model ( $F = 4.07, p = .00$ ) explained 10 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction, with the interaction terms contributing a further 8 per cent.

**Table 12: Regression results with supervisory support as a moderator in the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes**

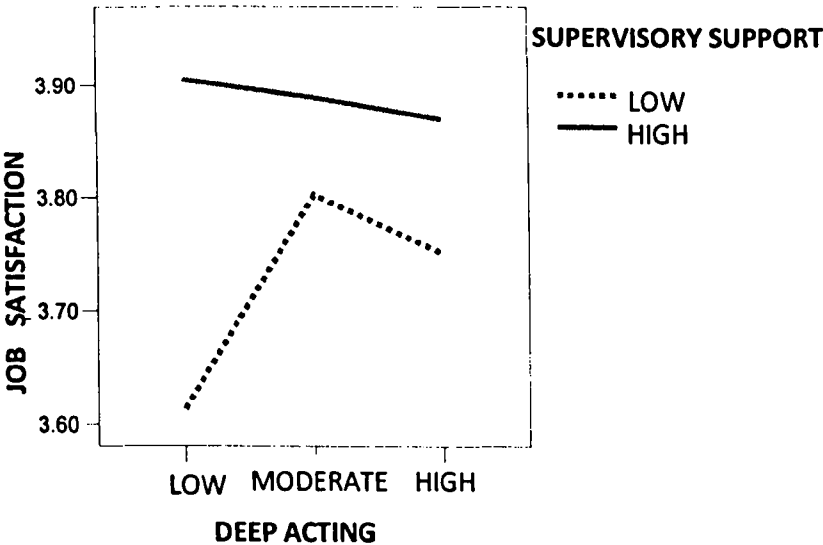
<u>Criterion Variables</u>	(N = 136)		(N = 137)	
	Job Satisfaction		Emotional Exhaustion	
	Std. Beta	t-value	Std. Beta	t-value
<u>Predictors</u>				
Surface Acting (SA)	-.01	-.03	-.09	-.19
Deep Acting (DA)	1.62	3.09**	-.53	-.98
<u>Moderator</u>				
Supervisory Support (SS)	1.16	3.69**	-.38	-1.17
<u>Interaction terms</u>				
SA X SS	-.08	-.15	.35	.65
DA X SS	-1.90	-2.82**	.51	.73
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.10		.04	
R <sup>2</sup> Change	.08		.02	
F Change	6.06**		1.04	

*Note: \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01.*

To graphically illustrate interaction effects, regression lines can be easily created. Thus, we plotted an interaction graph to depict the moderating effect of supervisory support on the relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction (see Figure 1). Deep acting scores had to

be first divided up into equal-sized groups of low, moderate, and high using the 33.33 and 66.67 percentile cutoff points. Job satisfaction was then regressed on deep acting for two levels of supervisory support: low and high.

As is evident in Figure 1, for employees with low supervisory support, job satisfaction increased significantly from low to moderate level of deep acting. But beyond the moderate point, increasing the level of deep acting appeared to decrease the job satisfaction of employees who had low supervisory support. On the contrary, employees who enjoyed high levels of supervisory support did not seem to experience significant increase in job satisfaction with the increase of deep acting. In fact, the reverse could be true. Simply put, employees with high supervisory support experienced greater job satisfaction which declined, though not significantly, as the performance of deep acting increased. On the contrary, employees with low supervisory support experienced lower job satisfaction as deep acting increased.



**Figure 1:** Interaction between deep acting and supervisory support for job satisfaction.

Another set of moderated regression was performed for emotional exhaustion. However, no moderating effect of supervisory support could be established (see Table 12) even though the model ( $F = 2.03, p < .10$ ) was adequate. It can be concluded that supervisory support did not have any significant impact on minimizing emotional exhaustion when employees performed emotional labor.

The second set of hierarchical multiple regression entailed incorporating coworker as a moderator in the model. The same procedures described earlier were applied here. Table 13 has the results. As shown in the table, the results revealed that coworker support significantly predicted both job satisfaction ( $\beta = .86; p = .00$ ) and emotional exhaustion in the expected direction ( $\beta = -.77; p = .01$ ).

