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Emotional Labor: An Affective-Commitment Perspective

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EMOTIONAL LABOR: AN AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT PERSPECTIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

The emotional-labor literature asserts that individuals respond to emotion-display requirements, called display rules, with surface and deep acting. However, surface acting, but not deep acting, relates to deleterious occupational-health outcomes. Deep acting, therefore, is a strategy organizations should promote, should they wish to prioritize the well-being of their employees. Unfortunately, little research exists that clarifies the emotional-labor-choice process. The current study used the job demands-resources model and self-determination theory to hypothesize that affective organizational commitment would differentially moderate the relationship between display rules and the methods of emotional labor. To evaluate this study's hypotheses, 320 participants on an online survey platform completed a survey for this study. A moderated path analysis indicated support for the relationship between display rules and surface acting but did not support the relationship between display rules and deep acting. Further, the results did not support the moderation hypotheses. I provide a comprehensive interpretation of this research and discuss implications for the predominant model of emotional labor. Additionally, I review the limitations, practical applications, and future directions of this study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have noted that people at work are required to exert mental and physical effort, and these requirements can be referred to as job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001; Karasek, 1979). With respect to customer-service jobs, a prevalent job demand, display rules (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), requires employees to display certain emotions to customers/clients. The process of meeting these display rules, referred to as emotional labor, is associated with many individual-level outcomes, including reduced job satisfaction, increased emotional exhaustion, increased psychological strain, and increased psychosomatic complaints (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Obviously, these outcomes are far from ideal. As I will review, the emotional-labor literature is concerningly unequipped to advise on how people best avoid these outcomes. Therefore, the present research sets out to address this deficiency, and this process begins by exploring the nature of emotional labor.

Review of Literature

Emotional Labor

Individuals display certain emotions in the workplace in response to emotion-display requirements — called display rules (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). A common example of a display rule is "service with a smile" in service contexts (Goldberg &

Grandey, 2007). Display rules can be explicit or implicit and can be generated by both the organization (e.g., by advertising positive experiences associated with their products) and the customer, and these rules are perceived by employees to be demands of the job (Diefendorff et al., 2006; Wharton & Erickson, 1993). The process of meeting these display rules is called emotional labor, and it is composed of two mechanisms. The first includes simply displaying the expected emotion for the situation. An employee can express emotion in a variety of ways, including facial movements, gazes, bodily movements, and vocal intonation (Keltner et al., 2019). When the employee expresses emotion that is dissimilar to their felt emotion (i.e., affect), it is referred to as surface acting (SA; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000). The second way an employee can engage in emotional labor is by deep acting (DA), which involves modifying internal, felt emotion to produce the expected emotional display (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000). An example of DA would be for an employee to imagine one's customers as children to elicit sympathetic emotions or humor (Hochschild, 2012). Further, when presented with display rules, individuals can engage in both SA and DA (Gabriel et al., 2015). Using the previous example, an employee may imagine their customers as children to produce humor (i.e., DA), but if a customer suddenly insults the employee, and gives the employee negative feelings, they will need to express a civil demeanor (i.e., SA), despite it being incongruent with how the rude customer has made them feel.

Importantly, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) observe that an employee can feel the appropriate emotions for the workplace context without engaging in SA or DA, positing that naturally felt emotions (NFE) represent a third form of emotional labor.

However, one may argue that if one feels the correct emotions for the job, without putting forth effort, they are not laboring. Regardless of whether NFE is or is not labor, Diefendorff et al. (2005) found that the expression of NFE is distinct from both SA and DA, and it is used by service workers in their jobs. This evidence suggests that NFE is a unique and viable method for meeting display rules. Though, emotional-labor research largely ignores the dimension of NFE (Walsh, 2019), potentially because its status is disputed.

Interestingly, some researchers consider emotional labor an active, volitional process or an automatic, unconsciousness process (Hülsheger et al., 2015), and they consider the expression of NFE to be automatic, passive DA. Other researchers assert that the expression of NFE may represent a statistical artifact, goal-abandonment, or high person-job fit (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). At any rate, it is not the purpose of the present paper to deal with this controversy, and it will instead focus on situations in which the expression of NFE is not a viable method for dealing with a customer interaction, thus necessitating the use of either SA or DA. I will now review the consequences of emotional labor.

DA and SA do not relate to the same individual-level outcomes. Most salient among the differences observed are the consistent negative effects of SA. This strategy has been shown to be negatively related to job satisfaction (Côté & Morgan, 2002; Judge et al., 2009), positively related to turnover intention (Chau et al., 2009), negatively related to job performance (Goodwin et al., 2011), and positively related to burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Martínez-Iñigo et al., 2007; Totterdell & Holman, 2003). Further, the chronic use of SA is related to a

reduction in positive affect, an increase in negative affect, reduced working-memory capacity, reduced social support, and increased proclivity towards depression (Gross & John, 2003; John & Gross, 2004).

In contrast, DA does not exhibit the same relationships, typically showing no relationship with burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Chau et al., 2009; Grandey, 2003; Martínez-Iñigo et al., 2007), a positive relationship with self-efficacy (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), a positive relationship with customer satisfaction (Grandey, 2003), and a positive relationship with service performance (Chi et al., 2011). Furthermore, DA is related to better interpersonal relationships, fewer depressive symptoms, and greater well-being (Gross & John, 2003). Note that there are exceptions to customer/client situations in which an employee is expected to not display positive emotion, such as with judges or morticians; while these occupations are interesting avenues for the study for emotional labor, I focus on the vast majority of customer/client service encounters, which are marked by an emphasis on positive displays.

Substantial portions of the emotional-labor literature attempt to explain the differential outcomes of these two acting strategies through conservation of resources theory (COR; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Hobfoll, 1989). COR defines resources "as those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies" (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). COR asserts that stress is a reaction to "(a) the threat of a net loss in resources, (b) the net loss of resources, or (c) a lack of resource gain following the investment of resource" (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). Interestingly, the theory also states that resources must be expended to gain more

resources. For example, time is a personal resource, and it must be spent at work to gain money, another personal resource. Expending resources still constitutes a stressor, but the negative stress effects can be avoided if the resource expenditure results in the acquisition of an equal or greater number of resources. Therefore, individuals at work can expend resources — their personal characteristics, energies, and time — to meet job demands, but they will have net increases in stress and strain if the resources are not regained. Brotheridge and Lee (2002) tested this assumption and provided evidence that SA represents a greater loss in resources compared to DA, perhaps indicating that the resources expended with SA were not regained. Conversely, as Huang et al. (2015) suggest, DA increases the positive emotional experience of customer interactions and thus leads employees to recoup resources expended through the exchange. The evidence provided from Brotheridge and Lee (2002) and Huang et al., (2015) suggest that a net loss of resources occurs in the case of SA and may be the mechanism leading to many of the aforementioned negative outcomes. Soon, I will return to the resource perspective, as it offers an avenue to a holistic understanding of emotional labor as seated in the larger work context — this is important for understanding how one may avoid the negative consequences of SA.

I have just reviewed that people respond to display rules with the emotional-labor strategies of SA and DA, and that these strategies lead to different outcomes — potentially explained by COR theory. I will now review why people choose between SA and DA, as this is important for understanding how to increase DA and decrease SA.

Emotional Labor Strategy Choice

The preceding discussion brings us to the following question: If SA is clearly not an ideal mechanism for emotional labor, what leads people to choose this as opposed to the more beneficial acting strategy? Why surface act at all? Meta-analytic evidence suggests that individual disposition toward positive or negative affect is related to whether one engages in SA or DA (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013); specifically, negative affectivity is positively related to SA, while positive affectivity is positively related to DA and negatively related to SA. Relatedly, researchers have examined the relationship between age and service employees' strategy choice and found that older workers deep act at higher frequencies. The authors proposed that this was due to older employees possessing different outlooks on social interactions, specifically in that they were seeking more positive social interactions (Dahling & Perez, 2010). However, researchers have also noted that there is substantial variability within individuals when it comes to engaging in either of these acting strategies (Judge et al., 2009). This suggests that something beyond disposition is responsible for choice of emotional-labor strategy. The interactionist perspective has long recognized that the environment, not simply one's disposition, bears considerable influence on the way people act (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000). In fact, emotional-labor researchers have suggested that environmental factors influence the choice of emotional-labor strategy (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996).

