EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP OF EMOTIONAL LABOR WITH AN ABILITY-BASED CONCEPTUALIZATION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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Grace A. Leung
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EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP OF EMOTIONAL LABOR WITH AN ABILITY-BASED CONCEPTUALIZATION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Grace A. Leung

Thesis

Approved:       Accepted:

Advisor                      Dean of the College
James M. Diefendorff          Ronald F. Levant

Committee Member             Dean of the Graduate School
Rosalie J. Hall              George R. Newkome

Department Chair             Date
Paul E. Levy
ABSTRACT

This empirical study proposed and tested theoretical links between emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional labor constructs (i.e., display rules, emotional labor strategies), thus expending past work on relationships between individual differences and emotional labor. Three emotional labor strategies (surface acting, deep acting, and naturally-felt emotions) were expected to mediate potential effects of EI on two outcomes of emotional exhaustion and perceived authenticity. Data were collected from 74 working students at the University of Akron who held part-time or full time jobs, and their supervisors. Employees completed measures of EI, display rules, emotional labor strategies, and emotional exhaustion. Their supervisors completed display rule measures and also rated the authenticity of the employees’ emotional displays. Results suggested significant relationships of emotional labor strategies with emotional exhaustion and perceived authenticity, but found minimal support for relationships between EI dimensions and either emotional labor strategies or the two outcome variables.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Organizations are beginning to take notice of the importance of emotions in the workplace (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Lord, Klimoski, & Kanfer, 2002). One area of emotions research that has seen increased attention is that of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1996). Emotional labor was originally defined as the regulation or management of emotions for a wage (Hochschild, 1983). The basic idea is that organizations expect employees to display certain emotions as part of their work role and employees often must actively regulate their expressions and felt emotions to conform to the display requirements. Emotional labor is important to organizations because it has been shown to predict employee well-being and performance in a variety of jobs (Beal et al., 2006; Diefendorff & Richard 2003; Grandey, 2003; Pugh, 2001; Rupp & Spencer, 2006).

Another prominent area of organizational research on emotions is that of emotional intelligence (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to accurately perceive emotions, use emotions to facilitate thought, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and reflectively regulate emotions. Thus, an individual with high emotional intelligence is able to read emotions in others’ facial expressions and body language, use past experiences to determine which emotions best facilitate thinking in particular
situations, analyze emotions to understand their probable outcomes, and have an awareness of how to maintain or change his or her feelings (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Such attributes are considered to be important for success and well-being in many work contexts (Cherniss et al., 2006; Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Lopes et al., 2004, 2005; Leban, 2003; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004).

Though research has linked individual difference variables to emotional labor constructs (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005), no research has examined the relationship of emotional intelligence with emotional labor. The lack of research in this area is surprising given the conceptual overlap between these two research streams. Examining the relationships among emotional intelligence and emotional labor constructs could provide insight into the role that emotional abilities play in the emotional labor process. The purpose of this study was to develop and test theoretical links between emotional labor and emotional intelligence constructs, within a customer service context. More specifically, I examined whether relationships of emotional intelligence with the organizational outcomes of emotional exhaustion and perceived authenticity were mediated by the extent to which employees engage in the emotional labor strategies of surface acting, deep acting, and expression of naturally-felt emotions. In general, employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence were expected to engage more in the less debilitating forms of emotional labor (deep acting and naturally-felt emotions), thus resulting in more positive outcomes. The following sections reviewed past work on emotional labor and emotional intelligence and then developed theoretical arguments linking the two bodies of research. Finally, hypotheses were developed and a study was presented to test the hypotheses.
Emotional Labor

Emotional labor refers to the regulation of emotions and emotional displays as part of the work role (Hochschild, 1983). At the core of emotional labor theory is the idea that organizations specify emotional display rules which serve as standards for the appropriate expression of emotions, including what emotions should be displayed and what emotions should not be displayed (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Ekman, 1973). Emotional labor involves adhering to display rules regardless of one’s true feelings. These display rules are derived from formal job requirements as well as unwritten social norms for emotional expression (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). Recent research has shown that employees and supervisors from a variety of occupations consider emotional display rules to be in-role job requirements (Diefendorff et al., 2006). Further, employees and supervisors exhibited high agreement in display rule perceptions, providing support for the notion that display rules are shared expectations at work.

Most research on emotional labor has examined two types of display rules: Demands to express positive emotions and demands to suppress negative emotions (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). These display rules have been linked to a variety of well-being and performance-related outcomes (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). For example,
Diefendorff and Richard (2003) found that display rules to express positive emotions were positively correlated with job satisfaction and employee positive emotional displays, while display rules to suppress negative emotions were negatively correlated with job satisfaction and unrelated to emotional displays. Additionally, Schaubroeck and Jones (2000) found that display rules to express positive emotions were positively correlated with job involvement and physical symptoms of ill health, while display rules to suppress negative emotions were negatively correlated with job involvement.

Display rules set the standards for emotional expression and employees may conform to emotional display rules by doing one of several things, depending on how they feel. If their feelings match display rules, they can express their naturally-felt emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005). In a service context, such an approach will lead to authentic positive emotional displays, which should enhance customer service ratings. Further, displaying naturally-felt emotions should result in very little emotional dissonance, which is the tension that is felt when one’s expressions and feelings differ (Hochschild, 1983), and lead to higher levels of well-being and satisfaction.

If individuals’ feelings do not match the display rule (e.g., feeling sad when expected to smile), then they must actively use one of several potential emotion regulation strategies to display the expected emotion (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Two of the most frequently discussed emotion labor strategies are surface acting and deep acting (Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Totterdell & Holman, 2003). Surface acting refers to hiding felt emotions and faking unfelt emotions. Surface acting is described as “acting in bad faith” because the employee is only changing his/her
outward display to adhere to job requirements; thus, the person is simply going through the motions and is not putting forth genuine effort to meet the display requirements (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Surface acting has been linked to negative outcomes such as lower service performance and emotional exhaustion, which occurs when an individual feels emotionally drained (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Totterdell & Holman, 2003). It also has been linked to high emotional dissonance and low perceived authenticity because the individual is faking the emotions and not expressing what is felt (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Grandey et al., 2005; Zerbe, 2000). This circumstance creates an internal tension that is uncomfortable and customers can pick up on the falseness of the display (Grandey et al., 2004).

Alternatively, deep acting is another emotional labor strategy in which individuals modify felt emotions so that genuine displays of emotion follow. Deep acting has been called “acting in good faith” because it demonstrates that employees have the organization’s best interest at mind (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). That is, employees are actively regulating their emotions so that they can display genuine emotions that conform to organizational expectations. Deep acting is positively related to displays of positive emotions, self-rated job performance (Totterdell & Holman, 2003), and a sense of personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Deep acting also has been linked to low emotional dissonance and high perceived authenticity because individuals are altering their own internal emotions to then naturally display the expected emotions (Grandey, 2003; Grandey et al., 2005). These authentic displays may benefit both the individual and the organization by fostering more positive interactions between customers and employees.
Past research has linked emotional display rules and emotional labor strategies with individual difference variables. For instance, Diefendorff and Richard (2003) found that extraversion was positively related to display rules to express positive emotions and neuroticism was positively related to display rules to suppress negative emotions. Similarly, Diefendorff et al. (2005) found that neuroticism was positively related to negative display rules, but did not find a link between extraversion and positive display rules. However, they did find that display rules to express positive emotions was positively related to emotional expressivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and self-monitoring.

In regards to the emotion regulation strategies, Diefendorff et al. (2005) found that surface acting was negatively related to extraversion and conscientiousness and positively related to self-monitoring and neuroticism. Thus, individuals who tended to experience more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions were dependable, not likely to change oneself to fit the situation, and were not likely to surface act. Austin, Dore, and O’Donovan (2008) also found nearly identical results with surface acting positively related to neuroticism and negatively related to extraversion and conscientiousness. Further confirming the results for affective disposition, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) and Brotheridge and Lee (2003) both found that positive and negative affectivity were negatively and positively (respectively) related to surface acting. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) also found surface acting to be significantly related to higher levels of self-monitoring. The links between deep acting and individual difference variables have not been strong in prior work. Diefendorff et al. (2005) found that deep acting was positively related to only agreeableness and not extraversion,
neuroticism, conscientiousness, or self-monitoring. Austin et al. (2008) found deep acting to be positively related with agreeableness and extraversion. Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) found that it was positively related to positive affectivity. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) found deep acting to be unrelated to self-monitoring of expressive behavior. Both Brotheridge and Lee (2003) and Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) found neither positive nor negative affectivity to be related to deep acting. Finally, Diefendorff et al. (2005) is the only study to examine individual difference predictors of the emotional labor strategy of expressing naturally-felt emotions and they found that it was positively related to agreeableness.

Although this past work has enhanced our understanding of the individual difference influences on emotional labor variables, it has focused exclusively on personality traits. In contrast, no research has examined ability or skill-based individual difference predictors of these variables. This gap in the research is surprising given the recent research attention to ability-based models of emotional intelligence (e.g., Matthews et al., 2005; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Zeidner et al., 2004). Next, I discuss emotional intelligence in more detail.

**Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is a relatively new and growing area of research that has captured the attention of the scientific community as well as the general public (Zeidner et al., 2004). After its initial introduction by Salovey and Mayer in 1990, the idea was highly popularized by a best-selling book describing emotional intelligence as any non-cognitive factors that benefit health, relationships, and work (Goleman, 1995). The public was quick to embrace the possibility of emotional intelligence as the best predictor
of success in life (Ciarrochi, 2000, 2002; TIME, 1995, Cover), regardless of one’s intelligence. However, at such an early stage of theoretical development, much of the validity and reliability of EI measures were overlooked (Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998). Since its inception, many models of emotional intelligence have been developed and revised. I focus on the ability-based model developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) define emotional intelligence as,

“the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (p. 10).