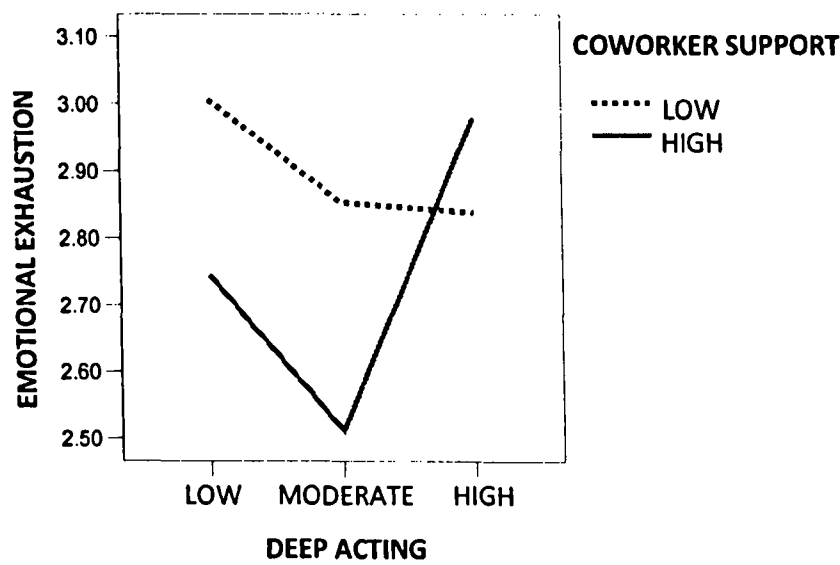
**Table 13: Regression results with coworker support as a moderator in the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes**

<u>Criterion Variables</u>	(N = 132)		(N = 137)	
	Job Satisfaction		Emotional Exhaustion	
	Std. Beta	t-value	Std. Beta	t-value
<u>Predictors</u>				
Surface Acting (SA)	.48	1.25	-.11	-.31
Deep Acting (DA)	.60	1.77*	-.85	-2.56**
<u>Moderator</u>				
Coworker Support (CS)	.86	2.89**	-.77	-2.68**
<u>Interaction terms</u>				
SA X CS	-.74	-1.66	.38	.87
DA X CS	-.60	-1.31	.99	2.22*
Adjusted $R^2$	.06		.08	
$R^2$ Change	.06		.06	
F Change	3.83*		4.46**	

Note: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

The model for job satisfaction ( $F = 2.80, p < .05$ ) was adequate but did not corroborate coworker as a moderator in the relationship between the emotional labor process (i.e., surface and deep acting) and job satisfaction. On the other hand, the model for emotional exhaustion ( $F = 3.41, p < .01$ ) revealed a significant  $F$  change at 4.46 ( $p < .01$ ), suggesting coworker as a moderator for the relationship between deep acting and emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = .99; p = .05$ ). The direction of the relationship was somehow unexpected. The  $R^2$  change value of .06 suggests that an additional 6 per cent of the variance in emotional exhaustion was contributed by the interaction term. Given the above results, Hypothesis 3 is partially supported.

An interaction graph was plotted to depict the interaction effects (see Figure 2). As shown in the figure, for employees with low as well as high levels of coworker support, emotional exhaustion decreased rather significantly when the levels of deep acting increased from low to moderate. But as the levels of deep acting increased from moderate to high, different patterns could be noted for the two groups of employees.



**Figure 2:** Interaction between deep acting and coworker support for emotional exhaustion.

Specifically, as employees engaged in more deep acting, the impact of low levels of coworker support in alleviating emotional exhaustion was no longer significant. Conversely, as employees performed more and more deep acting, high levels of coworker support appeared to be clearly detrimental to employees such that emotional exhaustion increased significantly as the levels of deep acting increased from moderate to high. These findings were somewhat surprising.