Unfortunately, very little research has investigated the environmental antecedents of SA and DA, but the field of leadership provides some insight. Specifically, both servant and transformational leadership have been found to positively relate to DA and

negatively relate to SA (Lu et al., 2019; Luo et al., 2019). Regarding the study on servant leadership, Lu et al. (2019) found that trust mediated the observed relationships. This trust translates, they postulated, into employees feeling more autonomous in their emotional expressions (Lu et al., 2019). Regarding the transformation leadership (TL) study, Luo et al. (2019) theorized that the relationships between TL and emotional-labor strategies result from TL producing positive feelings in employees and a sense of commitment to their organization. While these studies provide interesting results, they nonetheless illustrate that the emotional-labor field lacks a clear understanding of what may influence employees to differentially engage in SA and DA. Likewise, no literature on emotional labor has explicitly explored emotional-labor-choice processes. Some researchers do suggest that DA requires more effort, or resources, than SA (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2003). However, no research has followed up on this proposition.

The resource perspective already reviewed, COR, has been used as part of a larger, work-oriented resource theory called the job demands-resources theory (JDR; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This theory, which I shall describe in greater detail below, can be used to conceptually consolidate the literature on the antecedents of emotional labor and to address the gaps in the emotional-labor-choice literature, as it construes important elements of the work environment, namely job resources and demands, as important for understanding employee behavior. Further, I feel that this approach is appropriate given the extent to which resource theories are used in the emotional-labor literature (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015).

I have just argued that the literature on emotional-labor-strategy choice is scarce, and that the JDR perspective might offer a route to the eventual understanding of the choice process. I will now turn to review the JDR model, as this will allow the reader to understand how environmental factors influence employee behavior.

Job Demands Resources Model

The job demands-resources model assumes that all jobs can be characterized by physical, social, psychological, or organizational factors that (1) necessitate sustained emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral effort (called job demands) and those that (2) assist employees in meeting job demands, reduce job demands, reduce costs associated with job demands, and that stimulate growth, learning, and development (called job resources; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001). Examples of resources include feedback and job autonomy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), as each of these examples assists employees in meeting job demands. The provision of training is an additional example of a resource because it facilitates learning and development. It is important to note that, while some resources and demands are highly similar across jobs, there can be substantial variation in what is perceived as a demand or a resource — it depends on individual employees and the organization to which they belong. The JDR model also makes the assumption that demands and resources are implicated in two individual-level processes: strain and motivation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker et al., 2005); I will soon describe these two processes in detail. Further, beyond the independent effects of demands and resources on strain and motivation, the JDR proposes that the two factors interact to influence employee attitudes. For example, resources can buffer the negative effects of job demands — that is, lessen their strain effect (Bakker et

al., 2005). Likewise, in the presence of high, or challenging, job demands, resources have their strongest impact on employee outcomes (Hakanen et al., 2005).

The emotional-labor literature has, perhaps unintentionally, provided evidence for these interaction effects. With respect to the buffering effect of resources, Grandey et al. (2012) provide evidence that a climate of authenticity — defined as the degree to which employees could be authentic around coworkers — nullified the relationship between SA and emotional exhaustion, potentially because it serves to recoup resources. With respect to the augmenting effect of high job demands on resources, Huang et al. (2015) illustrated that the positive effect of DA (i.e., its ability to provide resources to the actor) was magnified when the employee perceived the customer exchanges as challenging. To fully understand the relationships between demands, resources, and employee attitudes, a more involved consideration of the strain and motivation process is needed.

The strain process is activated when individuals expend resources to meet job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001). More particularly, researchers note that this process — also referred to as a health-impairment process — develops in the presence of sustained effort to meet difficult job demands, as resources become overstretched and exhaustion occurs (Lewig et al., 2007). In contrast, the motivation process is activated when individuals perceive and utilize job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). It is motivational in nature because, extrinsically, resources are instrumental in meeting demands and because, intrinsically, resources lead to the satisfaction of innate human needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck et al., 2008). More specifically, Van den Broeck et al. (2008) used self-determination theory, a theory that posits the satisfaction of basic psychological needs is a necessary condition for optimal human functioning, as a

framework to explain how job demands and resources lead to or thwart the satisfaction of the basic human needs, which then influences motivated behavior and burnout. Through this lens, an employee's basic needs are satisfied by the provision of resources, which leads them to optimal functioning at work.

Self-determination theory (SDT) researchers propose that the satisfaction of basic needs allows employees to internalize extrinsically motivating forces — such as job demands — which results in behavior that approximates what an employee would autonomously choose to do (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Further, SDT proposes that for employees who have internalized extrinsically motivating forces, their work behavior will be associated with "greater behavioral persistence, more effective performance, and better mental and physical health" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 241). In customer-service contexts, this would mean that an employee would go above and beyond the call of duty, persist with effort in difficult customer situations, and have better health. Thus, one should expect resources, given their relation to internally-regulated behavior, to translate into greater work performance, more persistence with tasks, and higher prevalence of behaviors not formally articulated by an organization, referred to as extra-role, contextual, or discretionary behaviors; evidence supports this expectation (Bakker et al., 2004, 2008; Demerouti et al., 2015; Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). Consistent with SDT, researchers argue that the effect of need satisfaction on work behavior is transmitted through one's sense of belonging and attachment to their organization, organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2004). To explicate this proposition, I will describe organizational commitment, then I will describe how it may influence emotional-labor-strategy choice.

I have just reviewed the JDR model and that resources and demands give rise to various processes, including strain and motivation. Further, I described how these processes are explained through SDT. I will now review organizational commitment, as understanding the construct and how it relates to motivation will allow the reader to understand how it may influence emotional-labor-strategy choice.

Organizational Commitment

Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) define commitment as a stabilizing force that binds someone to a course of action. According to these researchers, commitment possesses three dimensions: affective, normative, and continuance. Affective commitment, which I have already mentioned, refers to an employee caring about, identifying with, and enjoying being a part of an organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Continuance commitment refers to an employee staying with an organization because of the perceived costs of leaving; this can manifest as the employee perceiving that the costs associated with leaving are too high, or that the employee simply has no alternatives (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Normative commitment refers to an employee's felt obligation to stay with an organization, arising from social norms (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). The present study focuses on affective commitment (AC) given its breadth of influence on many organizational variables such as task performance, turnover, OCBs, and burnout. I will briefly review the antecedents of AC and how they relate to the JDR model, as this will clarify why AC relates to such a range of valued variables.

Allen and Meyer (1990) assert that AC arises because of the organization satisfying employees' need to feel competent and accepted in the workplace. This is

largely consistent with the previous discussion of need satisfaction in SDT; I suggested that need satisfaction, which results from the provision of resources, leads to commitment, which then leads to an array of optimal work behaviors. More specifically, however, researchers also note that AC may arise because of a supportive work environment, including supportive coworkers and supervisors (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Meyer et al., 2002). Researchers claim that this reception of support leads employees to reciprocate the actions, and this translates into an employee that cares for their organization and assists it in achieving its goals (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Additional antecedents of AC include difficult goals (i.e., high job demands), performance feedback, and decision latitude (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Importantly, the antecedents of AC are resources and demands in the JDR model, and they highlight the conditions under which resources are most motivating; that is, in the presence of high job demands, resources result in optimal motivational outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2017; Bakker et al., 2005; van Woerkom et al., 2016).