They based their construct of emotional intelligence on the formal standards for traditional intelligence including having right and wrong answers for test items, showing specific correllational patterns similar to cognitive intelligences, and showing increases with age (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). In addition, they argued that EI consists of four specific branches: Perceiving Emotions, Understanding Emotions, Facilitation, and Managing Emotions. These branches range from basic emotional competencies (e.g., Perceiving Emotions and Facilitation) to more integrated and sophisticated competencies (e.g., Understanding Emotions and Managing Emotions) (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Further, the more advanced branches of EI build on the more basic branches (Brackett et al., 2006). For example, in order to be effective at managing emotions, individuals also must be able to perceive and understand emotions.

Branch 1, which is labeled Perceiving Emotions, consists of the ability to perceive emotions, as in recognizing emotions in oneself, in others’ facial expressions, body language, and voices, as well as other communication channels such as stories, music, or
works of art (Ekman & Friesen, 1975; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Nowicki & Mitchell, 1998; Scherer et al., 2001). Being able to accurately pick up on others’ non-verbal behaviors is advantageous because it can enhance interpersonal relationships such that if an individual notices a co-worker is feeling down, he or she might demonstrate concern for the coworker in an attempt to console the person. As the most basic branch, perceiving emotions can influence one’s standing on the other branches of EI. For instance, if one recognizes that a co-worker is angry, an individual can decide to wait to ask a favor because he/she realizes the request may be declined because of the person’s current affect. To maintain or enhance the quality of the relationship with this co-worker, one might attempt to change the coworker’s emotions by demonstrating sympathy or offering assistance. However, these more advanced emotional behaviors would not be possible if the person cannot first accurately perceive the co-worker’s emotions.

Branch 2, which is labeled Facilitation, involves the capacity to use emotions to assist thinking (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Specifically, it involves using emotions to enhance or facilitate reasoning, problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal communication (Brackett et al., 2006). For example, Isen (2001) found that positive affect yielded clear-headed, well-organized, open-minded, and flexible problem solving and thinking. Positive affect was also linked to enhanced social skills and kindness (Isen, 2001) which is vital for good interpersonal communication. As a result, individuals high in EI can intentionally choose to enter a positive state (e.g., by trying to see the positive side of things) as a way to enhance persistence during challenging times or stimulate creativity in solving difficult problems (Carmeli, 2003). From this we can
gather that different emotions may facilitate different mental sets or modes of thinking, which can lead to positive or negative outcomes.

Branch 3, which is labeled Understanding Emotions, includes the capacity to analyze emotions by carefully examining the causes, key factors, and outcomes of emotions and by anticipating the probable trends of emotion over time (Frijda, 1988; Lane, Quinlan, Schwartz, Walker, & Zeitlin, 1990). For example, an individual high in this attribute would be able to recognize likely transitions between emotions, such as feelings of betrayal turning into feelings of anger, and then turning into feelings of grief (Jordan & Troth, 2002). An individual who understands emotions will be able to more precisely label and discriminate among different types of feelings (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004), particularly complex emotions.

Lastly, Branch 4, referred to as Managing Emotions, encompasses the management of emotions in which an individual has the ability to reduce, enhance, or modify an emotional response in oneself and others (Gross, 1998). In the process of emotion management, individuals take into account social awareness, self goals, and self-knowledge (Averill & Nunley, 1992; Gross, 1998). This allows individuals to use their knowledge of how managing their emotions can impact themselves and those around them. For instance, as a young child, one might be taught to accept all gifts with a smile, even if it requires concealing true disappointment. As one reaches early adulthood, emotional self-management skills further develop such that one may be able to avoid certain feelings or know how to reframe situations so as to lessen or change their emotional impact (e.g., Erber, 1996; Larsen, 2000; Rice & Bratslavsky, 2000; Wenzlaff, Rude, & West, 2002). For instance, rather than simply hiding disappointment at an
unwanted gift, an individual may have learned to interpret the situation as the gift-giver being thoughtful and caring enough to remember his/her birthday. Such interpretation lessens the likelihood of experiencing disappointment and increases the likelihood of experiencing genuine appreciation. The ability to regulate emotions is the most complex aspect of emotional intelligence because it integrates the other aspects of emotional intelligence, along with the person’s plans and goals (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

Several recent studies have looked at emotional intelligence as a predictor of a variety of outcomes. For instance, emotional intelligence has been negatively associated with bullying, violence, tobacco use, and drug problems (Rubin, 1999; Trinidad & Johnson, 2002). Brackett et al. (2004) found that lower EI in males (especially the inabilities to perceive emotions and use emotions to facilitate thought) was associated with more illegal drug use, alcohol use, deviant behavior, and poor relations with friends, even after controlling for the Big Five personality traits and academic achievement. Additionally, Lopes et al. (2003) found that high scores on the Managing Emotion dimension were associated with more positive relationships with others, more perceived parental support, fewer negative interactions with close friends, more self-report and peer nominations of interpersonal sensitivity and prosocial tendencies, more positive peer nominations, and more reciprocal friendship nominations.

Research also has begun to link emotional intelligence with work outcomes. For instance, Leban (2003) found that project managers scoring high on EI led the most successful projects, suggesting that EI has implications for leadership and job performance. Lopes et al. (2004) found that employees scoring high on EI received
greater increases in rewards, attained higher rank within the company, received better peer and supervisor ratings of interpersonal facilitation, had higher stress tolerance, and exhibited greater leadership potential. Another study found that supervisors with high EI were found to have subordinates with greater commitment levels than supervisors with low EI (Giles, 2001), which indicates that employees appreciate EI in their supervisors (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2004). More recently, Côté and Miners (2006) found that emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence interacted to predict job performance such that emotional intelligence was a stronger predictor of task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors when cognitive intelligence was low (Côté & Miners, 2006) and was a weak predictor when cognitive intelligence was high. This interaction is important because it shows that individuals with low cognitive ability may still perform well if they are high in emotional intelligence.

**Linking Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labor**

The purpose of the current study was to examine the effects of emotional intelligence on key emotional labor constructs, as well as examine whether emotional labor variables mediate the relationships of emotional intelligence with well-being and performance-related outcomes. Integrating the emotional labor and emotional intelligence literatures can expand our understanding of both research domains. For emotional labor, the merger of these literatures may yield insight into how ability-based individual differences impact the emotional labor processes. This merger of the literatures can enhance our understanding of how emotional intelligence relates to emotion-based and interpersonal work outcomes. I expand on these ideas below.
Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Display Rule Perceptions

Emotional display rules are often described as unwritten norms for emotional expression (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Cropanzano, Weiss, & Elias, 2004; Grandey & Brauburger, 2002; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; VanMaanen & Kunda, 1989). These norms are presumed to derive from a variety of potential sources, including social expectations, performance requirements, and personal beliefs (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Humphrey, 2000; Schaubroek & Jones, 2000). Consistent with these ideas, Diefendorff and Richard (2003) demonstrated that emotional display rule perceptions are uniquely influenced by the amount of interpersonal demands in the job, supervisor expectations for emotional displays, and individual differences in personality (extraversion and neuroticism). Additionally, Diefendorff et al. (2006) provided evidence that supervisors and employees, on average, exhibit relatively high agreement on display rule perceptions. These results, combined with the fact that supervisors set expectations, evaluate performance, and allocate rewards and punishments, suggest that supervisors may be a key source of display rule information for employees.

I hypothesized that individuals high in emotional intelligence, specifically the branches of perceiving emotion and understanding emotion, may have a more accurate understanding of display rule information. Such individuals are more aware of and better able to label emotions in their environment (Mayer et al., 2004). As a result, individuals high in perceiving emotions may be better able to recognize the emotional display rule cues around them. Likewise, individuals high in understanding emotion may be able to comprehend why emotional display rules exist and how they facilitate other organizational and personal objectives. For instance, individuals high in emotional
intelligence can more accurately perceive their own and other people’s subtle positive and negative emotional displays at work and also more clearly see the link between such displays and outcomes such as team effectiveness and customer satisfaction.

Diefendorff et al. (2006), Diefendorff and Richard (2003), and Wilk and Moynihan (2005) suggested that a key source of display rule information is supervisor expectations. I hypothesized that individuals who are high in perceiving emotions and understanding emotions will be better able to pick up on the emotional display expectations of supervisors, and as a result, they will exhibit higher levels of agreement with their supervisors on the emotional display rule requirements. For example, an individual high in emotional intelligence may better attend to supervisors rewarding others’ positive displays or supervisors not displaying negative emotions when interacting with a difficult customer. As such, these individuals may have a clearer sense of the emotional display requirements at work, as indicated by supervisor expectations.

Hypothesis 1: The EI dimensions of Perceiving Emotions and Understanding Emotions are positively related to employee and supervisor display rule agreement.

Emotional Intelligence and Emotion Regulation Strategies

As mentioned previously, individuals may use a variety of emotion regulation strategies to conform to emotional display rules (Grandey, 2000). These include, surface acting, deep acting, and displaying naturally-felt emotions (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Surface acting is the modification of displayed emotions without altering true internal feelings (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2003). Low emotional intelligence has been characterized by difficulty in accurately recognizing emotions in others, decreased
ability to analyze emotions and their likely outcomes and lack of effective emotion management (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). I hypothesized that particular branches of emotional intelligence will have unique links with typical levels of this emotion regulation strategy. That is, the hypothesized links described below apply to the assessment of surface acting in the aggregate, rather than at the event-level, which may depend more on the complex interaction of individuals (Beal et al., 2005).