#### 4.5.2.2 Job autonomy

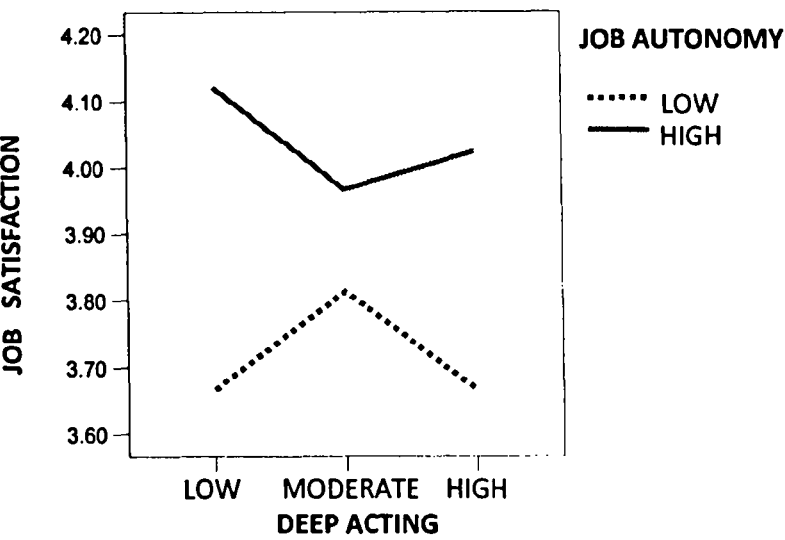
Moderated regression analyses were similarly run for another proposed moderator, job autonomy. The resultant model ( $F = 3.45, p < .01$ ), presented in Table 14, indicated that job autonomy served as a pure moderator in the relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction ( $\beta = -.1.04; p = .05$ ).

**Table 14: Regression results with job autonomy as a moderator in the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcomes.**

<u>Criterion Variables</u>	(N = 137) Job Satisfaction		(N = 137) Emotional Exhaustion	
	Std. Beta	t-value	Std. Beta	t-value
<u>Predictors</u>				
Surface Acting (SA)	-.74	-1.50	.78	1.53
Deep Acting (DA)	.83	2.10*	-.45	-1.13
<u>Moderator</u>				
Job Autonomy (JA)	.37	1.01	.03	.08
<u>Interaction terms</u>				
SA X JA	.73	1.24	-.67	-1.11
DA X JA	-1.04	-1.97*	.51	.95
Adjusted $R^2$	.08		.03	
$R^2$ Change	.03		.01	
F Change	2.44*		.94	

Note: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

Based on the value of  $R^2$  change, it can be surmised that the interaction effect predicted an additional 3 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction. To illustrate the moderating influence of job autonomy on the relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction, regression lines were plotted for deep acting (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Interaction between deep acting and job autonomy for job satisfaction.

As shown in Figure 3, there are two distinctively different patterns with regard to the interaction effects for employees who reported different levels of job autonomy. For those with low levels of job autonomy the impact of deep acting on job satisfaction was positive when low to moderate level of deep acting was present. However, the reverse was true when the level of deep acting transcended the moderate point. Interestingly, for employees with high levels of job autonomy, the impact of deep acting on job satisfaction was noticeably negative when the level of deep acting increased from low to moderate. From the moderate level onwards, the impact became positive.



Another multiple regression was conducted for emotional exhaustion. However, the resultant model ( $F = 1.93, p < .10$ ) did not support the moderating effect of job autonomy on the relationship between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion. Based on the above results, Hypothesis 4 receives only partial support.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter has examined the various analyses conducted that included descriptive statistics, goodness of measures, test of differences, and multiple regression analysis. The current chapter has also presented the results of the hypotheses testing by delineating hypotheses that were substantiated by the data and those which were not. By and large, the hypotheses received moderate support from the data. The next chapter reviews the salient findings and discusses some important implications of these findings.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This concluding chapter delineates what has been attempted and accomplished in the current study. First, the objectives of the study are recapitulated. Next, the salient findings of the study are highlighted alongside justifications for significant and nonsignificant results. Practical implications of the findings are then presented. The final section underlines the strengths and limitations of the study, and offers some suggestions for future research in this area.