Given the parallels between the antecedents of AC and the motivational process outlined in the JDR, it is reasonable to suggest that employees with high AC may be more motivated to pursue organizational goals. However, the effect of AC may be the result of a change in the type of motivation one experiences. Recall that the influence of job resources on employee motivation may be related to innate human need satisfaction. Need satisfaction is, according to SDT, associated with the internalization of external demands; that is, as needs become satisfied, people become less externally regulated and more internally regulated; their behavior becomes self-determined. A corollary is that AC will exhibit relationships with need satisfaction, and this has been explicitly theorized by

researchers (Meyer et al., 2004) and supported by empirical findings (Gagné et al., 2008, 2010; Meyer et al., 2012). Further, researchers (Meyer et al., 2004) theorize that people with more autonomous forms of regulated behavior, expressed in AC, strive towards the attainment of ideals, rather than simply obligations. Thus, employees with high AC tend to set and accept more challenging goals, and they work harder to attain these goals (Meyer et al., 2004).

From this, one would expect AC to exhibit relationships with both focal work behaviors — behaviors formally required by the organization — and discretionary behaviors — behaviors that are not formally required by the organization — and many researchers have found evidence positively relating AC to both types of work behavior, as well as being related to reduced turnover, reduced work withdrawal, less absenteeism, and less work-family conflict (Meyer et al., 2002; Riketta, 2002). These findings are sensible, given — as I have reviewed — the similar relationships observed for job resources and internally regulated behavior (Bakker et al., 2004, 2008; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demerouti et al., 2015; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). I have just reviewed the antecedents of AC and discussed how they fit into the JDR model. Further, I discussed that employees with high AC are internally motivated to excel in the workplace. I will now transition to describe how AC relates to emotional-labor-strategy choice.

Affective Commitment, Resources, and Emotional Labor

An analog to the argument that some employees, in particular those with higher AC, will be able to regulate their behavior differently than others is explicitly found in the resource literature; Bakker and Demerouti (2007), for instance, underscore the potential for resources to allow employees to cognitively reframe job demands.

Therefore, an employee can cognitively reframe — a mechanism of DA — a customer exchange from a tiring routine to an experience with the potential to generate positive customer exchanges. Hobfoll and Shirom (2000) offer a rationale for this by explaining that individuals must invest resources to do the following: limit the loss of resources, protect resources, and/or to gain resources. Further, these researchers posit that individuals with larger quantities of resources are less prone to lose resources and are more capable of gaining resources, and individuals with access to large quantities of resources are more likely to seek out opportunities to risk resources to gain resources. The emotional-labor literature acknowledges these processes by indicating that while DA conceptually requires more effort than SA, it is not related to emotional exhaustion; in other words, the resources expended in meeting display rules by DA are recouped through the positive experience with customers (Grandey, 2003).

I have illustrated how resources lead to commitment and how both concepts influence behavior in response to job demands. In addition, I have illustrated the connections that exist between resource theories and emotional labor. Literature integrating commitment and emotional labor, however, is sparse. In this section I will review the existing literature on commitment and emotional labor, starting with research on the relationship between AC and emotional-labor strategies. Lapointe et al., (2012) provide evidence that AC towards one's supervisor was positively related to DA but was unrelated to SA. Seery and Corrigall (2009), however, found SA to be negatively related to AC. A third study from Hur et al. (2013) found that perceived organizational support, an antecedent of AC, was positively related to DA, but unrelated to SA. Taken together, these three studies suggest that AC may be positively related to DA, but that SA may or

may not possess a negative relationship with AC. Finally, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) examined the concept of commitment to display rules as a moderator of the display-rule-emotional-labor relationship. They found the relationship between display-rule perceptions and both emotional-labor acting strategies to be stronger when commitment to display rules was high. This study is particularly relevant to the present study; specifically, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) were interested in if one's commitment would inform emotional-labor-strategy choice in response to job demands. However, this study did not investigate AC or commitment to one's organization. Therefore, no research has investigated the moderating role of AC in the relationship between display rules and emotional-labor strategies. I will now transition to discuss the connection between discretionary and focal work behaviors and emotional-labor strategies, as this will clarify the role of AC in emotional-labor-strategy choice.

As I mentioned above, discretionary work behaviors are behaviors that are not required by job demands. However, they are behaviors that also support the organization (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Organ, 1988). In contrast, non-discretionary behaviors are behaviors that are required by formal job demands and role requirements (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). From these definitions, it is reasonable to suggest that DA conceptually entails discretionary behaviors, while SA does not. More specifically, DA possesses elements of discretionary work behavior; people do not need to change how they feel to satisfy the display rule. SA, in contrast, represents behavior that simply meets the basic work requirement of a display rule: Display or suppress given emotions in customer-facing situations. Emotional-labor research has even suggested that DA, being a more elaborate, involved strategy, may be the result of an employee having goodwill

toward their organization, i.e., AC (Grandey, 2000). While research investigating SA and DA as discretionary and non-discretionary behaviors, respectively, is nonexistent, empirical evidence suggests that DA is positively related and SA negatively related to discretionary behaviors (Kiffin-Petersen et al., 2011; Yue et al., 2015).

Hypotheses

This leads to the core argument and hypotheses. I believe that AC is related to employees deep acting more and surface acting less. Specifically, when employees are provided with job resources, need satisfaction occurs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Need satisfaction leads employees to internalize external demands (Meyer et al., 2004). In the service context, this translates into employees satisfying display rules for internal, self-determined reasons. The result of the internalization of regulations leads people to work harder, approach tasks in creative ways, and perceive greater breadth of work responsibilities (Meyer, 2014; Meyer et al., 2004). In service contexts, this means that employees with high AC will deep act more and surface act less. Importantly, research in social sciences has discovered several curvilinear relationships between some psychological variables and behavior (Becker & Cropanzano, 2011; Carter et al., 2017), but there is no existing research on emotional labor and commitment to suggest that the effect of AC on emotional labor is curvilinear. To summarize, my hypotheses are:

Hypothesis 1a: The prevalence of display rules (DR) is positively related to the prevalence of deep acting (DA).

Hypothesis 1b: The prevalence of display rules (DR) is positively related to the prevalence of surface acting (SA).

Hypothesis 2a: Affective commitment (AC) will moderate the relationship between DR and DA such that, as AC increases, the strength of the positive relationship between DR and DA also increases.

Hypothesis 2b: Affective commitment (AC) will moderate the relationship between DR and SA such that, as AC increases, the relationship between DR and SA will decrease in strength and change in direction.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Data collection efforts resulted in the acquisition of 401 respondents. However, as I discuss below, 81 respondents were removed from the study. Regarding the 320 participants that were retained for analysis, the average age was 31.92 years. Regarding tenure, 17.2% of participants reported being with their organization less than one year, 23.4% between one and two years, 27.2% between two and five years, 17.2% between five and ten years, 12.5% between ten and twenty years, and 2.5% twenty or more years. The sample was 54.7% female, 44% male, and 1.3% other. Pertaining to the racial composition of the sample, 11.9% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 1.5% multiracial, 4.3% Black or African American, 74.2% White or Caucasian, and 8.1% other. Finally, regarding occupation, 3.4% belonged to clerical occupations, 1.2% entertainment-related occupations, 37.8% healthcare-related occupations, 20% hospitality-related occupations, 21% sales-related occupations, and 16.6% belonged to other customer-facing occupations.

Participants were gathered from Prolific, a web-based crowdsourcing platform. This crowdsourcing platform has been shown to possess comparable participate quality as Amazon MTurk and university-student subject pools (Palan & Schitter, 2018; Peer et al., 2017, 2021). While the Prolific platform may possess the same quality as traditional

university samples, I utilized attention-check statements in the survey to facilitate the assessment of data quality, as is recommended by Buhrmester et al. (2018). An example of such a statement includes “Please respond “strongly agree” to this statement.” Participants were notified that such statements appear in the survey, and I employed several statistical methods, discussed later, to detect non-compliant responses. Finally, I specified that the survey only be presented to Prolific workers with a work approval acceptance between 90% and 100%, as this is an additional step to ensure data quality (Peer et al., 2014). The reader should note that because work acceptance rating is a form for performance rating (Peer et al., 2014), the requirement of an acceptance rating between 90% and 100% may lead to range restriction on conscientiousness, as there is a well-documented relationship between this personality variable and work performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991). In fact, some researchers provide evidence that with an acceptance rating of 95% to 100% on a similar survey platform, one's sample may be slightly higher on conscientiousness, compared to traditional subject pools (Colman et al., 2018).