First, I expected that low EI on the dimensions of Perceiving Emotions, Understanding Emotions, and Managing Emotions would be associated with higher levels of surface acting. Managing emotions has the most direct theoretical link with surface acting. Individuals low in managing emotions do not effectively regulate their emotions. For instance, Jordan and Troth (2004) found that teams high in EI, especially awareness of emotions and the ability to deal with one’s own emotions, more effectively completed a task because they were able to manage or control their emotions to avoid conflict between team members. Surface acting, which involves faking and hiding emotions, has been associated with lower customer ratings (Grandey et al., 2005) and lower well-being (Gross, 1998; Pugliesi, 1999). As such, this strategy may not be adaptive for individuals in the long run.

Prior research (e.g., Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987) has argued that individuals who use this method of emotion regulation do so because they are “acting in bad faith,” which implies that they could use a different strategy but choose not to because of apathy or a lack of desire to do so (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2003). However, rather than reflecting a lack of interest in more effectively managing one’s emotions, it may be the case that individuals use this strategy because they lack the knowledge or ability to
use more adaptive or sophisticated strategies. EI reflects individual differences in such ability (Brackett et al., 2006). Individuals with low EI in the dimension of managing emotions lack the necessary skills to employ more adaptive emotion regulation strategies. In an emotional labor context, these individuals may surface act, which is a relatively simple, response-focused approach to managing emotions.

Additionally, I expected that the EI dimensions of Perceiving Emotions and Understanding Emotions might have unique relationships with surface acting. Individuals low in perceiving emotions are unaware of emotional cues, resulting in less information about the relationships and situations around them (Rivers, Brackett, Salovey, & Mayer, 2007). Without being able to accurately identify emotions in oneself or in others, individuals low in perceiving emotions may surface act more because when they experience negative emotions they are not able to process the reasons for their negative emotions, which is a key part of more adaptive emotion regulation strategies (e.g., cognitive reinterpretation).

Individuals low in understanding emotions are less able to comprehend why or how an emotion takes place, and are less likely to understand the implications that may result from emotions. Individuals low in understanding emotions may not realize that simply pasting on a smile can be perceived as not being genuine, or they may believe that the difference between a genuine and fake smile does not really matter, when in fact it may. For example, an individual high in understanding emotions would be able to understand whether adhering to a certain display rule had significant consequences and if it does, they would be more apt to engage in effective emotion management. If they realize that the consequences are negligible, they may put forth minimal effort to regulate
their emotions. Knowing which emotion regulation strategy to use may also depend in part on recognizing the presence of emotions and knowing how to interpret emotions and their likely consequences. Stated differently, if one cannot perceive or detect an emotion, it is impossible to know if one’s emotional displays are consistent with display rules and whether it is necessary to actively regulate one’s emotions.

I did not hypothesize that Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought would be uniquely related to surface acting because surface acting does not involve an internal change in emotions. Thus, for surface acting the internal emotion remains the same and only the outward appearance of the emotion (e.g., facial expression) is modified. Consequently, I advanced the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: The EI dimensions of (a) Perceiving Emotions, (b) Understanding Emotions, and (c) Managing Emotions are negatively related to surface acting.

The second emotion regulation strategy often discussed in the emotional labor literature is deep acting. Deep acting is defined as the modification of feelings to match required displays (Grandey, 2003). This strategy reflects a deeper understanding of the causes of one’s feelings and the consequences of one’s displays. As such, this strategy may be positively linked to EI dimensions, including the ability to manage emotions. Grandey (2000) noted that individuals who do not know how to regulate their emotions may tend to engage in less deep acting. This is due to deep acting being a type of regulation that involves more sophisticated emotion management by doing things such as changing one’s attentional focus or re-appraising situations so as to alter their impact on one’s emotions (Grandey, 2000).
Individuals with high EI, in all four areas of Managing Emotions, Perceiving Emotions, Understanding Emotions and Facilitation, may be better equipped to modify their own internal emotions in attempts to conform to emotional display rules. As mentioned previously, to excel in managing emotions it is important that one be able to perceive and understand emotions as well as identify the correct display rule for the situation. Once an individual recognizes an emotional display rule (Perceiving Emotions) he or she may then assess the accuracy and inaccuracy of his or her own emotional displays (Understanding Emotions). I hypothesized that using emotions to facilitate thought would be uniquely related to deep acting as it involves internally changing emotions. Being capable of creating positive emotions in oneself is a component of effective deep acting, whereby individuals align their internal emotions with the external display requirements. All in all, I hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between EI and the use of deep acting.

Hypothesis 3: The EI dimensions of (a) Perceiving Emotions, (b) Facilitation (c) Understanding Emotions, and (d) Managing Emotions are positively related to deep acting.

Expressing naturally-felt emotions also has been identified as an emotional labor strategy because even though individuals may feel the expected emotion they may still need to actively express the emotion to meet display requirements (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Thus, this emotional labor strategy is conceptually (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993) and empirically distinct (Diefendorff et al., 2005) from surface acting and deep acting. Diefendorff et al. (2005) suggested that expressing naturally-felt emotions plays an important role in displaying emotions in the workplace, as their
supplemental analyses found that individuals report using this strategy more often than SA and DA.

Expressing naturally-felt emotions might be associated with emotional intelligence, in that individuals high in emotional intelligence more readily recognize and understand emotional situations and, as a result, may naturally feel emotions that are more adaptive and consistent with the demands of the moment (Carmeli, 2003). High emotional intelligence in the area of perceiving emotions may be linked to expressing naturally-felt emotions because these individuals are able to almost instantaneously pick up on their own emotions and emotional cues around them. High emotional intelligence in the area of understanding emotions may also be linked to expressing naturally-felt emotions because these individuals are then able to quickly process why certain emotions are present, thus gaining a better understanding of the situation.

For instance, an individual high in emotional intelligence may immediately recognize the customer emotion of frustration and interpret it as being completely justified by the circumstance. This automatic interpretation will result in an appraisal of the situation as one in which the person can provide help, which leads to feelings of genuine empathy and concern. As such, a high EI individual may have less of a need to actively manage emotions than a low EI individual. Instead, they can express genuine and naturally felt emotions that coincide with the required emotional display rule. Thus, expression of naturally-felt emotions is unrelated to using emotions to facilitate thought and managing emotions because it is unnecessary for individuals to alter their emotions since they are already congruent with expected display rules.
Hypothesis 4: The EI dimensions of Perceiving Emotions, and Understanding Emotions are positively related to the expression of naturally-felt emotions.

Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labor Outcomes

Emotional labor has been linked to a variety of well-being and performance-related outcomes (Adelmann, 1995; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1990; Smith, 1992; Sutton, 1991; Wharton, 1993), including emotional exhaustion (Abraham, 1998; Brotheridge & Lee, 1998; 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1997) and others’ ratings of employees’ emotional displays (Grandey, 2003; Grandey et al., 2005). Given the expected links of emotional intelligence with the emotional labor strategies of surface acting, deep acting, and the expression of naturally-felt emotions, it stands to reason that emotional intelligence may have indirect effects on these outcome variables through emotional labor strategies. I expand on these ideas below.

Emotional exhaustion. Past research has found a strong relationship between surface acting and emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Grandey, Fisk, Matilla, et al., 2005). For instance, Grandey (2003) found surface acting to be positively linked to emotional exhaustion and theorized that this might be due in part to the feelings of tension and draining of resources that can exist when one does not display what is felt. In contrast, prior work has not found a link between deep acting and emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003). Although the relationship of the expression of naturally-felt emotions with emotional exhaustion has not been examined in past research, given the effortless and genuine nature of this expression management strategy (Ashforth &
Humphrey, 1993), I hypothesized that it would be linked to low levels of emotional exhaustion.

To my knowledge, the relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional exhaustion has not been examined in past research. However, it might be expected that individuals high in emotional intelligence will experience less emotional exhaustion because they can more accurately recognize and understand emotions, as well as more effectively manage their emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Thus, high emotional intelligence individuals may be less likely to have depleted emotional resources. I hypothesized that high emotional intelligence in the areas of Perceiving Emotions, Understanding Emotions, and Managing Emotions would be negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Further, I hypothesized that this effect would be primarily through surface acting and the expression of naturally-felt emotions.

_**Hypothesis 5:** Surface acting is positively related to emotional exhaustion._

_**Hypothesis 6:** The expression of naturally-felt emotions is negatively related to emotional exhaustion._

_**Hypothesis 7:** The relationships of the EI dimensions of (a) Perceiving Emotions, (b) Understanding Emotions, and (c) Managing Emotions with emotional exhaustion are mediated by surface acting and the expression of naturally-felt emotions._

**Perceived authenticity of emotional displays.** Prior research has pointed out that service quality is affected by the affective nature of service encounters (Parasuraman et al., 1985). For instance, affective delivery, which refers to the extent in which service delivery is positively viewed (i.e., friendliness and warmth) has been linked to desirable
outcomes (Bettencourt et al., 2001; Pugh, 2001; Tsai, 2001). Surface acting has been found to be negatively related to affective delivery, while deep acting has been found to be positively related to affective delivery (Grandey, 2003). Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) also examined this link but did not find surface acting or deep acting to be related to affective delivery which suggests that the strategy employees engage in may not be as important as whether the correct display rules are expressed. However, perhaps more importantly than simply displaying the correct positive emotional display, is the perceived authenticity of the display. Grandey (2003) suggests that observers may be able to differentiate between surface acting and deep acting as the faking involved in surface acting may be perceived as insincere and negative, making it a less effective emotional display.

Prior work has linked surface acting and deep acting with others’ ratings of employee emotional display authenticity (Grandey et al., 2005). For instance, Grandey et al. (2005) suggested that surface acting, which constitutes the expression of feigned emotions, is perceived by others as inauthentic. Customers see through the employees’ acting and perceive their displays to be inauthentic, which can lead to negative reactions. For example, past research has found that individuals are able to distinguish genuine smiles from fake smiles, and that fake smiles resulted in less positive reactions (Ekman et al., 1988; Frank, et al., 1993; Surakka & Hietanen, 1998). Inauthentic smiles weaken the positive internal attributions (i.e., ratings of friendliness or motivation) others may have of employees’ behaviors (Grandey et al., 2005).