#### **5.1 Recapitulation of the Research**

The current study was undertaken with three broad objectives in mind: (a) to examine the process of emotional labor as performed by hotel employees and how this influenced employee outcomes; (b) to ascertain the role of organizational factors in moderating the relationship between emotional labor and outcomes; and (c) to make recommendations on best practices in reducing, if not eliminating, the negative consequences of emotional labor.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

In essence, this study aims to examine the relationship between the process of emotional labor and its consequences in terms of two employee outcomes namely job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. Additionally, it investigates two organizational factors (i.e., support and job autonomy) as potential moderators of the proposed relationships. Generally, the findings were fairly congruent with previous studies while providing support for some of the study hypotheses. Some notable findings also emerged from this study. For instance, female

employees were found to engage in deep acting more than their male counterparts, thus corroborating previous findings (e.g., Johnson, 2004). The reason could be that women are more adept at building relationships and as such are better socialized when compared to men. This socialization may lead women to perform more deep acting to adhere to positive display rules.

For the direct effect of emotional labor on employee outcomes, both acting processes significantly predicted employee outcomes with the relationships in the expected direction. These findings are consistent with past studies that examined the consequences of emotional labor (e.g., Kim, 2008; Johnson, 2004; Yang & Chang, 2008). An important implication of these findings is that it is not emotional labor but rather how it is performed, either by engaging in surface acting or deep acting, is consequential upon employee outcomes. This stance is in line with Wharton's (1993) contention. For instance, surface acting is negatively linked to job satisfaction but positively related to emotional exhaustion, suggesting that performing surface acting is detrimental to employee well-being. Conversely, deep acting contributed to job satisfaction but negatively predicted emotional exhaustion. It can be surmised that an employee is better off to actually feel the organizationally mandated emotion rather than just "faking it" as less emotional exhaustion is likely with deep acting method.

The findings on the role of organizational factors namely support and job autonomy lent minimal support to the hypotheses since they were generally mixed and to some extent contrary to predictions. In some instances, support as well as job autonomy did not serve as moderators to the proposed relationships. These findings are inconsistent with previous research (e.g., Abraham, 1998; Erickson, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1985) but provided support for some other studies (e.g., Chu, 2002). It has been suggested that support and job autonomy

could be mediators or even antecedents of emotional labor and they indirectly contribute to the consequences of emotional labor (Chu, 2002).

The results for the moderating effects lent some support for the presence of “reverse buffering” as noted by Beehr (1995). In all the cases where organizational factors (i.e., support and job autonomy) acted as moderators, the real differences could be noted at the higher levels of emotional labor, particularly deep acting.

To clarify, supervisory support was found to significantly moderate the relationship between deep acting and job satisfaction. Low levels of supervisory support appeared to be more helpful than high levels of supervisory support in increasing job satisfaction but only when employees engaged in low to moderate levels of deep acting. Beyond that, both levels of supervisory support did not help to increase job satisfaction but instead could prove detrimental to employee job satisfaction. Hence, as suggested by ‘reverse buffering,’ supervisory support may actually contribute to negative effects of emotional labor when emotional labor is high.

The effect of ‘reverse buffering’ was interestingly more evident with high coworker support. The data revealed that employees with high coworker support were more likely to experience emotional exhaustion as they engaged in more deep acting. This finding supports Johnson’s (2004) study that reported that employees with high coworker support experienced a decrease in job satisfaction as emotional labor increased. This hence suggests that employees could be better off with low coworker support in their performance of emotional labor.

An explanation for the above findings is in order. We concur with Johnson (2004) in that social support is implicitly reciprocal. This is particularly true in Malaysian collectivistic society which emphasizes a tight social framework in which the common expectation is that members in the same group look after and protect each other (Robbins & Judge, 2009). This simply means that when employees receive support either from their superior or coworkers, they are expected to provide support in return. Therefore, as emotional labor increases, the situation becomes more emotionally demanding since the employee needs to also provide support to coworkers which may result in decreased job satisfaction and increased emotional exhaustion. In the words of Johnson (2004, p. 43), support can act as "...a double-edged sword because while beneficial at times, it can also be emotionally taxing."

