



The Differential Effect of Emotional Labour on Boundary Spanners

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Abstract

Purpose: The study sought to uncover the effect of emotional labour strategies (surface acting and deep acting) on job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. The study also purposed to analyse the moderating effect of organisational support (supervisory support and co-worker support) and the role of gender on emotional labour connotations. **Research design, data and methodology:** A conceptual framework was developed using extant literature which led to the examination of deep acting and surface acting, which are the two main strategies of emotional labour. The outcome variables were emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. Data was collected from front line employees of banks and was analysed using SEM-AMOS version 21. **Results:** It was revealed, in this study, that surface acting is inversely related to job satisfaction and positively related to emotional exhaustion, whereas deep acting was positively related to job satisfaction and inversely related to emotional exhaustion. The roles of gender and organisational support were also confirmed. **Conclusions:** The study therefore concluded that deep acting is the most ideal strategy of emotional labour as it leads to job satisfaction and reduced emotional exhaustion. Surface acting is a harmful emotional labour strategy.

Keywords : Organisational psychology, Services marketing, Emotional labour, Emotional exhaustion, Job satisfaction

JEL Classification Code : M31, M37, C12, C21

1. Introduction

The study investigated the differential effect of emotional labour on job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. There has been an increased pressure to enforce display rules through the suppression of genuine feelings of boundary spanners (front line employees). Front line employees are required to display the organization's mood and suppress their true feelings and emotions. Companies expect employees to display some form of sincerity when

engaging with customers. This include displaying emotions such as feelings of friendliness, warmth, calm, enthusiasm, and confidence, among others (Ye, 2016). That pestering need to display the 'face of the organisation' leads to the suppression of an employee's inner feelings. That friction led to what is known as emotional labour (Udeagha, 2012).

The justification by managers for emotional labour goes to the value between the interaction of the service provider and customers (Rugraff & Hansen, 2011). Such episodes of interactive exchange build customers' perception of quality

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service. Emotions are contagious. Thus, when a customer genuinely or emotionally, the customer is more likely to feel the same jovial mood. Once a customer is happy, Wagner, Barnes & Scott (2014) reiterate that, his perception of the service is more likely to be favourable. That concept is called emotional contagion, which refers to the generalisability of mood from the service provider to the client. Thus, many managers see the concept of emotional labour as good for business and a catalyst for service excellence.

Through the manipulation of one's inner feelings, to display the appropriate emotion in response to organisational rules or occupational norms, employees may be subjected to emotional burn-out and distress. This justifies the need for a systematic study which evaluates the impact of enforcing such emotional labour rules on employees' wellbeing. In bridging that gap, this paper offers a unique contribution by examining the moderation impact of organisational support and gender.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Emotional Labor

That strategy of exhibiting the organization's mood leads to the suppression of one's true feelings and mood. The resulting friction is a concept called emotional labour. According to Chu (2002), emotional labour can be defined as the degree of manipulation of one's inner feelings or outward behavior to display the appropriate emotion in response to organisational rules or occupational norms. Hochschild (1983) was the first to coin the term emotional labour in her study of flight attendants. Frontline employees are sometimes asked to display an emotion by the organisation which contradicts their inner self felt emotions. That leads to emotional dissonance. Hochschild (1983) argues that emotional dissonance refers to the separation of felt emotion from emotion expressed to meet external expectations, and contends that it is harmful to the physical and psychological well-being of employees.

The concept of delivering a service with an organisational face and smile gained momentum as soon as the importance of physical evidence in marketing was understood (Praveena, 2015). Boundary spanners are expected to put on the face of the organisation. That means displaying the mood that the organisation wants according to the service blueprint of the organisation. Khan (2012) suggests that it includes smiling and engaging with the customer in a friendly manner. Even when the customer is angry and hostile, boundary spanners are expected to remain calm, cheerful and above all smiling. Boundary spanners are front line employees who engage directly with customers especially walk-in customers (Wagner, Barnes & Scott,

relates with an employee who is in good mood, either 2014).

Emotional labour may be deemed extreme by the general populace. However, research in developed nations has confirmed that emotional labour leads to customer satisfaction (Akhter, 2016; Chu & Murmann, 2006; Ogut, Cagliyan & Findik, 2013). Thus, some companies justify their use of emotional labour. But a key question was asked by Mandinika (2020; 47) when he asks, "granted, organisations are nailing it on customer satisfaction, but are the employees equally satisfied with their jobs?"