On the other hand, Grandey et al., (2005) found that deep acting creates a more authentic impression on others, leading to higher attributions of friendliness and uniquely
predicting overall customer satisfaction. This is critical because deep acting may actually trigger positive emotions within customers as a result of being treated in an authentic, honest way (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2006). This could lead to stronger employee-customer relationships which are beneficial in the service industry. Additionally, these authentic positive displays may enhance customer satisfaction because of perceptions that employees are motivated to exceed minimum requirements (Grandey et al., 2005). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) suggest that individuals who display naturally-felt emotions will appear more sincere, which is an essential quality for good customer service. I hypothesized that individuals who display naturally-felt emotions will be perceived by others as authentic because there is no need to act or fake emotions.

Emotional intelligence may predict whether others perceive employees’ emotional displays as authentic and these effects may operate through emotional labor strategies. I hypothesized that the dimensions of Perceiving, Understanding, and Managing Emotions will be particularly relevant for predicting emotional display authenticity. Individuals high in the perceiving dimension of emotional intelligence are aware of their own emotions and emotional displays, as well as the emotions of others, enabling them to acquire an accurate understanding of situations. In addition, they will be able to discriminate between honest and false expressions in others (Rivers et al., 2007) suggesting that they may better understand the negative implications of such expressions. Likewise, someone with high emotional intelligence in the area of understanding emotions will be able to anticipate the potential outcomes of displaying an authentic emotion versus an inauthentic emotion, and thus also be more likely to manage their emotions accordingly to achieve an authentic emotional display. As such, individuals
high in each of these EI attributes will use more adaptive emotional labor strategies and consequently be perceived by others as displaying more authentically positive emotions.

_Hypothesis 8:_ Surface acting is negatively related to the perceived authenticity of employees’ affective delivery.

_Hypothesis 9:_ Deep acting is positively related to the perceived authenticity of employees’ affective delivery.

_Hypothesis 10:_ The expression of naturally-felt emotions is positively related to the perceived authenticity of employees’ affective delivery.

_Hypotheses 11:_ The relationships of the EI dimensions of (a) Perceiving Emotions, (b) Understanding Emotions, and (c) Managing Emotions with the perceived authenticity of employees’ affective delivery are mediated by surface acting, deep acting, and the expression of naturally-felt emotions.
CHAPTER III
STUDY OVERVIEW

This study examined emotional labor variables and their links to emotional intelligence constructs within a customer-service context. Specifically, I hypothesized that relationships of emotional intelligence with organizational outcomes of emotional exhaustion and perceived authenticity are mediated by the extent to which an employee engages in different emotional labor strategies such as surface acting, deep acting, and expression of naturally-felt emotions. These hypotheses were tested using an employed undergraduate sample. Additionally, we had several control variables including the job characteristics, demographical information, and the Big Five personality variables. Specifically we included Extraversion which has been linked to positive affectivity, Neuroticism which has been linked to negative affectivity, Agreeableness, which has been linked to surface acting, deep acting, and naturally-felt emotions, and Conscientiousness which has been linked to performance as control variables to examine whether the effects of the emotional labor strategies occurred above and beyond the effects of these personality variables.
CHAPTER IV

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 77 employees and their supervisors. Two cases were deleted due to a substantial amount of missing data, while an additional case was deleted due to lack of interpersonal contact on the job. Thus, 74 usable employee-supervisor pairs were included in the analyses. Employees worked at least part-time (20 hours or more per week) in a service-related occupation and were drawn from the University of Akron undergraduate population. On average, participants worked 28.2 hours per week. Of the 74 participants, 73% were female. The average age of the participants was 25.1 years. Average tenure in the current position was 3 years and 8 months, while the average tenure in the occupation was 5 years and 2 months.

Measures

Supervisors were asked to fill out measures pertaining to emotional display rules, employee authenticity, observing employee interactions with customers, and demographic information. Students completed questionnaires measuring emotional intelligence, emotional labor variables, emotional exhaustion, and demographic information. These measures will now be described in detail.

Surface acting. In order to measure surface acting I used Diefendorff et al.’s (2005) SA scale. This scale contains seven items including five items adapted from
Grandey’s (2003) SA scale and two items from Kruml and Geddes’ (2000) emotive dissonance scale. Emotive dissonance is conceptually similar to surface acting, referring to a situation in which there are differences between an individual’s feelings and displays. Items in this scale were rated on a scale of 1 = rarely or never to 5 = always or almost always. Sample items include “I show feelings to customers that are different than what I feel inside” and “I put on a “show” or “performance” when interacting with customers”. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .94. These items are listed in Appendix A.

Deep acting. In order to measure deep acting I used Diefendorff et al.’s (2005) DA scale. This scale consists of four items including three items adapted from Grandey’s (2003) DA scale and one item from Kruml and Geddes’ (2000) emotive effort scale. Emotive effort is conceptually similar to deep acting, in which the effort put forth in displaying appropriate emotions is measured. Items on this scale were rated on a scale of 1 = rarely or never to 5 = always or almost always. Sample items include “I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to customers” and “I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display toward others”. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .88. These items are listed in Appendix B.

Naturally felt emotions. In order to measure the display of naturally felt emotions, I used Diefendorff et al.’s (2005) scale measuring expression of naturally felt emotions. This scale consists of three items including one item adapted from Kruml and Geddes’ (2000). Sample items include “The emotions I express to customers are genuine” and “The emotions I show customers come naturally”. Items in this scale were rated on a scale of 1 = rarely or never to 5 = always or almost always. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .89. These items are listed in Appendix C.
Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence was measured with the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). The MSCEIT consists of eight tasks, two for each branch of emotional intelligence. Branch 1, Perceiving Emotions, is measured by having participants identify emotions in photographs of faces and the feelings portrayed by landscapes and artistic designs. Branch 2, Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought, is measured by having participants describe emotional sensations using comparisons to other tactile and sensory stimuli like taste, color, and temperature. For example, participants may be told to imagine feeling sadness and then rate the similarity of this feeling to adjectives related to other sensory modalities such as “closed”, “dark”, and “numb” (Rivers et al., 2007). In addition, participants identify which emotions would help facilitate or interfere with successful performance of a particular task. Branch 3, Understanding Emotions, is measured by testing a participant’s ability to detect how one emotion may change into another emotion and looking at a participant’s ability to analyze complex or blended emotions. Branch 4, Managing Emotions, is measured using hypothetical situations in which participants assess how they would maintain or change their emotions, as well as an assessment of how well the participant can manage others’ emotions in order to achieve a desired outcome.

The MSCEIT items are scored as correct or incorrect, consistent with other intelligence tests (Mayer et al., 2004). The test developers utilize two methods for determining the correct answers to items, consensus scoring and expert scoring. For the consensus approach, the general consensus of a normative sample of 5000 test-takers is used as the basis for determining item correctness assuming that the majority of test-
takers should be able to identify the optimal answer to EI questions (Mayer et al., 2002). Expert scoring procedures are also available, in which 21 experts on emotions research (e.g., emotion experts from the International Society for Research on Emotions) view each item and indicate the response that they view as correct. MSCEIT test scores scored by general consensus and expert scoring have been shown to correlate highly, ranging from \( r = .96 \) to \( r = .98 \) (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003). In the current study, the MSCEIT was scored using the general consensus which is recommended for most users (Mayer et al., 2002).

The MSCEIT was developed in 2002 and there have been a number of studies providing evidence in support of its validity (Rivers et al., 2007). These findings indicate that EI is a distinct intelligence, correlating only slightly with other intelligence measures (Mayer, et al., 2004; Rivers et al., 2007). EI is also distinct from most measures of personality (Rivers et al., 2007), including measures of social desirability (Lopes et al., 2003). The MSCEIT has also been shown to predict a variety of outcomes including academic performance, cognitive processing, social functioning, psychological well-being, psychopathology, and leadership and other behavior in the workplace (Rivers et al., 2007).

“The MEIS/MSCEIT provides an overall assessment of EI that has high internal consistency (reliability)…” (Matthews et al., 2002, p.516). The overall split-half reliability of the MSCEIT ranges from \( r = .91 \) to \( .93 \) (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2004). Additionally, area split-half reliabilities (Experiential Area = Branches 1&2; Strategic Area = Branches 3&4) indicate that \( r = .86 \) to \( .90 \), and branch score reliabilities range from \( r = .76 \) to \( .91 \) (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2002). Coefficient alphas in this study
were also within that range (Perceiving $r = .83$, Facilitating $r = .69$, Understanding $r = .77$, Managing $r = .78$). Test-retest reliability spanning 3 weeks, has also been found to be $r = .86$ (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). In sum, the MSCEIT exhibits high reliability.

**Emotional exhaustion.** In order to measure emotional exhaustion I used the job-related exhaustion scale developed by Wharton (1993), which is similar to other established emotional exhaustion scales. This scale contains six items which are rated from $0 = \text{never felt this way}$ to $6 = \text{felt this way everyday}$. Sample items include “I feel emotionally drained from my work”, “I feel frustrated by my job” and “I feel used up at the end of the work day”. Cronbach’s alpha was .91. These items are in Appendix D.

**Display rules.** In order to measure display rules I used Diefendorff et al.’s (2005) scale for perceived display rule demands. This scale contains 7 items (four for positive display rules and three for negative display rules), including four items adapted from Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) and three items adapted from Schaubroeck and Jones (2000). Items in this scale were rated on a scale of $1 = \text{strongly disagree}$ to $5 = \text{strongly agree}$. Sample items include “Part of my job is to make the customer feel good” and “I am expected to suppress my bad moods or negative reactions to customers.” Cronbach’s alpha was .94. This scale was also used to assess supervisor beliefs about employee display rules and will be modified accordingly. For instance, the above sample items will read: “Part of my employee’s job is to make the customer feel good” and “My employee is expected to suppress his/her bad moods or negative reactions to customers.” These items are listed in Appendix E.
Burke and Dunlap’s (2002) average deviation index was used to estimate the agreement between employees’ and supervisors’ display rule perceptions ratings and test Hypothesis 1. The formula for the average deviation index is as follows:

$$AD_{m(j)} = \frac{N}{N} \sum_{k = 1}^{N} |x_{jk} - \bar{x}_j|.$$  

The simplicity of the average deviation index allows researchers to interpret interrater agreement in the original metric or units of the measurement scale (Burke & Dunlap, 2002).