Similarly, the findings on the role of job autonomy as a moderator in the relationship between emotional labor and employee outcome were also unexpected. The findings did not provide support for previous studies (e.g., Avella, 2009; Johnson & Spector, 2007; Wharton, 1993) that generally reported that the more autonomy a service worker has, the less deleterious the effects of performing emotional labor. In fact, the reverse was true in this study. A plausible reason could be that as front-line service workers, hotel employees do not really have a choice to engage in expressive behaviors that reflect their affective state. Whether they like it or not, they still have to abide by the organizational display rules in their interactions with customers. In other words, it is expected of hospitality workers to provide "service with a smile" in accordance to the occupational norms of the service sector and this necessitates the performance of emotional labor. Thus, hotel employees may have autonomy in other aspects of their job but not so with regard to the expression of emotions in the workplace.

### 5.3 Managerial Implications

The results of this study have demonstrated that emotional labor in itself may not necessarily lead to negative consequences. Rather it is the process of emotional labor which comprises of two methods of acting, surface and deep acting that can determine the direction of the outcomes. The findings suggest that deep acting proves to be a better method to manage one's emotions in view of the more favorable consequences. Hence, hotel employees have to make sincere efforts to experience and display the appropriate emotions (i.e., deep acting).

A crucial message for hotel managers is that education and training may be necessary to help employees use more appropriate and beneficial methods to manage their emotions. Such training could help employees learn how to provide sincere hospitality. For instance, when hotel guests are unhappy with a certain aspect of service, hotel workers should learn to express a "sincere" (not superficial) apology. This apology coupled with the correct remedies will help ease hotel guests' anger leading them to feeling more satisfied. This in turn helps lessen employees' job stress. Clearly, deep acting can benefit hotel workers and guests alike (Kim, 2008).

Moreover, gender has been found to influence the choice of acting method such that females tended to employ more deep acting as compared to their male counterparts. Hence, training and education in emotion management should also be gender-specific. In a similar vein, Grandey (2000) suggests that men may need more training in this aspect.

The findings of the study also suggest that perhaps hotel managers should carefully monitor the kind and level of support and job autonomy made available to the employees. Generally, past

studies have provided evidence that support and job autonomy indeed can be beneficial to employees in terms of buffering the negative consequences of emotional labor. Contrary to expectations, the current study revealed that providing high support (supervisory as well as coworker support) and job autonomy somehow were not effective in mitigating the negative impact of emotional labor. Instead the negative consequences of emotional labor were compounded by the presence of high support and autonomy.

It follows that the management may need to consider other means to alleviate the negative effects of emotional labor amongst employees such as the use of humor and constant breaks in the workplace. Stress management programs can be another plausible alternative. Training programs can also be designed to give employees the opportunity to openly discuss the frustrations on their jobs (Chu, 2002). Such training has several clear advantages. First, it allows employees to ventilate their negative emotions caused by their jobs. Next, it assures employees that the organization is aware of and acknowledges the emotional contribution employees put into their jobs. This positive feedback can in turn motivate employees' productivity and commitment to their jobs and the organization.

Finally, we concur with Chu (2002) that although emotional labor evidently influences outcomes at individual level as well as organizational level, its significance has not been appropriately acknowledged. While the industry pays well for mental and physical labor, most of the emotional labor performers in the hospitality industry receive relatively lower wages (Chu, 2002). If the hospitality industry expects its service workers to provide quality service, these workers need to be not only recognized but also accordingly rewarded for their emotional contribution. This warrants the redesigning of the compensation structure of the hospitality

industry to reward emotional labor performers as well as to attract more quality job candidates. Perhaps, this move can directly help to address the prevailing issue facing Sabah and Labuan in terms of losing skilled service workers to hotels and resorts overseas that offer more lucrative wages.

#### **5.4 Limitations and Future Research**

One of the concerns of this study is that the study has rallied primarily on sample drawn from a limited geographical area which is Sabah and Labuan. This coupled with small sample size in relation to the number of variables under study might have made it difficult to capture all the relevant relationships. Therefore, future research can conduct a validation study with larger sample from diverse areas and using other statistical methods such as structural equations modeling (SEM). Hence, more solid managerial implications and higher generalizability of the current findings can be ascertained.