Udeagha (2012) argues that companies should focus more on employee motivation not emotion suppression. His arguments were seconded by (Khan, 2012) who reckons that time has passed when the old adage was the rule of thumb... "customer is king". Rather than placing all emphasis on satisfying the customer at the expense of employees' satisfaction, Khan (2012) recommends the reverse, starting by satisfying employees, not suppressing them. The same concept was upheld by Lee, Azizi, Sidinc & Salehd (2014) who say the new emerging concept should be "an employee is the first customer". The concept borders on the theory that a happy employee is a productive employee.

2.2. Emotional Labour Strategies

According to Hochschild (1983), the pioneer of emotional labour, and other researchers (Rugraff & Hansen 2011; Khan 2012, Lazanyi, 2014; Lee et al., 2014) there is a consensus that two emotional labour strategies are: deep acting and surface acting.

2.2.1. Deep Acting

According to Chu (2002) deep acting occurs when employees change not only their physical expressions, but also their inner feelings when dealing with customers. Udeagha (2012) also contributes that deep acting occurs when employees' feelings do not fit the situation, they then use their training or past experience to wake up appropriate emotions. There is consonance between inner feelings and outward actions. Hochschild (1983) tie it up by discussing how emotions are manipulated in deep acting. According to Hochschild (1983), in deep acting emotions and feelings are changed from inside out. Deep acting can be done through imagining or recalling similar emotional experiences (Chu, 2002). It can also be done by developing genuine empathy for the customer. Several studies have confirmed that deep acting always almost lead to displays of the required emotions (Rugraff & Hansen, 2011; Khan, 2012; Hochschild, 1983).

Contrary to many researchers who suggest that deep acting naturally occurs and leads to genuine display of

emotions, Liu, Prati, Perrew, and Femis (2008) as quoted by Udeagha (2012), found out that deep acting might require a great deal of mental energy in the form of motivation, emotional intelligence, engagement, and role internalization and might therefore be even more psychologically demanding than other forms of emotional labour such as surface acting. Thus, Liu et al. (2008) disapprove the effortless regulatory ideology of deep labour.

2.2.2. Surface Acting

Surface acting is the extreme end of deep acting on a continuum of emotional labour strategies. According to Lee et al. (2014) surface acting implies temporarily suppressing or masking the felt emotions which are inappropriate for the job, and expressing the appropriate ones. It involves changing the outward appearance of an employee or service provider by simulating emotions that are not actually being felt (Huang, Chiaburu, Xin & Li, 2015). To engage themselves in surface acting, boundary spanners may put on a welcoming and friendly outside appearance like a warmly facial expression, welcoming gestures or a calm voice tone; when in actual fact they do not feel that way.

2.3. Emotional Labour Outcome

Emotional labour, either deep acting or surface acting, may lead to either emotional exhaustion or job satisfaction, depending with the way it was administered. The Interactionist Theory (Leindsey & Collano, 1996) explained emotion building and development and suggested that emotional dissonance may arise as a result of emotional labour. Similarly, the Dramaturgical Theory (Mondiqu & Hollarim, 2000) which largely borrows from Hochschild's dramaturgical perspective of emotion management suggested that employees may be satisfied with their jobs if they deep act and may be burnt out if they surface act. The Emotion Regulation Theory (Grandey, 2000) analysed emotional labour from the emotion regulation perspective and indicated that the individual well-being outcome variables of emotional labour are job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion.

2.3.1. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the feeling of contentment and gratification by an employee of his/her work (Lazanyi, 2014). It is a positive indication of a favourable working environment within the organisation. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to be motivated to do more at work (Akther, 2016). Ghalandari, Mortazavi, Abbasi and Jogh (2012) found out, in a study, that deep acting positively correlates with job satisfaction, whilst

surface acting negatively correlates with job satisfaction. The same conclusion was reached by some researchers too (Chuang et al. 2014; Mandinika, 2020; Ogut, Cagliyan & Findik, 2013).