**Authenticity.** In order to measure authenticity, supervisors rated employees’ emotional displays at the workplace using an authenticity scale developed for this study, because no measure is currently available. This scale includes one item adapted from Grandey et al. (2005) and four items written for this proposed investigation. Items in this scale were rated on a scale of 1= *strongly disagree* to 5= *strongly agree*. Sample items include “This person seems sincere when dealing with the public” and “This employee is truly himself/herself when interacting with customers.” Cronbach’s alpha was .70. These items are listed in Appendix F.

**Control variables.** Personality, job characteristics, and demographic variables were collected to use in refining the sample and controlling for extraneous sources of variance.

**Big five personality dimensions.** In order to measure the Big Five personality dimensions I used Saucier’s (1994) Mini-Markers Big Five Personality measure. This scale contains 40 items, including 8 items for each dimension. Items in this scale are
rated on a scale of $1=extremely\ inaccurate$ to $9=extremely\ accurate$. Scale reliabilities range from .71 to .84. These items are listed in Appendix G.

**Job demands for emotional labor.** Individuals were asked to provide their formal job title and a written description of their job including ranking their primary duties by importance. Supervisors were also asked to complete the same information about their employee’s job. This information was then used by two independent coders to identify a corresponding job title and description in the O*NET database (Peterson et al., 2001). The coders agreed on the O*NET job title on 45 of the jobs, with the discrepancies on the remaining 29 jobs eliminated by a discussion between the coders. All of the discrepancies were due to the selection of occupational titles that differed in subtle ways between the coders (e.g., one coder selected Cook, restaurant, while the other coder selected Cook, fast food).

Each O*NET job description included scores on a variety of job characteristics that are already derived through extensive job analytic techniques (Peterson et al., 2001). This method is preferred for various reasons. By using a more objective evaluation, biases which may occur through subjective self-report ratings will be avoided (Spector & Fox, 2003). I used these O*NET values to control for a variety of job characteristics relevant to emotional labor such as the amount of interaction with the public and the emotional expectations in a given workplace (Grandey et al., 2007).

Consistent with Grandey et al. (2007), I obtained established O*NET values for the following items: 1) “In your current job, how important are interactions that require you to deal with external customers (as in retail sales) or the public in general (as in police work)?” 2) “Communicating with people outside the organization, representing the
organization to customers, the public, the government, and other external sources. This information can be exchange in person, in writing, or by telephone or e-mail.”

Performing for people or dealing directly with the public. This includes servicing customers in restaurants and stores, or receiving clients or guests”. I also obtained established O*NET values for the following items 1) “Job requires being pleasant with others on the job and displaying a good-natured, cooperative attitude” 2) “Job requires being sensitive to others’ needs and feelings and being understanding and helpful to others on the job” 3) “Job requires maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior, even in very difficult situations” and 4) Job requires accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high-stress situations”. Whether these activities were important for a particular occupation was rated by O*NET job analysts on a scale of 1 = not important to 5 = very important. Coefficient alpha was .81 and overall item correlations were high for the O*NET items. Additionally exploratory factor analysis indicated the formation of one factor. As a result, a composite score was calculated for O*NET job characteristic items.

Additionally, I had supervisors respond to an item that indicated how much of an opportunity he/she typically has to personally observe the employee interacting with customers/clients. If a supervisor did not have much opportunity to observe the employee’s interactions, this data was dropped. The frequency of these observations was rated on a scale of 1= never to 5 = very often. This item is listed in Appendix H.

We also included the distinction between Gutek et al.’s (1999) service relationships and service encounters as a covariate. A service relationship occurs when a customer has repeated contact with the same provider, while a service encounter occurs
when a customer interacts with a different provider each time (Gutek et al., 1999). In order to measure whether an employee-customer interaction qualified as a service relationship or a service encounter we used 6 items from a service association scale developed by Croyle (2004). Items in this scale were rated on a scale of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Coefficient alpha was .81. These items are listed in Appendix I.

Demographics. I controlled for the students’ gender and age, tenure in the organization, and number of hours worked per week. In addition, I had employees indicate how long they have worked at their current job or a similar job in the past. This helped to differentiate between employees who may have the same length of tenure in the organization, but certain employees may have had extended prior experience in the same industry at a similar job. These items are listed in Appendix J.

Procedure

Data was collected from employed undergraduate Introduction to Psychology students and their respective supervisors. 375 participants received a sealed packet of information to give to their supervisors, including questions pertaining to display rules and ratings of employee authenticity. 111 packets were returned by supervisors, however 16 of which were not linked to a student employee and had to be dropped. Thus, 95 student employees received an e-mail asking them to schedule a time and date to come in to complete the self-report measures. However, 18 students did not respond or commit to an appointment, so these cases were also dropped from the study. Each participant and supervisor was given a unique ID number to ensure confidentiality in that the ID could not be readily linked back to the participants’ name or e-mail address. Additionally, any
identifying information was removed from the data after participant and supervisor responses are matched. In total, there were 77 matched dyads, but three dyads were deleted from the analyses due to missing information or lack of interpersonal contact on the job. In total, we obtained useable responses from 74 participants, representing a 20% response rate from the original 375 participants who were given surveys.

Analyses

Path analysis was used to test Hypotheses 2-12 using LISREL 8.3 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). By using path analysis, I was able to test if the model is consistent with my observed data. In determining adequacy of model fit, the following fit indices were assessed: the $\chi^2$ Goodness of Fit statistic, the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) (Steiger, 1990), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (Bentler, 1990), the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) (Tucker & Lewis, 1973), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) (Bentler, 1990). Vandenberg and Lance (2000) provide rules of thumb for acceptable fit, with an RMSEA value of .08 and an SRMR value of .10 representing upper bounds for good fit, while a value of .90 representing the lower bound of good fit for the CFI and TLI. Procedures recommended by MacKinnon, Krull, and Lockwood (2000) were used to test the mediation hypotheses, including application of the Sobel test.
CHAPTER V
RESULTS

Table 1 provides means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities for the variables of interest. Consistent with previous research (Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Mayer et al., 2003), the four branches of EI were significantly correlated with one another, with the correlations ranging from .36 to .48 (see Table 1).

Relationships among emotional labor variables were also consistent with expectations. For example, display rule perceptions were significantly correlated with surface acting ($r = .24, p < .01$) and deep acting ($r = .39, p < .01$). Also, similar to previous research (Diefendorff et al., 2005), surface acting had a significant negative relationship with naturally felt emotions ($r = .45, p < .01$) and a significant positive relationship with emotional exhaustion ($r = .32, p < .01$). Expression of naturally-felt emotions had a significant negative relationship with emotional exhaustion ($r = -.27, p < .05$). The outcome variables of emotional exhaustion and perceived authenticity were significantly negatively related to one another ($r = -.32, p < .01$).

Several significant relationships between EI and emotional labor variables or outcomes were found. Managing emotions was significantly related to the emotional labor strategy of deep acting ($r = .26, p < .05$), and understanding emotions was significantly related to emotional exhaustion ($r = .30, p < .05$). Although not hypothesized, display rule perceptions were related to all four branches of EI (Perceiving
Table 1. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables.*

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participant Age</td>
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<td>25.1</td>
<td>8.52</td>
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<td>2. Participant Gender</td>
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<td>0.08</td>
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<td>3. Service Relationship</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
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<td>4. Job Demands for EL</td>
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<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>(0.51)</td>
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<td>5. Extraversion</td>
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<td>6.19</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.25*</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
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<td>6. Conscientiousness</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6.53</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>(0.71)</td>
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<td>7. Agreeableness</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7.47</td>
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<td>0.14</td>
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<td>0.38**</td>
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<td>8. Openness</td>
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<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.28*</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
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<td>9. Emotional Stability</td>
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<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.80)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Perceiving Emotions</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>0.25*</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.27*</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
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<td>11. Facilitating Emotions</td>
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<td>95.45</td>
<td>14.02</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
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<td>12. Understanding Emotions</td>
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<td>92.90</td>
<td>11.10</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.81**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.59**</td>
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<td>13. Managing Emotions</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>98.56</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
</tr>
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<td>14. Total Emotional Intellige</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>96.99</td>
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*Note.*

* p < .05.

** p < .01.
Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables. (Continued)

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Note:  
* p < .05  
** p < .01
emotions, $r = .24, p < .01$; Facilitating emotions, $r = .34, p < .01$; Understanding emotions, $r = .23, p < .05$; Managing emotions, $r = .43, p < .01$), as well as total EI Total ($r = .42, p < .01$). Lastly, O*NET job characteristics were significantly related to the perceiving emotions branch of EI ($r = .27, p < .05$), display rule perceptions ($r = .43, p < .01$), as well as surface acting ($r = .28, p < .05$). This suggests that occupations involving a significant amount of interaction with others are more likely to have employees who have stronger display rule perceptions, which may lead to more emotion regulation strategies such as surface acting in response. Next, I turn to a discussion of my tests of hypotheses.