Another potential limitation is the use of self-report measures that recorded respondents' perceptions. While these are important as perceptions, they may not be an accurate reflection of reality. They may have also inflated the correlation. However, it should be noted that this self-report methodology is still deemed appropriate for this study since it seeks to assess employees' performance of emotional labor, attitudes, and perceived outcomes.

The proposed model only managed to explain a minimal percentage of the variance in employee outcomes. Hence, the line of research may still be expanded by exploring other variables such as individual characteristics (e.g., emotional intelligence and affectivity) and job characteristics (i.e., frequency, duration, and variety of emotional display).



Finally, data were collected using a cross-sectional design that could only capture the proposed relationships at one point in time. Thus, a longitudinal study is highly recommended so that the consequences of emotional labor can be better gauged over a period of time.

## 5.5 Conclusion

Drawing upon an east Malaysian sample, the study provided some useful insights into the process of emotional labor that can have immense personal consequences on hotel workers. One noteworthy finding is that emotional labor in itself may not necessarily lead to negative consequences. Rather it is the choice of techniques of performing emotional labor (i.e., surface and deep acting) that actually determines the direction of the outcomes. Whereas performing surface acting is detrimental to employee outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion), deep acting proves to be a more beneficial method to manage work emotions.

Contrary to predictions, our study found that high support (supervisory and coworker support) and job autonomy had reverse buffering effects on the consequences of emotional labor. Enhanced knowledge in this area can be helpful for organizations in the hospitality industry to reduce the related personal and organizational costs of emotional labor by means of training and stress management programs.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE BORANG SOAL SELIDIK

Dear Respondent,

We seek your kind assistance in completing the attached questionnaire about your emotions in the workplace. There are no right or wrong answers as this is just an academic exercise. What is more important is that you provide honest and frank responses. We would like to give you our full assurance that all information furnished by you will be treated in strict confidence.

Thank you for your invaluable assistance and participation in making this a meaningful study.

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Magdalene Ang Chooi Hwa, PhD  
Research Leader  
School of International Business and Finance  
Universiti Malaysia Sabah  
Labuan International Campus  
Tel.(O): 087-466817

*Para Responden,*

*Kami meminta bantuan anda untuk melengkapkan soal selidik yang berikut tentang emosi anda di tempat kerja. Data yang dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik ini adalah untuk kajian akademik. Oleh itu, tidak ada sebarang jawapan yang betul atau salah. Apa yang lebih penting lagi ialah jawapan anda yang jujur dan ikhlas. Lantaran itu, kami menjamin bahawa semua maklumat yang diberikan oleh anda adalah rahsia.*

*Kami mengucapkan ribuan terima kasih atas kerjasama dan penglibatan anda dalam menjayakan kajian ini.*

---

Magdalene Ang Chooi Hwa, PhD  
Ketua Penyelidik  
Sekolah Perniagaan dan Kewangan Antarabangsa  
Universiti Malaysia Sabah  
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**Section I (Bahagian I)**

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH STATEMENT THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.

SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGGAMBARAKAN PENDAPAT ANDA TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.

No.	On an average day at work, how <u>frequently</u> do you do each of the following when interacting with customers? <i>Dalam suatu hari bekerja yang biasa, berapa kerapkah anda membuat perkara berikut apabila berinteraksi dengan para pelanggan?</i>	Never <i>Tidak pernah</i>	Rarely <i>Jarang-jarang</i>	Sometimes <i>Kadang-kala</i>	Often <i>Seringkali</i>	Always <i>Selalu</i>
SA1	Resist expressing my true feelings. <i>Elakkan daripada menunjukkan perasaan saya yang sebenarnya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
DA1	Make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others. <i>Berusaha untuk benar-benar merasai emosi-emosi yang saya perlu tunjukkan kepada orang lain.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
DA2	Try to actually experience the emotions that I need to display to others. <i>Cuba untuk benar-benar mengalami emosi-emosi yang saya perlu tunjukkan kepada orang lain.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SA2	Pretend to have emotions that I don't really have. <i>Berpura-pura mempunyai emosi-emosi yang saya tidak ada.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SA3	Hide my true feelings about a situation. <i>Menyembunyikan perasaan sebenar saya terhadap sesuatu situasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