2.3.2. Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is a core dimension of emotional burnout (Udeagha, 2012). According to Johnson (2004: 11), emotional exhaustion is "the state of depleted energy caused by excessive emotional demands made on people interacting with customers or clients and involves feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work". Akther (2016) relates emotional exhaustion by way of an example. For instance, an employee may put on a grin and happily welcomes customers regardless of the fact that she or he is feeling down thereby faking feelings that are not genuinely experienced. At the back of their mind, they are emotionally exhausted because of the pressure from their superiors. According to Balogun and Shyngle (2016) repeated episodes of such behaviour lead to inconsistent delivery and haphazard unthought-of responses by the front-line employee.

2.4. Gender

In most emotional labour studies, gender was seen as a moderating variable because males and females respond differently to stressing and emotion arousing situations (Lazanyi, 2014; Lee et al., 2014; Grandey, 2003; Perera & Arachchige, 2014). Rugraff and Hansen (2011) contend that females are naturally more sympathetic and loving than males, giving women boundary spanners a better chance to deep act than males. To put the issue into perspective, Praveena (2015) gives a mind-blowing example. He says if a child starts crying in the banking hall, women are more likely to go pick the child up and genuinely claim 'ooh what a sweet child'. The issue might however be different for men, who would be busy judging the morality of the parents who dumb their children.

2.5. Organizational Support

According to Wagner, Barnes and Scott (2014), organisational support refers to the extent to which employees perceive that their company's management cares about their well-being and fulfils their socio-emotional needs. As employees engage themselves in emotional labour, if their organisations offer them support that is more likely to lead to job satisfaction. Organisational support comes in two forms namely; Supervisory Support and Coworker Support.

Supervisory Support relates to the extent to which

supervisors offer the needed socio-psychological support to employees, Giorgi, Arcangeli, Perminiene, Lorini, Ariza-Montes, Fiz-Perez, Fabio & Mucci (2017). Employees whose supervisors are more sympathetic, sensitive and compassionate are more likely to result in job satisfaction regardless of the nature of emotional labour administered on them. Rugraff and Hansen (2011) suggest that Coworker Support relate to the extent to which fellow employees support one another to cope with emotional labour. Johnson (2004) adds that coworker support includes the extent to which coworkers are easy to talk to and offer instrumental support.

2.6. The Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The two emotional labour strategies were identified as deep acting (DA) and surface acting (SA). Two extreme outcomes on a continuum were established as job satisfaction (JS) and emotional exhaustion (EE). The relationship between emotional labour and emotional labour outcome was moderated organizational support (OS) (supervisory support and co-worker support). The conceptual framework is thus presented in Figure 1.

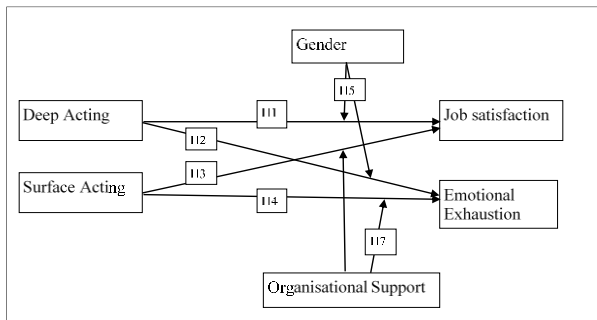


Figure 1: Emotional Labour Conceptual Model

The following were the hypotheses for the study:

H1: Deep acting has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

H2: Deep acting has a negative impact on emotional exhaustion.

H3: Surface acting has a negative impact on job satisfaction.

H4: Surface acting has a positive impact on emotional exhaustion.

H5: The mean deep acting rating for men and women boundary spanners are statistically different with job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion.

H6: Organisational support moderates the relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction.

H7: Organisational support moderates the relationship between surface acting and job emotional exhaustion.

3. Methodology

The research followed a positivism research philosophy to investigate the effect of emotional labour on boundary spanners. A cross sectional survey was carried out which focused on emotional labour activities of boundary spanners of international banks operating in Zimbabwe. Stratified random sampling was used to select international bank's frontline employee respondents proportionally.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Questionnaire design was governed by previous scales obtained from literature (Chu, 2002; Johnson, 2004; Khan, 2012; Akhter, 2016) to effectively cover constructs for deep acting, surface acting, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion and organisational support. A five-point Likert Scale was used and its continuum ran from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. The study was an email administered survey which found its richness in the readily available emailing list of all boundary spanner respondents in the sampling frame. The survey took three months and it ended in September 2020. The sampling frame consisted of bank tellers, customers, services employees, personal bankers, and bank clerks. 301 questionnaires were administered and 209 were returned and usable, giving a response rate of 69.4%.