**Employee-Supervisor Display Rule Agreement and EI**

Hypothesis 1 stated that employee-supervisor agreement in display rule perceptions would be predicted by the EI dimensions of perceiving emotions and understanding emotions. Employee-supervisor display rule agreement was calculated using Burke and Dunlop’s (2002) average deviation index. An average deviation index of 0.0 indicates perfect agreement, while larger numbers indicate disagreement. According to Burke and Dunlop (2002), an AD value of .8 or less is an acceptable standard for interrater agreement for items using a response scale with 5 options. Employees and supervisors demonstrated a high level of display rule agreement ($M = .45$ and 90.5% of the sample had an AD value less than .8.

Correlation analyses indicate that perceiving emotions ($r = -.05, ns$) and understanding emotions ($r = -.03, ns$) were not correlated with employee-supervisor display rule agreement (the EI dimensions of facilitation ($r = -.08$) and managing ($r = -.21$) also were not correlated with agreement.). The correlation between overall EI and display rule agreement also was nonsignificant (see Table 1). Simultaneous regression
analyses with all EI scales included as predictors also did not reveal any significant relations. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

_Hypothesized and Alternative Path Models_

The hypothesized model was assessed using path analysis. A key component of the theoretical model, as indicated in Figure 1, is that the emotional labor strategies were expected to mediate the influence of emotional intelligence on emotional exhaustion and authenticity. However, alternative possibilities are that the emotional intelligence scales have direct links to the outcome variables that are not mediated by the emotional labor strategies or that the relationship of emotional intelligence and the outcome variables is partially accounted for by the emotional labor strategies (as would be reflected by partial mediation). To test these additional possibilities, I examined alternative models in which the emotional intelligence scales had direct links with the outcome variables.

In all of the models, emotional display rule perceptions was included as a control variable predicting the emotional labor strategies and outcome variables, given that prior work has demonstrated such relationships (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Grandey, 2003). Additionally, the exogenous variables (EI branches and display rules) were allowed to freely correlate. The emotional labor strategies also were allowed to freely correlate with each other, based on past work showing that they are related to each other (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey, 2003).

The test of the hypothesized model (Model A) resulted in poor fit to the data (see Table 2 for fit indices). As a result, I turned to the first alternative model (Model B), in which direct paths from each of the EI branches to emotional exhaustion and supervisor rated
Table 2. Summary of Fit Statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>( \chi^2/df )</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
<th>( \Delta \chi^2 )</th>
<th>( \Delta df )</th>
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<td>.51</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>12.19</td>
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</table>

Note: \( N = 74 \). RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; SRMR = standardized root-mean-square residual. \( \Delta \chi^2 \) and \( \Delta df \) are in comparison to hypothesized Model A.
authenticity were included. This model did not significantly improve model fit in comparison to the hypothesized model ($\Delta \chi^2(8) = 11.78, p < .16$). However, inspection of these additional paths revealed one significant link between the EI scales and the outcomes (understanding emotions to emotional exhaustion). I then tested a second alternative model (Model C) in which only the additional path from understanding emotions to emotional exhaustion was retained and all other alternative paths from Model B were removed. This model fit the data well (see Table 2) and yielded improved fit when compared to the hypothesized model ($\Delta \chi^2(1) = 7.78, p < .005$).

Inspection of the modification indices revealed an unexpected negative link between deep acting and emotional exhaustion. Allowing this path to be freed in the model (Model D) further improved model fit compared to Model C ($\Delta \chi^2(1) = 4.41, p < .04$) and the hypothesized model ($\Delta \chi^2(2) = 12.19, p < .002$). As such, this model was retained as the best fitting model. I now turn to the tests of the hypotheses.

Path coefficients for Model D are presented in Figure 1. The coefficients for the display rule paths are presented in the note of Figure 1, with significant links of display rules with surface acting ($\gamma = .54, p < .01$) and deep acting ($\gamma = .68, p < .01$). Turning to the tests of hypotheses, surface acting was not predicted by perceiving emotions ($\gamma = .01, ns$) or understanding emotions ($\gamma = .00, ns$). Thus Hypotheses 2a and 2b were not supported.

On the other hand, surface acting was significantly negatively related to managing emotions ($\gamma = -.03, p < .01$), providing support for Hypothesis 2c. Deep acting was not predicted by any branch of emotional intelligence [perceiving emotions ($\gamma = .01, ns$), facilitating emotions ($\gamma = -.01, ns$), understanding emotions ($\gamma = -.01, ns$), and managing
Figure 1. Hypothesized Model A

Note. Not illustrated = paths from display rules to surface acting ($\gamma = .54$, $p < .01$), deep acting ($\gamma = .66$, $p < .01$), naturally felt emotions ($\gamma = .12$, ns), emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = .02$, ns), and perceived authenticity ($\gamma = -.15$, ns).

* $p < .05$
emotions ($\gamma = .01, \text{ns}$). As a result, Hypotheses 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d were not supported. Additionally, expression of naturally felt emotions was not significantly predicted by perceiving emotions ($\gamma = .00, \text{ns}$) or understanding emotions ($\gamma = .00, \text{ns}$), thereby failing to support Hypotheses 4a and 4b.

Turning to the links between the emotional labor strategies and the outcome variables, surface acting was significantly related to emotional exhaustion in a positive direction ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), providing support for Hypothesis 5. Expression of naturally-felt emotions was not significantly related to emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -.06, \text{ns}$), failing to support Hypothesis 6. Supervisor rated perceived authenticity was not significantly predicted by any emotional labor strategies [surface acting ($\beta = -.04, \text{ns}$), deep acting ($\beta = .10, \text{ns}$), expression of naturally-felt emotions ($\beta = .02, \text{ns}$)] failing to support Hypotheses 8, 9, and 10 respectively. Unexpectedly, deep acting was significantly related to emotional exhaustion in a negative direction ($\beta = -.21, p < .05$).

Hypotheses 7 and 11, which proposed mediation, were examined using MacKinnon, Krull, and Lockwood’s (2000) framework. First, each mediating variable (surface acting, deep acting, or naturally felt-emotions) was regressed on each independent variable (perceiving, understanding, or managing emotions) in path analysis. In tests of mediation, the links between the independent variables and mediators are identified by the $\alpha$ symbol. Second, the links between the mediators and the dependent variables (emotional exhaustion, perceived authenticity) are estimated, with these paths symbolized by $\beta$. I then examined the presence of any indirect effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables that is carried by the effects of mediators, using the
Sobel (1982) test. However, none of the indirect effects were significant (see Table 3), failing to provide support for Hypotheses 7 and 11.
Table 3. Results of Sobel Test for Indirect Effects of Mediation.

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<th>Hypothesis</th>
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<th>β</th>
<th>z</th>
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</thead>
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<td>1.03, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a: Perceiving-NF-EE</td>
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<td>-.11, ns</td>
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<tr>
<td>7b Understanding-SA-EE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c Managing-SA-EE</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.7, ns</td>
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</table>

**Note.**

* *p<.05

SA = Surface acting, DA = Deep acting, NF = Naturally-felt emotions, EE = Emotional exhaustion, PA = Perceived authenticity
Supplemental Analyses

In addition to the hypothesized relationships, several supplemental analyses were examined in an attempt to further understand the results.

Total EI as a predictor. Prior research has typically examined the predictive validity of a total EI score, which is the average across the branches, rather than looking at the branches separately (Côté & Miners, 2006, Matthews et al., 2005). A potential problem with using the branch scores as separate predictors is that they tend to be highly correlated with each other (as they were in the present investigation; see Table 1), canceling out any unique relationships they may have with other variables. As such, I examined a model in which a total EI score was used as a predictor of the emotional labor strategies and outcome variables. This model did not yield good fit to the data ($\chi^2(2) = 6.09, p < .05$; RMSEA = 0.16; SRMR = .05; TLI = .40; CFI = .94). Further the only significant EI path was from EI to emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = .30, p<.05$), which is similar to the significant link between understanding emotions and emotional exhaustion. Thus, it does not seem that significant links between the EI branches and other study variables are being masked by simultaneous regression analyses.

Control variables. A final set of path models was examined in which the control variables of age, gender, the Big Five personality factors, service relationship vs. service encounter, and O*NET job characteristics were included as covariates in predicting the emotional labor strategies and outcome variables. Building on the final path model (Model D), a model that included these additional variables as predictors (Model E) fit very well ($\chi^2(11) = 9.26, p < .60$; RMSEA = 0.0; SRMR = .02; TLI = 1.12; CFI = 1.00).
Figure 2. Final Model

Note. Not illustrated -- paths from display rules to surface acting ($\gamma = .54$, $p < .01$), deep acting ($\gamma = .68$, $p < .01$), naturally felt emotions ($\gamma = -.12$, ns), emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = .01$, ns), and perceived authenticity ($\gamma = -.15$, ns).

Path estimates for Model E (Model with control variables) included in parentheses. * $p < .05$
Path coefficients for Model E are presented in Figure 2. Although the tests of hypotheses were generally unaffected by inclusion of these additional control variables (the pattern of significance was the same as in the model without the control variables), the covariates exhibited several significant relationships. In particular, participant age was marginally related to surface acting ($\gamma = -.03, p < .10$) and marginally related to deep acting ($\gamma = -.03, p < .10$), suggesting that older individuals were less likely to report engaging in both types of emotional labor strategies. Participant gender, conscientiousness, openness, and emotional stability were not significantly related with any of the emotional labor or outcome variables. Similar to Diefendorff et al. (2005), extraversion was marginally significantly related to the expression of naturally-felt emotions ($\gamma = .16, p < .10$) and agreeableness was significantly related to surface acting ($\gamma = -.30, p < .01$), deep acting ($\gamma = .31, p < .05$), and naturally-felt emotions ($\gamma = .31, p < .01$). Although these findings are consistent with prior work, they should be interpreted with caution as the sample size to parameter ratio was not favorable, with LISREL reporting that the parameter estimates are unreliable because the total sample size is smaller than the number of parameters.