DA3	Really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job. <i>Mencuba dengan bersungguh-sungguh untuk menjiwai emosi-emosi yang saya perlu tunjukkan sebagai sebahagian daripada pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
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**Section II (Bahagian II)**

No.	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ITEM THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. <i>SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGAMBARKAN PENDAPAT KAMU TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.</i>	Strongly disagree <i>Sangat tidak bersetuju</i>	Disagree <i>Tidak bersetuju</i>	Uncertain <i>Tidak pasti</i>	Agree <i>Bersetuju</i>	Strongly agree <i>Sangat bersetuju</i>
JS1	In general, I do not like my job. <i>Pada amnya, saya tidak menyukai pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
JS2	All in all, I am satisfied with my job. <i>Secara keseluruhannya, saya berpuashati dengan pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
JS3	In general, I like working here. <i>Pada amnya, saya suka bekerja di sini.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

**Section III (Bahagian III)**

No.	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ITEM THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. <i>SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGAMBARKAN PENDAPAT KAMU TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.</i>	Never <i>Tidak pernah</i>	Rarely <i>Jarang-jarang</i>	Sometimes <i>Kadang-kala</i>	Often <i>Seringkali</i>	Always <i>Selalu</i>
EE1	I feel emotionally drained at work. <i>Saya merasa keletihan emosi di tempat kerja.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

EE2	I feel used up at the end of the day. <i>Saya merasa terlalu penat pada penghujung hari.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE3	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job. <i>Saya merasa letih bila bangun waktu pagi dan terpaksa berhadapan dengan kerja saya sehari lagi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE4	Working with people is really a strain to me. <i>Bekerja dengan orang adalah sesuatu yang memberi ketegangan kepada saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE5	I feel burned out from my work. <i>Saya merasa keletihan daripada pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE6	I feel frustrated on my job. <i>Saya merasa kecewa dengan pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE7	I feel I am working too hard on my job. <i>Saya rasa saya bekerja terlalu keras dalam pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE8	Working with people directly puts too much stress on me. <i>Bekerja dengan orang memberikan banyak tekanan secara langsung ke atas diri saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
EE9	I feel like I am at the end of my rope. <i>Saya merasakan diri saya berada di jalan buntu.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

#### Section IV (Bahagian IV)

No.	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ITEM THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. <i>SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGAMBARKAN PENDAPAT KAMU TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.</i>	Strongly disagree <i>Sangat tidak bersetuju</i>	Disagree <i>Tidak bersetuju</i>	Uncertain <i>Tidak pasti</i>	Agree <i>Bersetuju</i>	Strongly agree <i>Sangat bersetuju</i>
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SS1	My supervisor takes time to learn about my career goals and aspirations. <i>Penyelia saya mengambil masa untuk mengetahui tentang matlamat dan aspirasi kerjaya saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS2	My supervisor cares about whether or not I achieve my goals. <i>Penyelia saya mengambil berat samada saya mencapai matlamat saya atau pun tidak.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS3	My supervisor informs me about different career opportunities for me in the organization. <i>Penyelia saya memaklumkan kepada saya tentang peluang-peluang kerjaya saya dalam organisasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS4	My supervisor makes sure I get the credit when I accomplish something substantial on the job. <i>Penyelia saya memastikan saya mendapat pujian apabila saya menyempurnakan sesuatu yang besar dalam pekerjaan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS5	My supervisor gives me helpful feedback about my performance. <i>Penyelia saya memberikan saya maklumbalas yang berguna tentang prestasi kerja saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS6	My supervisor gives me helpful advice about improving my performance when I need it. <i>Penyelia saya memberikan nasihat yang bernas demi menambahbaikkan prestasi saya apabila saya memerlukannya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS7	My supervisor supports my attempts to acquire additional training or education to further my career. <i>Penyelia saya menyokong percubaan-percubaan saya untuk memperoleh latihan tambahan atau pendidikan untuk memajukan kerjaya saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS8	My supervisor provides assignments that give me the opportunity to develop and strengthen new skills.					