4. Results and Discussion

Out of the 209 validated responses, 54.5% were females whilst 45.5% were males. With regards to boundary spanning job categories, bank tellers (39.9%) were the majority, followed by the customer services officers (21.6%) and the minority were bank clerks with a representation of 18.3%. Results revealed that 38.5% of boundary spanners had experience of 4-6 years. Employees' general disposition during a service encounter showed that they were generally 'Smiling' (58.2%), 'Cheerful' (38.5%), and 'Moody' (3.3%). This shows that respondents were generally friendly when dealing with customers.

All questionnaire items measuring surface acting and deep acting were subjected to principal component analysis. This was done to verify that indicators loaded correctly on their respective constructs. Before the execution of the principal component analysis, the study examined the suitability of the data for analysis. The correlation matrix had many coefficients above 0.30. Pallant (2005) indicates that there should be many occurrences of correlations of 0.30 and greater for data to be suitable for analysis.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Okin (KMO) value was 0.867 which exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.6 (Pallant, 2005). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($X^2 = 624.641$, $DF = 28$, $P = 0.000$) was statistically significant. Therefore, the KMO and

the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity both confirmed the suitability of factorability of the correlation matrix.

Through PCA, the study identified a clear distinct evidence of the availability of two factors with eigenvalues in excess of 1. Component 1 explained 50.1% of the percentage variance, whilst component 2 explained 13.6%. The acceptance of factors was also guided by the scree plot which had a clear elbow break after the second component. Guided by Pallant (2005), the study interpreted the scree plot to mean that only two factors were identifiable in the model. This was in line with the grounded theory that informed the study.

However, in line with the recommendation of Pallant (2005), items with poor loadings below 0.50 may be dropped. Also, the study assumed that the two independent variables were not correlated. Therefore, all cross loadings were to be dropped in line with the recommendation of Pallant (2005). Therefore, one item was dropped because it was poorly loading on component 2, whilst one more component was dropped because it was loading on both components, 0.578 on component 1 and 0.721 on component 2.

To further enhance the interpretation of the component

factors, the results were subjected to Varimax rotation. The rotated matrix confirmed the presence of only two components. Component 1 had four items (DA1 to DA4) which all were measuring the deep acting latent construct. Component 2 also had four items (SA1 to SA4) which were all measuring the surface acting latent variable. All variables had item loadings of 0.73 and above, exceeding the Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2005) cut-off of 0.5. The identification of the variables was easy as the exploratory factor analysis confirmed the underlying theory.

4.1. The Measurement Model

Using the AMOS package, the study examined divergent validity, convergent validity and reliability. The results showed an acceptable model fit (CMIN = 108.933, DF = 90, P = 0.085, CMIN/DF = 1.210, GFI = 0.938, AGFI = 0.907, CFI = 0.989, RMSEA = .032). The conclusion and interpretation of the model fit results was based on Kumar (2017). Therefore, the study concluded that the model was a good fit. Table 1 thus shows the study results for convergent validity and reliability.

Table 1: Convergent and Reliability Statistics

Factors	Item	Standard Loading	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Deep Acting	I make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to customers.	0.778	0.834	0.829	0.549
	I genuinely experience the emotions of our customers	0.749			
	I show an intensive effort in order to be able to feel inside of me.	0.681			
	The emotions I show to customers match what I truly feel	0.751			
Surface Acting	I display emotions that I am not actually feeling	0.739	0.819	0.828	0.546
	I hide my true feelings about a situation	0.75			
	I pretend to feel well	0.752			
	I do what the company wants me to do not what I want to do	0.714			
Job Satisfaction	I am satisfied with my job.	0.771	0.888	0.907	0.709
	I like working here.	0.895			
	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	0.86			
	My job is meaningful	0.837			
Emotional Exhaustion	I feel used up at the end of the day.	0.684	0.848	0.832	0.555
	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	0.688			
	I feel emotionally drained at work	0.827			
	I feel frustrated on my job.	0.77			

Table 1 presents statistics that prove the presents of convergent validity. All items had high factor loadings on their latent variables. The factor loadings ranged from 0.684 to 0.895. All these factor loadings were loading fairly higher than the minimum threshold of 0.5 which was stated by Hair et al. (2010). This thus offers supporting evidence that indicators were converging well on their latent factors.