Prolific workers that were interested in the work assignment read the details of the job posting, which included the informed-consent form. This form explains the details of the study, any related risks, and incentives. The participants were instructed to accept the work assignment only if they agreed to the terms of the consent form. If they did not agree to the consent form, they were instructed to not accept the assignment. Once they accepted the assignment, they were provided with a link to Qualtrics, the site that hosted the survey.

Accepted work resulted in compensation consistent with the U.S. federal minimum wage, a payment of $1.25 for ten minutes per response. Payment was not provided to people who provided non-compliant responses or did not submit the survey. If the work provided by a Prolific worker is rejected, the Prolific worker's acceptance rating will be diminished. A diminished acceptance rating is detrimental to the ability of Prolific workers to acquire future employment and was not taken lightly. To ensure that the rejection process is handled judiciously, researchers recommend providing clear instructions for how the researcher will determine work acceptance or rejection (McInnis et al., 2016). To this end, I provided the rejection criteria, along with the informed consent, in the initial work listing. The listing and instructions can be found in Appendix A.

The initial part of the survey contained a greeting and introduction to the research, as well as a reiteration of the criteria for work rejection. This was followed by the survey instructions, which were engineered to induce a specific frame of reference (Hunthausen et al., 2003). Specifically, the instructions carefully indicated that participants should think of a time when they were confronted with a customer/client situation in which their felt emotions were not congruent with the expectations for how they should express themselves in the situation. They were instructed to be cognizant of such a situation when responding to the survey questions. This is an important step, as this study is only seeking to investigate situations in which the expression of NFE is not a viable method for meeting display rules. These instructions were presented in the survey as "For each statement below, think of situations where it would be deemed inappropriate for you to express your true feelings to customers or clients.

Measures

Emotional Labor

Surface acting was measured with a scale developed by Diefendorff et al. (2005). Diefendorff et al. (2005) adapted these items from Grandey (2003) and Kruml and Geddes (2000). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with seven items by responding on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Sample surface-acting items include "I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way," and "I fake a good mood when interacting with customers." In the present study, the internal-consistency reliability for surface acting for was α = .90, and Diefendorff et al. (2005) reported an internal-consistency reliability of α =.91. Deep acting was measured with a scale developed by Diefendorff et al. (2005). Diefendorff et al. (2005) adapted these items from Grandey (2003) and Kruml and Geddes (2000). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with four items by responding on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Sample deep-acting 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." In the present study, the internal-consistency reliability for deep acting for was α = .89, and Diefendorff et al. (2005) reported an internal-consistency reliability of α =.85. Further, Diefendorff et al. (2005) assessed the measurement properties of the surface and deep acting scales and reported good model fit (χ^2 (73, N = 297) = 133.46, p < .05; RMSEA =.066; SRMR =.063; TLI = .97; CFI = .98). These scales can be found in Appendix B.

Display Rules

Display rules were measured with a scale developed by Diefendorff et al. (2005). Diefendorff et al. (2005) adapted these items from Grandey (2003), Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), and Schaubroeck and Jones (2000). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with seven items by responding on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Sample display rule 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." In the present study, the internal-consistency reliability for the display rule scale was α = .80, and Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) reported an internal-consistency reliability of α =.77. Further, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) assessed the measurement properties of a model including display rules and reported good fit ($\chi 2$ (230, N = 318) = 479.09, $p < .05$; RMSEA =.066; SRMR =.063; TLI = .97; CFI = .98) The scale can be found in Appendix B.

Affective Organizational Commitment

Affective Organizational Commitment (AC) was measured with a scale developed by Meyer et al. (1993). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with six items by responding on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Sample AC items include "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own," and "I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization." In the present study, the internal consistency reliability for the AC scale was α = .92, and Meyer et al. (1993) reported an internal-consistency reliability of α =.82. Further, Meyer et al. (1993) assessed the measurement properties of a model containing affective commitment

and reported good fit ($\chi 2$ (132, N = 530) = 475.72, $p < .05$; RNI = .979; PNFI = .845). The scale can be found in Appendix B.

Demographics

Researchers recommend collecting information on variables such age, race, gender, and education for two related reasons (Salkind, 2010). First, gathering information on these variables allows a researcher to assess the extent to which a research sample is representative of the population. And second, collecting demographic information allows researchers to understand for whom research may generalize. Therefore, in the present study, the following demographic information was collected: age, race, gender, tenure, and occupation. This information was requested after participants completed the survey.

Analytic Strategy

All data analyses were conducted in R. Data analysis began with data cleaning. Researchers indicate that data imputation is the optimal method for addressing missing cases (Beals & Nye, 2017). Other methods for dealing with missing data, such as pairwise (removing the respondent from the scale with missing data) or casewise (deleting the respondent entirely) deletion may lead to reduced power (Beals & Nye, 2017). Therefore, missing cases were addressed with mean imputation, replacing the missing cases using the respondent's mean for that variable. However, as the number of mean imputed values on a scale increases (i.e., number of missing values increases), so does the bias in parameter estimates (Jamshidian & Bentler, 1999). For this reason, I originally planned to use case-wise deletion if respondents missed more than one item on

a scale. A total of six missing cases were present. Since no respondent missed more than one item on a single subscale, missing values were imputed with the respondent's mean on the corresponding scale.

After missing values were addressed, the data was analyzed for non-compliant responses. While researchers have made a case that online crowdsourcing platforms provide samples of equal quality to traditional convenience samples (Landers & Behrend, 2015), such as university undergraduates, the data are still subject to non-compliant responding (Fleischer et al., 2015). This is problematic for a variety of reasons, most relevant that non-compliant responses can alter the dimensionality of measurement scales (Meade & Craig, 2012). Following Meade and Craig's (2012) recommendations for identifying non-complaint responses, I used the careless package in R (Yentes & Wilhelm, 2021) to compute the following non-compliant-response-detecting indices: outlier analysis (i.e., Mahalanobis Distance), within-person item correlations (i.e., Psychometric Synonyms), and response patterns (i.e., maximum LongString). The cutoff for rejection on Mahalanobis Distance was three standard deviations from the mean. The maximum number of the exact same response that was tolerated was 12 (maximum LongString). Regarding psychometric synonyms, Meade and Craig (2012) used the items with correlations exceeding .6 to be used as reference items and used within-person correlations below .03 on these items as the cutoff for rejection (Matherly, 2019). Therefore, respondents with within-person correlations on the reference items below .03 were flagged as non-compliant and removed from the study.

Using these metrics, 81 of the 401 participants, approximately 20%, were removed from the study. The reader should note that researchers have observed similar

non-compliant response rates on other online survey platforms (Barends & de Vries, 2019). Of these 81 removed participants, 31 participants were flagged as outliers, 47 were flagged by psychometric synonyms, and three respondents failed two of the four attention-check statements. 10 of these 81 removed participants failed the inclusion criteria for both Mahalanobis Distance and psychometric synonyms.

To test my hypotheses, I utilized manifest path analysis (Edwards & Lambert, 2007), also referred to as structural equation modeling with observed variables (Bollen, 1989). Manifest path analysis is a form of structural equation modeling that solely relies on manifest (i.e., observed) variables and does not estimate latent variables. While researchers note that basic regression methods (e.g., manifest path analysis) are less optimal at detecting interaction effects than latent variable modeling, there is no clear consensus on how to model these interactions or how to interpret them (Cortina et al., 2021). In a recent review, Cortina et al. (2021) assessed eight different methods for modeling interactions in latent variable models and recommended running each method to assess convergence of results. However, this underscores the lack of consensus and as such the present paper opted for more tried-and-true methods.