*Participant gender as a moderator.* The final set of exploratory analyses considered whether participant gender moderated the effects of EI on other variables. Recent work by Brackett, Mayer, and Warner (2003) has shown that the effect of EI on a variety of outcomes depends on gender, with significant relationships being observed for men, but nonsignificant effects being observed for women. These authors also observed mean differences for men and women, with women having higher levels of EI across the three studies. The authors explained their different relationships for men and women by arguing that the benefits of EI may be curvilinear with positive effects occurring up to
some minimum level of competency and then additional increases in EI not yielding any more advantages. Thus, they theorized that women were typically above the minimum level of competency, such that differences among women on EI did not translate into differences in the outcomes. However, many of the men were not above this minimum level of competency, resulting in differences in EI among men translating into differences in the outcome variables. One potential reason for this higher level of EI for women is that women may be socialized from a young age to read emotions better than men (Ciarrochi et al., 2000). Likewise, Brackett et al. (2006) acknowledge that the MSCEIT may differ predictively for men and women because the social norms for each gender are different. Based on these prior findings, I explored whether sex moderated the effects of EI on other outcomes. I also explored whether other relationships in the model were moderated by sex.

In the current study, several interesting differences between males and females were apparent. Gender moderated the relationship between managing emotions and the emotional labor strategy of expressing naturally felt emotions ($\beta = -.08, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = .132$), such that managing emotions and naturally felt emotions were significantly positively correlated for females ($r = .31, p<.05$), but significantly negatively correlated for males ($r = -.47, p<.05$). Gender also moderated the relationship between total EI and expressing naturally felt emotions ($\beta = -.07 p < .0001; \Delta R^2 = .165$), such that total EI and naturally felt emotions were significantly positively correlated for females ($r = .31, p<.05$), but significantly negatively correlated for males ($r = -.67, p<.01$). These findings suggest that, for females, being high on managing emotions or total EI is linked to the expression of naturally felt emotions, while, for males, the higher individuals are on
managing emotions or total EI the less likely they are going to express naturally felt emotions to conform to display expectations. A possible explanation for this may be that when males experience emotional labor, they are more likely to engage in less sincere or good faith emotion regulation strategies than females (Surface acting $M_{\text{males}} = 2.38$, $M_{\text{females}} = 2.09$; Deep acting $M_{\text{males}} = 2.78$, $M_{\text{females}} = 3.13$).

Sex significantly moderated the relationship between surface acting and supervisor ratings of perceived authenticity ($\beta = -.26$, $p < .05$; $\Delta R^2 = .053$) such that surface acting was significantly negatively correlated with perceived authenticity for females ($r = -.32$, $p < .05$), whereas for males the relationship was positive but non-significant ($r = .19$, $ns$). This finding suggests that surface acting has a greater impact on whether females are perceived authentically, than whether males are perceived as being authentic. This finding is similar to that of Johnson and Spector (2007) who found that surface acting led to more detrimental outcomes for females than males, such as reduced affective well-being and job satisfaction, and increased emotional exhaustion.
CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to develop and test theoretical links between emotional labor and EI constructs, within a customer service context. Consistent with prior research (Diefendorff et al., 2005), links among the emotional labor variables were generally supported. However, the results generally did not support emotional intelligence as playing a role in predicting the emotional labor strategies and outcome variables. The following sections discuss the findings in more detail.

Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labor

The results of this study revealed that emotional intelligence did not significantly predict the emotional labor strategies of deep acting or expressing naturally-felt emotions, though the EI branch of managing emotions was significantly negatively related to surface acting. This finding suggests that individuals who can decide how to appropriately respond to a situation by reducing, enhancing, or modifying one’s emotional response (Brackett et al., 2006; Mayer et al., 2004) are less likely to suppress felt emotions and express unfelt emotions when interacting with customers (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Totterdell & Holman, 2003). Thus, high surface acting may be due, in part, to an individual’s inability to make decisions about the usefulness of certain emotional responses in given situations (Brackett et al., 2006; Mayer et al., 2004).
In the current study, I also explored the potential moderating effects of sex on EI-outcome relationships since previous research has demonstrated meaningful differences between men and women in relation to EI. For instance, researchers have found EI, as measured by the MSCEIT, to be linked to social competence outcomes for males but not females (Brackett et al., 2006). These findings indicated that men higher on EI reported using less destructive strategies in relationships and were perceived as being more socially competent by others than men lower on EI. Interestingly, Brackett et al. (2004) also found EI to be more predictive for males such that males scoring lower on EI were more likely to be poorly adjusted and engage in negative behaviors such as illegal drug use, excessive alcohol consumption, deviant behavior, and poor relations with friends.

In the current study, I found that gender moderated the relationship between the EI branch of managing emotions and the emotional labor strategy of expressing naturally-felt emotions, such that for females, the ability to manage emotions was positively correlated with the expression of naturally-felt emotions, while on the other hand, the EI branch of managing emotions was negatively correlated with the expression of naturally-felt emotions for males. Gender also moderated the relationship between total EI and the expression of naturally felt emotions in the same way. These findings suggest that high EI women may be able to simply express what they feel to meet emotional labor demands, whereas high EI men may avoid expressing their naturally-felt emotions to meet these same demands. It may also suggest that women can use more automatic and less conscious emotion management techniques compared to men (Côté et al., 2006). As a result, females may be less likely to report altering their emotions through emotion regulation strategies, but instead report expressing what they feel. While these finding are
suggestive, the fact that none of the EI branches, and the managing emotions branch in particular, had direct links with deep acting or expressing naturally felt emotions is perplexing. However, this finding is consistent with Johnson and Spector (2007) who found that deep acting and surface acting were not correlated with EI, as assessed with Wong and Law’s (2002) self-report EI measure. Johnson and Spector (2007) also acknowledged that they only examined the two emotion regulation strategies of surface acting and deep acting, which may not be the preferred strategies of individuals high in emotional intelligence. This same concern could be raised about the present study.

The lack of significant links between EI and the emotional labor strategies suggests that the tendencies for employees to manage their emotions during customer service interactions is not dependent on their emotional abilities. Perhaps the choice of these emotional labor strategies is more dependent on personality (e.g., Austin et al., 2008; Diefendorff et al., 2005) or situational demands (e.g., Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005) than it is on emotional competence. A recent study (Austin et al., 2008) looking at the associations of personality and self-reported EI with display rule perceptions and emotional labor found links between the emotion regulation strategies and dimensions of the big five, consistent with previous findings (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Similar to the findings of the current study, Austin et al. (2008) found EI to be negatively associated with SA, but unrelated to DA, suggesting that individuals high on EI are less likely to surface act.

However, if EI reflects the tendency to be effective in interpersonal situations, as shown in prior work (Brackett et al., 2006; Lopes et al., 2003; 2005), it is surprising that these abilities do not more strongly differentially relate to surface acting and deep acting,
which have been shown to predict effectiveness in service situations (Grandey, 2003). Previous research using the MSCEIT has found that individuals high on managing emotions viewed themselves as being more interpersonally sensitive and prosocial, were rated more favorably by their peers (Lopes et al., 2005), had more positive relations with others, and were less likely to report having negative interactions with close friends (Lopes et al., 2003). Additionally, Brackett et al. (2005) found that romantic couples in which both individuals scored low on EI, as assessed with the MSCEIT, reported less positive relationship outcomes. In comparison, the results of the current study indicate a direct link between managing emotions and surface acting, but no direct links to emotional exhaustion or supervisor ratings of employee authenticity.

The present investigation also found that the EI branch of understanding emotions was directly and positively related to emotional exhaustion. This relationship is counter to what would be expected theoretically as it suggests that individuals who are higher in this EI dimension reported being more emotionally exhausted at work. That is, the extent to which individuals can understand how and why emotions develop was associated with lower well-being. Although this finding is surprising it may be that this EI attribute is problematic for well-being when individuals do not also have the means or ability to change the situation that is responsible for the emotion. For example, if an employee is treated poorly by a supervisor, he/she may understand the anger he/she feels and why it is occurring. However if the person is unable to regulate such negative emotions because of a lack of ability to do so or because of constraining situation, having a high level of emotional knowledge may actually lead to a lower sense of well-being.
Although not hypothesized, it is interesting to note that significant relationships were observed between emotional display rule perceptions and each of the EI branches. This finding suggests that more emotionally intelligent individuals were more likely to perceive that their jobs had requirements to express positive emotions and suppress negative emotions. This unexpected finding suggests that high emotional abilities may make the emotional demands of situations more salient to individuals, resulting in greater perceptions that there is a need to manage emotions. This finding contributes to research demonstrating dispositional influences on emotional display rule perceptions (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

**Emotional Labor and Outcomes**

Emotional labor has been described as the process of regulating one’s emotional displays in response to perceived emotional display rules (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). When employees' emotional displays do not match those prescribed by the organization, employees often must engage in emotion regulation strategies to meet the required displays (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey, 2003). Emotion regulation strategies such as surface acting have been linked to negative outcomes such as emotional exhaustion, stress, burnout, lower affective delivery ratings, and lower overall well-being (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; 2005; Gross & John, 2003) while deep acting on the other hand, has been linked to more positive outcomes such as higher affective delivery ratings and perceived authenticity, lower emotional dissonance, and greater well-being (Grandey, 2003; Gross & John, 2003). Additionally, direct links between display rule perceptions and outcomes such as job satisfaction and co-worker ratings of emotional displays have been found.
such that perceived demands to display positive emotions related to greater job
satisfaction, more positive co-worker ratings of emotional displays and a heightened
sense of personal accomplishment, while demands to express negative emotions related
to lower job satisfaction (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff & Richard, 2003).