The Cronbach Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.819 to 0.888, whilst the range for the Composite Reliability was 0.828 to 0.907. Both the Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability results were in excess of 0.7 the minimum threshold for non-exploratory studies (Hair et al., 2010;

Kumar, 2017). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs were 0.546 and above. According to Kumar (2017), the acceptable AVE is 0.50, which therefore places the study within the acceptable region.

4.2. Discriminant Validity

Table 2 presents the discriminant validity statistics calculated as the square root of the average variance extracted.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity Statistics

	Deep Acting	Surface Acting	Job Satisfaction	Emotional Exhaustion
Deep Acting	0.740616			
Surface Acting	-0.134	0.738905		
Job Satisfaction	0.639	-0.532	0.841967	
Emotional Exhaustion	-0.604	0.708	-190	0.744652

Results in table 2 present evidence of discriminant validity. The diagonal (bolded) results in the table are the the square root of the AVE. These values are higher than the correlations between all other factors of the study. According to Byrne (2004), if the the square root of the AVE is higher than related correlations, there is evidence of discriminant validity. Therefore, using Byrne (2004), we conclude that all variables were uniquely distinct from others.

Table 2 also presents the correlation statistics for the study variables. Deep acting has a strong positive association with job satisfaction (0.64), whilst it has a strong inverse association with emotional exhaustion (-0.60). Surface acting is inversely related to job satisfaction (-0.53) and positively associated with emotional exhaustion (0.71).

4.3. Structural Model

The Amos package was used to test the impact and strength of the relationship between emotional labour and outcome variables. Figure 2 presents the findings.

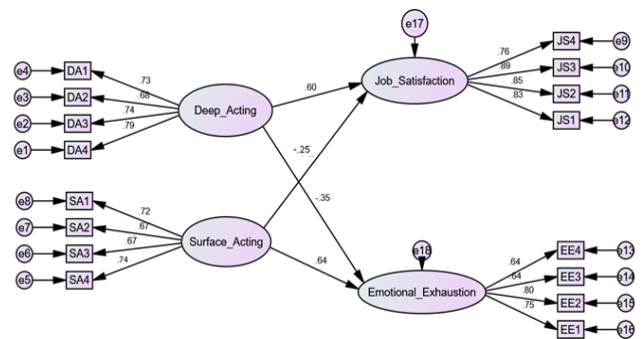


Figure 2: Path Analysis

The structural model presented in Figure 2 had considerably good fit indices (CMIN = 234.380, DF = 94, P = 0.00, CMIN/DF = 2.493, GFI = 0.921, AGF = 0.895, CFI = 0.947, RMSEA = 0.72). The model managed to explain 54% of the determinants of emotional exhaustion (R2= 0.54) and 40% of job satisfaction (R2 = 0.40).

The structural model in figure 2 also shows that deep acting positively impacts on job satisfaction and inversely impacts on emotional exhaustion. Conversely, surface acting positively impacts on emotional exhaustion and negatively impacts on job satisfaction. Table 3 shows the extent to which the hypothesised paths were statistically significant.

Table 3: Significance Level of Path Associations

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Decision
Job Satisfaction	←	Deep Acting	0.619	.136	7.753	***	Supported
Emotional Exhaustion	←	Deep Acting	-0.335	.079	-4.585	***	Supported
Job Satisfaction	←	Surface Acting	-0.251	.170	-2.715	0.036	Supported
Emotional Exhaustion	←	Surface Acting	0.654	.171	5.870	***	Supported

The first hypothesis (H1) predicted that deep acting has a positive impact on job satisfaction. This hypothesis was accepted ($\beta = 0.619$, $P = 0.000$, $r = 0.639$) signifying that boundary spanners are more satisfied with their jobs if they deep act. The strength of the correlation coefficient (0.639) showed that the influence of deep acting in inciting job satisfaction of frontline employees was also high.