Manifest path analysis can simultaneously estimate the regression coefficients between several predictors and several outcome variables, and it can assess the direct effect of a predictor on several outcome variables at various levels of a moderator variable. That is, this procedure can be used to estimate interaction effects. Thus, this procedure is well suited for the present study. Importantly, the maximum likelihood (ML) estimator, the typical parameter-estimation method for path analysis, assumes multivariate normality, and this assumption is violated when forming the interaction

variable (Cortina et al., 2021). While researchers note that ML is generally robust to violations of non-normality (Benson & Fleishman, 1994; Hoogland & Boomsma, 1998), I opted to use the diagonally weighted least squares method (DWLS) as it makes no assumptions about normality (Cortina et al., 2021). The procedure was carried out in R with the Laavan package (Rosseel, 2012).

Concerning the statistical assumptions of path analysis, Kline (2016) discusses two broad types of assumptions: the structural assumption and several data-related assumptions. The structural assumption refers to the path model being correctly specified. If the model is incorrectly specified, all parameter estimates will be biased (Kline, 2016). The data-related assumptions are solely determined by the parameter-estimation method (Kline, 2016). Because the DWLS method is not predicated on normal theory, it does not require the data to be normally distributed (Cortina et al., 2021). Additionally, as the DWLS method is very similar to the weighted least squares (WLS) method (Kline, 2016), it does not require the assumption of homogeneity of error variance (Mak, 1992). Further, researchers note that low sample sizes will also bias parameter estimates, and several simulation studies provide evidence that the DWLS method works well with a sample size of at least 300 (Flora & Curran, 2004; Moshagen & Musch, 2014).

Prior to conducting the path analysis, a consideration of statistical power was carried out. Statistical power analysis is typically concerned with determining the sample size required to have an 80% chance of detecting an effect, if one is present in one's data (Cohen, 1988; Kyriazos, 2018). Interestingly, most literature on power analysis for SEM focuses on the chi-square statistic for model fit and the likelihood-ratio test for differences between models (Kline, 2016). Regarding the chi-square statistic, it has been

found to be a rather unreliable measure of model fit, which will be discussed soon, typically being statistically significant when sample size exceeds 200 and when data is non normal (Hu & Bentler, 1998; Ullman & Bentler, 2003). For this reason, a consideration of power was not carried out for the chi-square statistic.

The second area to which power analysis can be applied is in determining if one has the power to detect if estimated parameters depart significantly from zero. Unfortunately, the present author found no literature discussing power analysis for SEM in this context. However, because a z-test is used to detect if parameter estimates are significantly different from zero (Ullman & Bentler, 2003), G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) indicated that a sample size of 270 would be needed to detect the smallest estimated correlation present in the data (i.e., r = .15; between display rules and deep acting; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Other heuristic-based estimates of sample size needs in SEM typically recommend 10 people per indicator (Kyriazos, 2018). Therefore, with 24 indicators, this heuristic requires that I have 240 participants in my study. Further, in testing a path model structurally similar to the present study, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) had 318 participants. However, because they used a latent variable approach with a model containing several additional variables, their study required a larger sample size. In summary, considering Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005), the results of the power analysis, and the sample size requirements for DWLS, I estimated a minimum sample size of 300.

To assess the degree to which my model fits the data, the chi-square statistic and several fit indices were referenced. As I discussed earlier, the chi-square statistic is an unreliable measure of fit, typically producing statistical significance when sample sizes

exceed 200 (Ullman & Bentler, 2003). For this reason, Kline (2016) recommends accompanying the chi-square test with a diverse set of fit indices. Therefore, following the recommendations from Kline (2016), I used the following: (1) the chi-square test of fit, (2) root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990), the Bentler Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). RMSEA and SRMR are both absolute fit indices, meaning they assess the extent to which a model deviates from a perfectly fitting model (Hu & Bentler, 1998). CFI, in contrast, is an incremental fit index, and it compares the fit of one's model to the fit of a null model (i.e., the worst fitting model). That is, CFI assesses the improvement that results from using one's model, rather than using the null model. Cutoff values that indicate acceptable model fit are as follows: a RMSEA of .05 or lower indicates good fit; a SRMR of .08 or lower indicates good fit; and a CFI of .95 or higher indicates good fit. Given the controversies with model respecification (Kline, 2016), I will not engage in model modification.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Table 1 provides the descriptive information, reliabilities, and correlation matrix for the research variables. Before proceeding to the path analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out to investigate the structure of the measures in this study. The CFA was carried out in R using the Lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012), and fit assessments provide a mixed view of the fit of the measurement model: $\chi^2(246, N = 320) = 756.45$, $p < .05$; RMSEA = .08. SRMR = .07, CFI = .88. SRMR indicates a good fit. However, RMSEA indicates mediocre fit. Further, CFI was .88, indicating poor fit. Taken together, these results indicate that I cannot unequivocally conclude a good or poor fitting model. Modification indices indicated that model fit would be substantially improved by allowing the error terms for items within scales, but not between scales, to covary. Importantly, the modification indices did not indicate that cross-loadings between items and other latent variables would improve model fit, suggesting that the dimensionality of the measurement model corresponds to referenced literature. At any rate, the CFA was carried out only to assess the performance of measurements and the results were not used as part of the main analysis. That is, modifications to the measurement model are not useful or applicable as I analyzed hypotheses with a manifest path analysis. I will now discuss the results of the path analysis.

Before carrying out the path analysis, the moderator (i.e., affective commitment) and predictor (i.e., display rules) were mean-centered and then the product of the two variables was formed. The formation of a product variable (i.e., the product of predictor and moderator) is a common methodological step in assessing moderation using manifest methods, and this variable represents the interaction between predictor and moderator (Hayes, 2018; Kline, 2016). Further, researchers note that while mean-centering does reduce the correlations between the predictor, moderator, and product variable, it does not resolve issues with multicollinearity (Hayes, 2018; Kline, 2016). However, it does aid in the interpretation of the moderation (Hayes, 2018; Kline, 2016).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alphas, and Bivariate Correlations Matrix

Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*	α	1	2	3	4
1. Surface Acting	320	3.85	0.80	.90	-	-.22*	-.24*	.33*
2. Deep Acting	320	3.28	0.97	.89		-	.28*	.03
3. Affective Commitment	320	3.98	1.61	.92			-	-.08
4. Display Rules	320	4.26	0.56	.80				-

Note: ** denotes significance at p <.05*

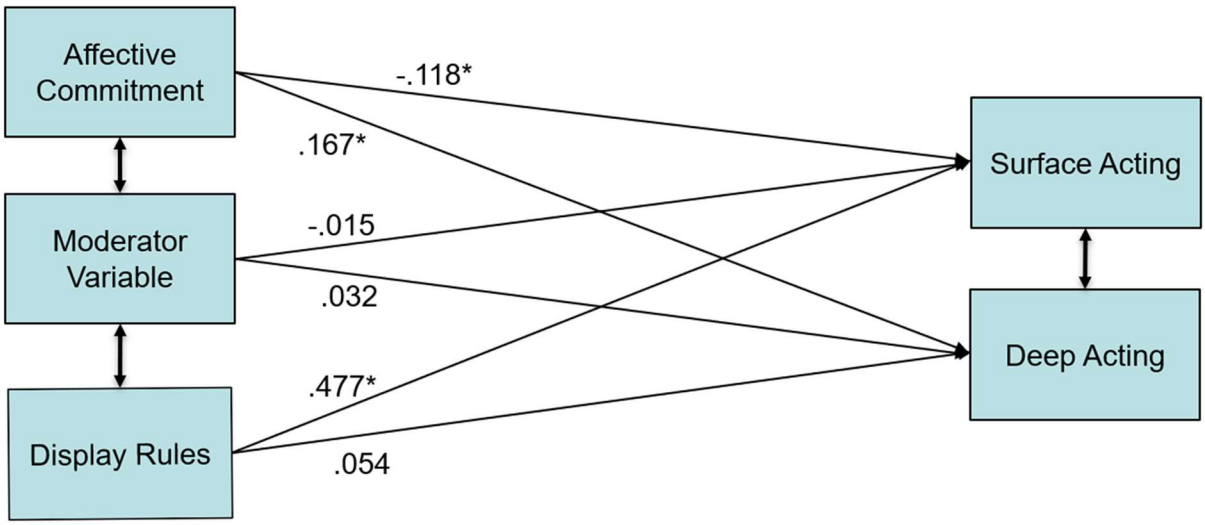
Main Analysis

Regarding the steps in running the path analysis, Raykov and Marcoulides (2006) suggest first fitting a just-identified or saturated model. With a saturated model, all available parameters are estimated, and, with zero degrees of freedom, the chi-square fit statistic and fit indices will indicate perfect model fit (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006).