Consistent with past work (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Totterdell & Holman, 2003), surface acting predicted emotional
exhaustion, with greater surface acting being associated with more exhaustion. In
contrast to prior work, which has found no relation between deep acting and emotional
exhaustion (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Kruml & Geddes, 2000;
Totterdell & Holman, 2003), this study also found that deep acting was negatively related
to emotional exhaustion, suggesting that individuals who engage in deep acting may be
able to avoid emotional exhaustion by actively changing their emotions, rather than
simply modifying the display. It is not clear why this study found a link that other studies
have not found, though it may be that the occupational makeup of this sample is different
from other studies. Nonetheless, these results suggest that deep acting may actually
benefit individuals by leading to low emotional exhaustion. Perhaps this effect is
attributable to the lack of dissonance which between displayed emotions and felt
emotions that occurs with deep acting.

This study did not find significant links between the emotional labor strategies
and supervisor ratings of employee authenticity in customer service interactions. This
finding is inconsistent with past research, which has found affective delivery to be
significantly negatively related to surface acting and significantly positively related to
deep acting (Grandey, 2003). Affective delivery refers to the extent to which individuals
are perceived as friendly and warm (Bettencourt et al., 2001; Pugh, 2001; Tsai, 2001),
and thus also perceived as more authentic (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey 1993). However,
gender was found to be a significant moderator of the relationship between surface acting
and perceived authenticity, such that surface acting had a significant negative effect on
the perceived authenticity of female employees, but had a positive, albeit non-significant,
effect on male employees perceived authenticity. These results are consistent with
Johnson and Spector (2007) who found that gender acted as a significant moderator of
surface acting and well-being outcomes. These authors found that the detrimental effects
of surface acting were greater for women than for men, which is similar to the findings of
the current study.

**Practical Implications**

The results of this study have several practical implications. First, the significant
link between managing emotions and surface acting, which is related to emotional
exhaustion, suggests that increasing an employee’s ability to manage emotions may
benefit them in the long-run (Gross & John, 2003). Organizations should consider an
applicant’s ability to manage his or her emotions during the selection process as it
appears to be linked to whether they will engage in negative emotional labor strategies
and negative well-being outcomes (Arvey, Renz & Watson, 1997). Managers may want
to provide emotional intelligence training to employees who must engage in emotional
labor in an attempt to reduce the potential negative outcomes (Slaski & Cartwright,
2003). Additionally, training employees to engage in deep acting and to not engage in
surface acting may help them to avoid negative outcomes such as emotional exhaustion
which could lead to more negative effects such as intention to turnover or lowered
organizational commitment (Cameron, Horsburgh, & Armstrong-Stassen, 1994; Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

**Limitations and Future Research**

The current study has a number of limitations which should be addressed in future research. First, a major limitation of this study is the small sample size, which resulted in low statistical power for observing significant effects (Maxwell, 2000). Future research should seek to replicate this study using a larger sample size. A second limitation of this study is that the sample consisted of employed college students, which may limit the generalizability of the results. However, the average age of participants was higher than a typical undergraduate population (25.1), with many of the students working full time (26%). Nonetheless, future research should examine these relationships using a non-student sample. A third limitation of this study is that the authenticity of employee emotional displays was assessed from the supervisor’s perspective, rather than from customers. It may be the case that some supervisors did not have as much information on employee emotional displays as others, due to differences in how frequently they observed employee-customer interactions. It is also possible that employees may have acted differently when they knew their supervisor was observing them. Future research may want to also ask participants to rate the authenticity of their own emotional displays in order to see if there is much agreement between supervisor ratings and self-ratings.

Future research should examine the links of this ability-based conceptualization of EI with other workplace outcomes. For instance, researchers may want to study the potential links between supervisor EI and employee perceptions of Leader Member Exchange (LMX; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997). High
quality LMX is characterized by experiences of trust, respect, liking, and reciprocity in terms of influence and behavior (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Schiemann, 1978). As such, LMX may serve as a mediator between supervisor EI and employee outcomes, such as job performance or feedback seeking. Because emotional intelligence is purported to contribute to more effective social interactions (George, 2000; Lopes et al., 2003; 2004), leaders who are high on emotional intelligence should then be more capable of developing high quality LMX relationships with their subordinates, leading to positive organizational outcomes. Additionally, future research should continue to test for potential moderating effects of gender in the relationships of emotional intelligence and emotional labor variables with outcome variables as it is important to understand how and why gender differences occur.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study suggest that EI is not generally related to emotional labor variables, though some marginally-significant and interactive effects were observed. However, the EI dimension of understanding emotions and the emotional labor strategies of surface acting and deep acting had independent effects on employee emotional exhaustion, with greater understanding emotions and surface acting, and less deep acting being associated with more emotional exhaustion. From a managerial perspective, organizations may want to train employees on emotional intelligence abilities as well as emotional labor strategies in order to avoid potential negative outcomes which can have adverse effects on both employees and their organizations.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

SURFACE ACTING

1. I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way.
2. I fake a good mood when interacting with customers.
3. I put on a “show” or “performance” when interacting with customers.
4. I just pretend to have the emotions I need to display for my job.
5. I put on a “mask” in order to display the emotions I need for the job.
6. I show feelings to customers that are different from what I feel inside.
7. I fake the emotions I show when dealing with customers.
APPENDIX B

DEEP ACTING

1. I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to customers.

2. I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display toward others.

3. I work hard to feel the emotions that I need to show to customers.

4. I work at developing the feelings inside of me that I need to show to customers.
APPENDIX C

EXPRESSION OF NATURALLY FELT EMOTIONS

1. The emotions I express to customers are genuine.

2. The emotions I show customers come naturally.

3. The emotions I show customers match what I spontaneously feel.
APPENDIX D

EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work
2. I feel frustrated by my job
3. I feel used up at the end of the work day
4. I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job
5. I feel burned out from my work
6. I feel I’m working too hard on my job
APPENDIX E

DISPLAY RULE ITEMS

Positive display rule perceptions of the employee

1. Part of my job is to make the customer feel good.

2. My workplace does not expect me to express positive emotions to customers as part of my job.

3. This organization would say that part of the product to customers is friendly, cheerful service.

4. My organization expects me to try to act excited and enthusiastic in my interactions with customers.

Negative display rule perceptions of the employee

1. I am expected to suppress my bad moods or negative reactions to customers.

2. This organization expects me to try to pretend that I am not upset or distressed.

3. I am expected to try to pretend I am not angry or feeling contempt while on the job.

Positive display rule perceptions of the supervisor

1. Part of my employee’s job is to make the customer feel good.

2. Our workplace does not expect my employee to express positive emotions to customers as part of his/her job.
5. This organization would say that part of the product to customers is friendly, cheerful service.

6. Our organization expects my employee to try to act excited and enthusiastic in his/her interactions with customers.

Negative display rule perceptions of the supervisor

1. My employee is expected to suppress his/her bad moods or negative reactions to customers.

4. This organization expects my employee to try to pretend that he/she is not upset or distressed.

5. My employee is expected to try to pretend he/she is not angry or feeling contempt while on the job.
APPENDIX F

AUTHENTICITY ITEMS

1. This person seems sincere when dealing with the public.

2. This employee is genuine in his/her interactions with the public.

3. This employee does not seem authentic when interacting with the public. (reverse code)

4. When interacting with customers, this employee is real.

5. This employee is truly himself/herself when interacting with customers.
APPENDIX G

BIG FIVE PERSONALITY MINI-MARKERS

1. Bashful
2. Bold
3. Careless
4. Cold
5. Complex
6. Cooperative
7. Creative
8. Deep
9. Disorganized
10. Efficient
11. Energetic
12. Envious
13. Extraverted
14. Fretful
15. Harsh
16. Imaginative
17. Inefficient
18. Intellectual
19. Jealous
20. Kind
21. Moody
22. Organized
23. Philosophical
24. Practical
25. Quiet
26. Relaxed
27. Rude
28. Shy
29. Sloppy
30. Sympathetic
31. Systematic
32. Talkative
33. Tempermental
34. Touchy
35. Uncreative
36. Unenvious
37. Unintellectual
38. Unsympathetic
39. Warm
40. Withdrawn
APPENDIX H

SUPERVISOR OBSERVATIONS OF EMPLOYEE INTERACTION

1. Typically, I am able to observe this employee’s interaction with customers/clients.
APPENDIX I

SERVICE ASSOCIATION

1. ___ I typically never work with the same customer more than once.

2. ___ Customers often return to work specifically with me.

3. ___ I typically work with customers multiple times.

4. ___ I rarely work with the same customer again.

5. ___ Customers do not return to work with me in particular.

6. ___ I can expect to see customers again after their first visit.
APPENDIX J

JOB EXPERIENCE

1. How many hours per week do you work, on average? ____________ hours/week

2. How long have you: Worked for the company? ______ years ______ months
   Held your current position? ______ years ______ months
   Worked in this occupation (including your current and prior jobs)? _____ years ______ months

3. What is your job title?

4. What are your primary job duties (e.g., interacting with customers, cooking, unloading trucks, directing others)? If you have more than one primary job duty, please list them in the order of importance to your job.
APPENDIX K

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

October 17, 2007

Dr. Luong
119 Hunt Club Drive, Apt. 2B
Copley, Ohio 44321

Dr. Luong

Your request for exemption for the protocol entitled "Analyzing the Relationship of Emotional Labor with an Amity-Based Conceptualization of Emotional Intensity" was approved on December 17, 2007. The IRB application number assigned to this project is 2007-467. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

☐ Exemption 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices.

☒ Exemption 2: Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, or observation of public behavior.

☐ Exemption 3: Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, observation of public behavior not exempt under category 2, but subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public offices.

☐ Exemption 4: Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or images.

☐ Exemption 5: Research and demonstration projects conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine public programs or services.

☐ Exemption 6: Taster and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptability studies.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make changes to the studies design or procedures that increase the risk to subjects or include procedures that do not fall within the approved exemption category, please contact the IRB to discuss whether or not a new application must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must also copy this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Student Name:

Date:

[Signature]

Not Applicable

Approved content form attached

IRB Office Director

Karen DeSantis, PhD
Office of Research Services and Compliance
University of Akron

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