Similar results were found in Turkey by Ogut, Cagliyan and Findik (2013) who found statistical evidence of a positive correlation between job satisfaction and deep acting. It was noted that deep acting leads to job satisfaction because it is closely related to genuine acting which follows natural feeling without emotion suppression. Similarly, using a confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling procedure using LISREL, Yoo and Jeong (2017) found out that deep acting predicted positive influence on employee work engagement. A balanced assertion was put forward by Mandinika (2020) who encourages managers of front-line employees to monitor physical health of employees over a period of time. That followed a revelation in his study that employees who were excessively exposed to deep acting developed high blood pressure problems regardless of generics and genetics.

The second hypothesis (H2) predicted that Deep acting has a negative impact on emotional exhaustion. This hypothesis was accepted ($\beta = -0.335$, $P = 0.000$, $r = -0.604$) showing that frontline employees will be less emotionally exhausted if they deep act. A negative beta shows that when deep acting goes up by 1 standard deviation, emotional exhaustion goes down by 0.335 standard deviations.

In a related study, Huang, Chiaburu, Xin & Li (2015) revealed that deep acting was less emotionally exhausting for service providers when they perceived their jobs as challenging. Similarly, Bursali, Bağcı and Kök (2013) found that private bank employees prefer to act natural rather than acting roles and express their feelings as they come from deep inside.

The third hypothesis (H3) posits that surface acting has a negative impact on job satisfaction. The results of the study confirmed this hypothesis ($\beta = -0.251$, $P = 0.036$, $r = -0.532$), implying that the more boundary spanners surface act, the less likely that they become satisfied with their jobs

by a factor of 25%.

A study by Balogun and Shyngle (2016) shows that surface acting may lead to impaired self-evaluation on employees who use it. The long run effect of it could be depression, reduced motivation and high employee turnover. Huang et al. (2015: 1399) also suggest that surface acting can lead to net loss in resources since the “inauthentic display of emotions is less likely to yield an upswing in positive resources”.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) hypothesised that surface acting has a positive impact on emotional exhaustion. The hypothesis is accepted at $P = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.654$, $r = 0.708$. This means that the more boundary spanners surface act, the more they become emotionally exhausted and burnt out. This goes to highlight the need for managers and companies to desist from emotion suppression as it causes emotional burnout.

The previous studies by other researchers also found consistent results with the current findings. For instance, Giorgi et al. (2017) studied emotional labour in the banking sector in Rome. They found out that that workplace stress was a critical banking sector issue with potentially negative effects on workers’ and organizations’ psychological and physical health. Their study also brought out the idea that there was a gradual increase in mental health problems in the banking sector which was as a result of stress at work.

4.4. The Effect of Gender on Emotional Labor

The study tested whether male and female employees were affected differently by emotional labour strategies administered on them. The Mann Whitney Test, also known as the Wilcoxon Test for independent samples was computed and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney Rank Scores for Age against Emotional Labor Outcome Variables

Ranks				
	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Job Satisfaction	Female	114	146.02	23947.00
	Male	95	156.96	21504.00
	Total	209		
Emotional Exhaustion	Female	114	154.55	21173.00
	Male	95	148.04	24278.00
	Total	209		
		Job Satisfaction	Emotional Exhaustion	
Mann-Whitney U		10417.000	10748.000	
Wilcoxon W		23947.000	24278.000	
Z		-1.109	-.660	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.267	.509	

a. Grouping Variable: Indicate your gender

The data shown in Table 4 shows that the Job Satisfaction mean rank score for males (156.96) was higher than of female frontline employees (146.02). The emotional exhaustion mean rank score for females of 154.55 was higher than 148.04 for male employees. The Mann-Whitney

U test statistic shows that the differential effect of emotional labour was not statistically significantly different between male and female employees. The P-value for Job satisfaction was 0.267 ($p > 0.05$) whilst for emotional labour was 0.509 ($p > 0.05$).