Saturated models, however, always perfectly reproduce the observed covariance matrix (i.e., perfectly fit the data) and as such are unfalsifiable and not particularly useful. However, Raykov and Marcoulides (2006) indicate that the saturated model serves as a baseline model to which more restricted models (i.e., models with positive degrees of freedom) can be compared. Restricted models are models in which some parameters are not estimated and, as a result, they are less able to emulate the observed data (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006). This allows one to assess the extent to which the model fits the data. Therefore, after fitting a saturated model, these researchers recommend fitting more restricted models then comparing these models to the saturated model. Importantly, however, restrictions must be guided by empirical or theoretical reasoning (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006; Streiner, 2005).

Pertaining to the path analysis, first a saturated model was fit to the data. This model included the following parameter estimates: (1) covariances between the exogenous variables, (2) covariances between endogenous variables, (3) variances for exogenous variables, (4) disturbances for endogenous variables, and (5) path coefficients between exogenous and endogenous variables. As was expected, this model fit the data perfectly: χ^2 (0, N = 320) = 0, RMSEA = .0. SRMR = .0, CFI = 1.0. Next, a more restricted model was produced by removing the estimate of the covariance between affective commitment and display rules. This restriction was made because there is no theory indicating a relationship between an individual's affective commitment and the prevalence of display rules. The chi-square test of difference between the restricted model and the saturated model indicated that the two models were statistically indistinguishable: $\Delta\chi^2$ (1, N = 320) = .158, p > .05. Raykov and Marcoulides (2006)

indicate that this is evidence that the restriction placed on the model is acceptable. Importantly, however, because the restricted model has positive degrees of freedom, fit assessments can be referenced, and they indicate the model fits the data well: χ^2 (1, N = 320) = .158, p > .05, RMSEA = .05. SRMR = .02, CFI = .98. Because the restricted model fit the data well and no other restrictions were plausible, it was retained as the model to reference for confirmation or disconfirmation of hypotheses. Figure 1 contains a visual depiction of this model.



Note: *p < .01; double headed arrows indicate covariance parameter

Figure 1: Final Path Model

An examination of the parameter estimates revealed support for hypothesis 1a, with surface acting being positively predicted by display rules (β = .477, p < .05). Hypothesis 1b, however, was not supported, as deep acting was not significantly positively predicted by display rules (β = .054, p > .05). Regarding the moderation hypotheses, hypothesis 2a was not supported, as the path coefficient between the product variable and deep acting was not significant (β = .032, p > .05). Further, hypothesis 2b

was not supported, as the path coefficient between the product variable and surface acting was not significant (β = .015, $p > .05$). The path coefficients, standard errors, z-values, and p-values can be found in Table 2 and 3.

Table 2

Path Coefficients of Display Rules, Affective Commitment, and Moderator Variable on Surface Acting

Variable	β	*SE*	*z*	*p*	95% CI
Display Rules	.477	.092	5.174	.000	[.296, .658]
Affective Commitment	-.118	.030	-3.979	.000	[-.060, -.118]
Display Rules*Affective Commitment	-.015	.068	0.214	.831	[-.119, .148]

Note: CI = Confidence Interval

Table 3

Path Coefficients of Display Rules, Affective Commitment, and Moderator Variable on Deep Acting

Variable	B	*SE*	*z*	*p*	95% CI
Display Rules	.054	.096	0.561	.575	[-.134, .242]
Affective Commitment	.167	.036	4.647	.000	[.096, .237]
Display Rules*Affective Commitment	.032	.072	0.448	.654	[-.109, .174]

Note: CI = Confidence Interval

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Principal Findings

People use their emotions to perform work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Grandey, 2000), and the emotional-labor literature has organized the methods of emotion work into surface and deep acting (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Surface acting entails displaying emotions that are dissimilar to one's affect. Deep acting, in contrast, refers to modifying one's affect to produce an emotional display that is incongruent with one's feelings. Importantly, surface and deep acting are associated with different consequences, with surface acting possessing detrimental relationships with many health outcomes (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Dissimilarly, research on deep acting paints a more optimistic picture, as it is demonstrated to possess no relationships with health outcomes and positive relationships with variables such as customer-service performance and self-efficacy (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). This disparity in outcomes between the acting strategies led to the present study; I aimed to investigate what might lead employees to choose deep acting over surface acting, and I hypothesized that affective commitment would make a difference.

Affective commitment generally describes one's reason for sticking with a course of action (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Applied to the organizational foci, it refers to an individual staying with their organization due to a sense

of belonging and identification with the ideals and values of the company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This sense of belonging and identification, I hypothesized, might lead employees with high affective commitment to deep act rather than surface act, as they may possess motivation that is conducive to above-and-beyond, extra-role behaviors such as deep acting.

The results of the present study, however, provide little support for my hypotheses. First and foremost, I hypothesized that display rules, job demands that elicit emotional expressions (Grandey, 2000), would possess positive relationships with both deep (i.e., hypothesis 1a) and surface acting (i.e., hypothesis 1b). These hypotheses were drawn from the emotional-labor literature (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Grandey, 2000). However, the present study only partially replicated these relationships. Specifically, display rules positively related to surface acting (i.e., hypothesis 1b was supported) but possessed no significant relationship to deep acting (i.e., hypothesis 1a was not supported). Second, I hypothesized that affective commitment would moderate the relationships between display rules and deep (i.e., hypothesis 2a) and surface acting (i.e., hypothesis 2b). Specifically, I reasoned that, as affective commitment increases, the relationship between display rules and surface acting would decrease and become negative, while the relationship between display rules and deep acting would increase in strength. However, the present study produced no evidence to support these assertions. I will now provide a more involved interpretation of these results.

The finding that display rules did not significantly relate to deep acting (i.e., hypothesis 1a), but did significantly related to surface acting (i.e., hypothesis 1b), was surprising given the predominant theorizing from emotional-labor researchers and

existing empirical evidence (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Goldberg & Grandey, 2007; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Grandey, 2000; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Hochschild, 2012). Specifically, the dominant understanding in the field of emotional labor is that display rules are demands of certain jobs and people meet these demands with both surface and deep acting (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). The null finding for hypothesis 1a may potentially be explained by two reasons, and I will discuss them in turn.

First, the procedure employed in the current study may have nullified a relationship between display rules and deep acting. Namely, participants were instructed to imagine situations in which it would be inappropriate to express their true feelings when responding to the emotional-labor scale. Participants may have interpreted this as obviating the use of deep acting, as this technique conceptually requires more effort and time to enact (Grandey, 2000). Thus, in moments where it is inappropriate to express true feelings, people may rely on surface acting. When there is a less immediate, pressing need to satisfy display rules, people may deep act. However, there is no available research to verify this proposition. Relatedly, researchers conceptualize deep acting as a strategy used before an emotion has developed, referred to as an antecedent-focused strategy (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998; Hülsheger et al., 2015). Therefore, when we instructed participants to think of situations where their feelings were not appropriate for the moment, we indicated situations where they already experienced affect, potentially obviating the use of deep acting.

The second reason for the null finding in hypothesis 1a concerns the way display rules were measured. Emotional-labor researchers have asserted that the literature

overwhelmingly relies on perceptions to measure display rules, where job-analysis techniques may be much better suited (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). This is an issue because people may fail to accurately recall the prevalence of display rules; the display rule scale that was used in the present study may have failed to adequately capture this job requirement, and as such we were unable to fully assess the extent to which display rules covary with deep acting. Relatedly, the display-rule scale may be measuring aspects of surface acting. For example, the display-rule item "I am expected to suppress my bad moods or negative reactions to customers" bears resemblance to the surface-acting item of "I fake a good mood when interacting with customers." Of course, this is speculative, and, importantly, the CFA did not indicate that cross-loadings between display rules and surface acting would substantially improve model fit, suggesting that the display-rule scale is not measuring surface acting. I will now provide commentary on the results for hypothesis 1b.