	<i>Penyelia saya menyediakan tugas-tugas yang memberikan saya peluang untuk mengembangkan dan mengukuhkan kemahiran baru.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
SS9	My supervisor assigns me special projects that increase my visibility in the organization. <i>Penyelia saya memberi saya projek-projek istimewa yang menyerlahkan kehadiran saya dalam organisasi .</i>	1	2	3	4	5

**Section V (Bahagian V)**

No.	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ITEM THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. <i>SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGAMBARKAN PENDAPAT KAMU TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.</i>	Strongly disagree <i>Sangat tidak bersetuju</i>	Disagree <i>Tidak bersetuju</i>	Uncertain <i>Tidak pasti</i>	Agree <i>Bersetuju</i>	Strongly agree <i>Sangat bersetuju</i>
CS1	My coworkers go out of their way to make my work life easier for me. <i>Kawan sekerja saya memberi ruang untuk membuat kehidupan kerja saya lebih senang.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
CS2	It is easy to talk to my coworkers. <i>Adalah senang untuk bercakap kepada kawan kerja saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
CS3	I can rely on my coworkers when things get tough at work. <i>Saya boleh bergantung ke atas teman sekerja saya apabila keadaan menjadi susah di tempat kerja.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
CS4	My coworkers are willing to listen to my personal problems. <i>Kawan sekerja saya sanggup mendengar masalah peribadi saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

### Section VI (Bahagian VI)

No.	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ITEM THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. <i>SILA BULATKAN NOMBOR BAGI SETIAP PERNYATAAN YANG HAMPIR MENGAMBARKAN PENDAPAT KAMU TENTANG PERNYATAAN TERSEBUT.</i>	Strongly disagree <i>Sangat tidak bersetuju</i>	Disagree <i>Tidak bersetuju</i>	Uncertain <i>Tidak pasti</i>	Agree <i>Bersetuju</i>	Strongly agree <i>Sangat bersetuju</i>
JA1	I decide on my own how to go about doing the work. <i>Saya membuat keputusan sendiri bagaimana untuk melaksanakan sesuatu tugas.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
JA2	The job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work. <i>Pekerjaan ini memberikan saya satu peluang untuk menggunakan inisiatif atau penilaian sendiri dalam menjalankan tugas saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
JA3	The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work. <i>Pekerjaan ini memberikan peluang sebaik mungkin untuk kebebasan dalam saya menjalankan tugas saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

### Section VII (Bahagian VII)

The following information is required for analysis purposes only, and will be kept confidential. Fill in the information or tick (✓) in the space provided.

*Maklumat yang berikut diperlukan untuk tujuan analisis sahaja dan segala maklumat akan dirahsiakan. Isikan jawapan atau tanda (✓) di ruangan yang disediakan.*

(1) Your gender: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Male      \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Female  
*Jantina anda: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Lelaki      \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Wanita*

(2) Your age : \_\_\_\_\_ (years).  
*Umur anda: \_\_\_\_\_ (tahun)*

- (3) Your ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Bumiputera \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Chinese  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Indian \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other (*please specify*) .....
- Keturunan anda: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Bumiputera \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Cina  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. India \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Lain-lain (*sila nyatakan*) .....
- (4) Your marital status: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Single \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Married \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Divorced  
 Status perkahwinan anda: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Bujang \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Berkahwin \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Bercerai
- (5) Your highest education level:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1. High School and below .....(*please specify*—PMR, SPM, MCE, etc.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Diploma  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Degree and above  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other qualification (*please specify*) .....
- Tahap pendidikan tertinggi anda:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Sekolah tinggi dan ke bawah .....(*sila nyatakan*—PMR, SPM, MCE, dsb.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Diploma  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Ijazah dan ke atas  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Kelayakan lain (*sila nyatakan*) .....
- (6) Your job title/designation: .....  
 Gelaran jawatan anda: .....
- (7) Organizational level: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Low \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Middle \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Top  
 Tahap organisasi: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Rendah \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Pertengahan \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Tinggi
- (8) Length of time in current job: .....(months/years)  
 Tempoh bertugas dalam jawatan sekarang: .....(bulan/tahun)
- (9) Length of time with present organization: .....(months/years)  
 Tempoh bekerja dengan organisasi sekarang: .....(bulan/tahun)

Thank you  
 Terima kasih