As I indicated above, the finding that display rules were positively related to surface acting was not surprising. The emotional-labor literature attests that surface acting is used in response to display rules, and the present study supports this assertion. Further, the present study sought to empirically establish this relationship because my overall objective is to investigate variables that may intervene in the emotional-labor process. To this end, hypothesis 2a and 2b were proposed, and I will now discuss the results as they relate to these hypotheses.

As I discussed above, hypothesis 2a and 2b proposed that affective commitment would moderate the relationship between display rules and the emotional-labor strategies such that, as affective commitment increased, people would choose deep acting over

surface acting in response to display rules. My rationale for this proposition is that, as affective commitment increases, the motivation to comply with external demands (i.e., display rules) changes. This change in motivation results in individuals choosing deep acting over surface acting, as deep acting is theoretically a behavior that represents going-the-extra-mile behavior, while surface acting represents the bare minimum (Grandey, 2000). However, neither of these hypotheses were supported, and I will discuss three reasons why I think these hypotheses were not supported.

The first reason these hypotheses were not supported may be because the organizational focus of commitment was incorrect. That is, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) discuss that commitment can refer to many different foci, including commitment to one's organization, supervisor, work team, or discrete tasks. In the present study, it was hypothesized that one's identification with the values and ideals of their organization (i.e., affective organizational commitment) would lead them to behave differently in response to display rules, compared to those that did not possess affective commitment. It may have been more appropriate to postulate, however, that one's affective commitment to display rules, rather than the organization, would lead them to deep act rather than surface act. In a related study, Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) found evidence that commitment to display rules increased the strength of the positive relationship between display rules and both emotional-labor strategies. However, these researchers did not measure affective commitment, and it is only this form of commitment that is theorized to impact the display-rule, emotional-labor relationship. Alternatively, it may have been more appropriate to measure affective commitment toward one's supervisor, as research

on leader-follower relationships provides convincing evidence that one's connection with their supervisor has serious implications for their behavior (Martin et al., 2016).

I will now discuss the second potential reason for these findings. It was proposed earlier in the study that job resources would lead to need satisfaction and affective commitment, and that affective commitment reflects the motivational process that arise from the provision of resources. However, job engagement, defined as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional) and active full performance" (Kahn, 1990, p. 700), is also proposed as a motivational construct that arises from the provision of job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Meyer, 2014). Given that engagement describes a momentary, state experience, it may have been the appropriate moderator to use in the current study, as the emotional-labor-choice process conceptually appears to unfold on a moment-to-moment basis. Commitment, as opposed to engagement, is not conceptualized as a state or moment-to-moment experience (Meyer et al., 2004). Therefore, when faced with the need to satisfy a display rule, an employee experiencing engagement may choose to deep act, rather than surface act. Unfortunately, there is no literature on this topic.

The third reason I propose for the null findings with hypothesis 2a and 2b concerns the present study's research design. Being cross-sectional survey research, I was unable to analyze the emotional-labor-choice process in real time. As I mentioned in the above section, the process of choosing between surface and deep acting occurs on a moment-to-moment basis as people progress through their workday. As such, this slice-of-time study cannot properly assess the thought processes of people as they respond to

display rules. A quasi-experimental design in which groups composed of varying affective commitment are induced to respond to a display rule may provide a substantially better test of the current studies hypotheses.

Before I transition to review practical applications, I will discuss my treatment of outliers. Aguinis et al. (2013) have urged researchers to nuance their treatment of outliers by not immediately classifying them as error. These researchers draw the distinction between interesting, or non-error, and error outliers, where interesting outliers may provide substantive information. In fact, they reference several situations in which the presence of interesting outliers substantially altered the conclusion of research. Therefore, I sought to understand the extent to which interesting outliers may have altered the present study's conclusions. To this end, I created an alternative inclusion criterion that omitted outlier respondents only if they failed the criteria for both Mahalanobis distance and psychometric synonyms. This alternative criterion classified outliers that failed both tests as error, not interesting, outliers and resulted in 10, rather than 31, outliers being omitted from the present research. The inclusion of these outlier cases did not, however, alter any conclusion drawn from the present research, and the only notable difference was a change in RMSEA for the final path model, from .056 to .064. Having discussed my interpretation of this study's results, I will now transition to describe practical applications, limitations, and future directions of this research.

Practical Applications

Pertaining to the practical applications of the present research, organizational consultants, Industrial-Organizational practitioners, and business leaders should be aware of the mounting evidence that display rules relate positively to surface acting and surface

acting relates positively to detrimental health outcomes. This information should inform organizational decisions relating to display rules. For example, this information should be considered if an organization is deciding to implement a workplace policy that may increase expectations for emotional expressions.

This information should also lead people to reconsider implementing display rules in jobs. In fact, several emotional-labor researchers openly call for the "eradication" of display rules (Grandey et al., 2015). These researchers assert that display rules engender poor health and limit the ability of employees to flourish in their positions (Grandey et al., 2015). Given what we have reviewed about the consequences of surface acting, these assertions appear to be sensible. However, the removal of display rules does not appear to be a simple task. Researchers note that display rules arise from top-down processes (e.g., cultural expectations, workplace mandates) and bottom-up processes (e.g., emergent work-group norms), and therefore organizations cannot simply make display rules go away (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Further, if display rules are part of an organization's product, as reported on in the seminal research on emotional labor (Hochschild, 2012), then it is unlikely that organizations will want to remove them. At any rate, organizations should attempt to limit the implementation of emotion-expression requirements.

Limitations

This research is not without limitations, and I would like to discuss four such limitations: (1) the design of the research, (2) the statistical analysis, (3) the construct of emotional labor, and (4) differences between the mean of surface acting reported in the present study and the means observed elsewhere. I will elaborate on these

in turn. First, as I briefly mentioned above, the design of the present research prevents any causal conclusions. While the results indicate a relationship between display rules and surface acting, we cannot conclude that display rules lead to surface acting or that display rules cause people to surface act. It is equally plausible, based upon the results of this study, that surface acting leads people to perceive display rules. Admittedly the tone of this article leaned toward a causal link between display rules and surface acting, and there is experimental evidence for such a conclusion (e.g., Goldberg & Grandey, 2007), but the audience should note that the results of the present study prevent such conclusions.

The second limitation of this research concerns statistical analysis. Manifest path analysis, like regression, assumes that variables are measured without error. This is, of course, a problematic assumption because variables are certainly measured with error, and the consequence of this measurement error is biased parameter estimates (Cortina et al., 2021). To make matters worse, researchers have noted that the consequences of measurement error are magnified in the product of two measures (Bohrnstedt & Marwell, 1978; Cortina et al., 2021). Specifically, Bohrnstedt and Marwell (1978) have noted that the reliability of a product variable is smaller than the reliability of either of its parent variables. These decrements in measurement quality consequently decrease statistical power (Aguinis & Gottfredson, 2010). Therefore, this issue may have prevented the current research from accurately estimating and assessing the parameters in the specified model.

The third limitation of this research pertains to the construct of emotional labor, specifically with how deep acting is conceptualized and measured. Grandey (2000)

consolidated the existing literature on emotional labor, reinforcing the now dominant classification of deep and surface acting. In this article, she referenced a popular model of affect regulation from Gross (1998), indicating the stark similarities between the emotional-labor strategies and the strategies in Gross's (1998) process model of affect regulation. Importantly, deep acting was related to two distinct forms of affect regulation, cognitive reappraisal and attentional deployment, while surface acting neatly mapped onto a single type of affect regulation, suppression (Grandey, 2000). This is an issue because deep acting is not, conceptually, a unidimensional construct, yet it is measured as such in the present study and elsewhere (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Gabriel et al., 2015). Surface acting, in contrast, conceptually matches suppression (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998). Therefore, deep acting, as conceptualized as a distinct form of emotional labor, requires theoretical refinement. If it is in fact composed of two different processes, attentional deployment and cognitive reappraisal, then it needs to be reformulated along those lines and new measures need to be developed. In summary, this is a limitation for the present research because my measure of deep acting may have been deficient and unable to capture a potential real-world phenomenon.

Finally, the observed mean of surface acting in the present study was 3.9, differing considerably from a mean of 2.7 reported by Diefendorff et al. (2005) and of 2.1 reported by Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005). This potentially indicates range restriction on surface acting, which may have distorted the assessment of my hypotheses. Further, this is evidence that the sample in this study is not representative of the population of those who labor with their emotions, limiting the generalizability of the findings in the present research.

Future Directions

The theoretical concepts and empirical results of the present research leads to five recommended future directions: (1) replicate the present research, (2) investigate the emotional-labor-choice process, (3) investigate the role of job engagement, (4) investigate the different commitment foci, and (5) investigate ability to engage in surface and deep acting. I will discuss these in turn. First, given the limitations of the statistical method employed in the current study, it is recommended that future research replicate the present study but analyze data using a latent SEM approach. As discussed in Cortina et al. (2021), there is no accepted best method for modeling interactions in latent-variable models, but future research could, as recommended by these researchers, run each latent method and examine the results for convergence.

The second recommendation for future research is for a qualitative approach to investigating the emotional-labor-choice process. Specifically, think-aloud protocols, diary research, and interviews could be used to gain greater insight into what leads people to choose between the emotional-labor strategies. Further, these data could be used to build upon the existing theory of emotional labor. The third recommended future direction is to investigate the role of engagement in the emotional-labor process. As mentioned above, it is possible that engagement, not affective organizational commitment, informs people's choice of surface or deep acting. With such research, it is also recommended to take a within-person research approach and employ experience-sampling or diary-based approaches (see Xanthopoulou et al., 2009 for an example). This can give greater insight in the moments when people decide to either surface or deep act, compared to the cross-sectional method employed in the present study.

The fourth recommendation is to investigate different foci of affective commitment. As mentioned earlier, affective organizational commitment was chosen as the moderator variable, but it may be more appropriate to investigate commitment to display rules. Conceptually, affective commitment to display rules could lead people to choose deep acting over surface acting, irrespective of their commitment to their organization, because the satisfaction of display rules aligns with important values.

The final recommendation is to investigate the ability to engage in deep and surface acting. While the concept of ability to labor with one's emotions is not present in the existing emotional-labor literature, research elsewhere, notably the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), has posited that one's ability to behave in a particular manner is a vital component that, along with motivation to behave, determines the manifestation of behavior. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that an employee may be motivated to deep act but not possess the ability to do so, resulting in a lack of this behavior.

Conclusion

Research suggests that surface acting is associated with poor health outcomes. This motivated the current author to investigate variables that might lead people to deep act, an alternative to surface acting that bears no relationship with health outcomes. To this end, affective organizational commitment was hypothesized to moderate the relationship between display rules and the acting strategies, such that, as commitment increased, individuals would deep act rather than surface act. However, the present research did not provide evidence for the moderating effect of affective commitment. Further, I did not find a relationship between display rules and deep acting, an interesting finding given the existing empirical support for this relationship. The current study did

find a relationship between display rules and surface acting. This was a less continuous finding given, again, existing empirical research. Future researchers are encouraged to reflect upon the content of this document and pursue avenues that will help strengthen our understanding of emotional labor.

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APPENDIX A

WORK LISTING

This survey is open to full- and part-time employees whose job is to interact with customers in either a face-to-face, telephone, and/or virtual setting.

In the survey, you will be asked about the degree to which your workplace mandates the type of emotions that are acceptable to display. Additionally, you will be asked how you feel about your organization, and the survey will ask you to indicate how you go about managing your emotions while on the job. Lastly, the survey will request demographic information.

If you accept this work, but decline the consent form in the survey, you will NOT be compensated.

Additionally, if you carelessly respond to the survey, statistical analysis will flag your response as non-compliant and you will NOT be compensated.

Finally, if you do not submit the survey, you will NOT be compensated.

Below you will find the informed consent form for this research investigation. Do NOT accept this work if you do NOT agree to the below form.

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before signing the statement below. You must be of legal age or must be co-signed by parent or guardian to participate in this study.

TITLE OF PROJECT: Does affective organizational commitment moderate the relationship between expression requirements and emotion regulation?

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: To investigate how individuals with commitment to their organization manage their emotions in response to job demands

SUBJECTS: Approximately 300 full- or part-time working adults that work in customer- or client-facing positons. These occupations include, but are not limited to, restaurant and hospitality service, sales, healthcare, childcare, clerical work.

PROCEDURE: This study will require you to answer questions about how you feel at work, how you feel about your organization, and how you manage your emotions around customers and clients. Additionally, demographic information, such as your race and age, will be collected.

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: U.S. Minimum wage for 10 minutes of time, $1.20 per participant

RISKS, DISCOMFORTS, ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: This study involves no treatment or physical contact. All information collected from the survey will be held strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected. No one will be allowed access to the survey other than the researchers

The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should you be injured as a result of participating in this research.

The following disclosure applies to all participants using online survey tools: This server may collect information and your IP address indirectly and automatically via "cookies".

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal investigators listed below may be reached to
answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Steven Toaddy **– toaddy@latech.edu**
CO-INVESTIGATOR: Matthew Vosburg **– mjv007@latech.edu**

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Richard Kordal, Director, Office of Intellectual Property & Commercialization

Ph: (318) 257-2484, Email: rkordal@latech.edu

APPENDIX B

MEASURES

Emotional-Labor Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005)

5-point Likert scale, (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)

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.

5-point Likert scale, (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)

Deep Acting

8. I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to customers.
9. I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display toward others.
10. I work hard to feel the emotions that I need to show to customers.
11. I work at developing the feelings inside of me that I need to show to customers.

Display Rules Scale (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005 Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000)

5-point Likert scale, (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)

Positive Display Rules Perceptions

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. **R**

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.

5-point Likert scale, (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)

Negative Display Rule Perceptions

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.

Organizational Commitment Scale (Meyer et al., 1993)

7-point Likert scale (1 "strongly disagree" and 7 "strongly agree")

Affective Commitment

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.

2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.

3. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization. **R**

4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization. **R**

5. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization. **R**

6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

Demographic Questions

1. Please indicate your gender.

   Response option (RO): (1) Male, (2) Female, (3) Other: Please Specify, (4) Decline to Identify

2. Please indicate your age in years.

   RO: 18 - 120

3. Please indicate your race.

   RO: (1) White, (2) Black, (3) Native American or Native Alaskan, (4) Asian, (5) Native Hawaiian, (6) Pacfic Islander, (7) Biracial or Multracial, (8) Decline to identify

4. Please indicate the number of years you have spent with your current organization.

   RO: (1) Less than one year, (2) Between one and two years, (3) Between two and five years, (4) Between five and ten years, (5) Between ten and twenty years, (6) More than twenty years

5. Please specify your occupation.

   RO: (1) Restaurant/Bar/Hospitality, (2) Healthcare, (3) Sales, (4) Clerical Work, (5) Entertainment, (6) Other: Please Specify

APPENDIX C

HUMAN USE APPROVAL

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS

EXEMPTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Matthew Vosburg and Dr. Steven Toaddy

FROM: Dr. Richard Kordal, Director of Intellectual Properties
rkordal@latech.edu

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: May 21, 2021

TITLE: "Emotional Labor: An Affective-Commitment Perspective"

NUMBER: HUC 21-102

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt from full review under the following exemption category(s): 46.104(a)(d)(1)(2)(i)(ii).

(a) Unless otherwise required by law or by department or agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories in paragraph (d) of this section are exempt from the requirements of this policy, except that such activities must comply with the requirements of this section and as specified in each category.

(d) Except as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the following categories of human subjects research are exempt from this policy:

(1) Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

(ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation.

Thank you for submitting your Human Use Proposal to Louisiana Tech's Institutional Review Board.