The fifth hypothesis (H5) wanted to ascertain if male and female boundary spanners are affected the same by emotional labour administered on them. The study therefore hypothesised that the mean rating for men and women boundary spanners are statistically different. However, The Mann-Whitney U test statistic shows that the differential effect of emotional labour was not statistically significantly different between male and female employees. The p value for Job satisfaction was 0.267 ($p > 0.05$) whilst for emotional labour was 0.509 ($p > 0.05$). This means that both female and male boundary spanners were affected the same by emotional labour strategies. The effect of deep acting was the same for men and women. The findings of the current study were different from the majority of studies previously done on emotional labour and its outcomes (Praveena, 2015; Lee et al., 2014; Lazanyi, 2014; Perera & Arachchige, 2014; Rugraff & Hansen, 2011). However, the results were consistent with the findings of Ye (2016) who also found an insignificant difference between males and females.

Table 5: The Moderation Effect of Organizational Support

			Likelihood Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Job satisfaction	←	Surface acting	-.833	.458	-4.820	0.00	
Job satisfaction	←	Organisational support	-.101	.150	-.673	.501	
Job satisfaction	←	Surface acting – Organisational Support	.003	.017	.155	.877	
Emotional exhaustion	←	Surface acting	.862	.163	5.300	0.00	
Emotional exhaustion	←	Organisational support	.111	.053	2.081	.037	
Emotional exhaustion	←	Surface acting – Organisational Support	-.014	.006	-2.333	.020	

Table 5 shows that the moderation effect between surface acting and job satisfaction is not statistically supported. The interaction variable ($P = 0.877$) and the moderation variable ($P = 0.501$) all had insignificant P-values ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, we conclude that organisational support does not moderate the association between surface acting and job satisfaction (H6). Therefore, whether employees get supervisory and coworker support, that has no significant impact for as long as the employees are surface acting.

The lower deck of table 4 shows results for the moderation effect of organisational support on surface acting and emotional exhaustion. The P-value for the interaction variable was statistically significant ($P = 0.020$) and so was the P-value for the moderation variable (0.037). This therefore gives evidence of the presence of the moderation effect of organisational support (supervisory

support and co-worker support) on surface acting and emotional exhaustion (H7). This means that employees are more likely to cope with surface acting if they are supported by their supervisors and co-workers.

5. Managerial and Policy Implications

Managerial and policy recommendations proposed in this section are based on the findings that emotional labour strategies may lead to a favourable outcome (job satisfaction) and an unhealthy outcome (emotional exhaustion). It was also noted that male and female employees are affected the same by deep acting whilst the support that boundary spanners get from their supervisors and coworkers help them to cope with emotional exhaustion.

The study recommends training and retraining of

boundary spanners so that they have an appreciation of the management's need to develop a friendly customer engagement. As employees become conscious of that, they cease to surface act but they engage in deep acting which is closely tied to genuine acting. The study has shown that deep acting promotes job satisfaction.

Through employee engagement, surface acting will be reduced and deep acting will be enhanced. Employees would know where the organisation is coming from and going to. Through that collaboration, employees would feel they are part of the organisation. That is more likely to loosen surface acting whilst promoting deep acting which was found to be associated with job satisfaction in this study.

The study also recommends a relaxed policy and job rotation to allow boundary spanners to switch to back office when they are emotionally distressed, where they would not be interacting with customers. Mandatory boundary spanning even when the employee is not feeling well may force employees to surface act. According to the current study findings, as they surface act, they become dissatisfied with their jobs. This is detrimental as that may cause high labour turnover in the long run.

The study has shown that emotional labour has health effects that affect the cognitive ability of employees. Such effects were found to be stress related and depression as caused by excessive emotional suppression. The research therefore recommends the instigation of wellness programmes to regularly subject frontline employees to health check. Such programmes will also help employees to be conscious of their need to moderate emotional suppression and long run stress related effects.

The study found no statistical difference of the effect of emotional labour on gender. Therefore, when administering display rules, they may not consider gender variances among frontline employees. Both males and female employees are affected the same by deep acting.

The study found out that employees' level of emotional exhaustion as a result of surface acting was moderated by the support they got from supervisors and core workers (organisational support). The study therefore recommends supervisors to run an open-door policy on employees so that they feel free to approach them each time they are overwhelmed by their work. Similarly, supervisors should be there for their subordinates. They should offer technical and social support to front line employees so that they cope with the emotional distress of emotional labour. Employee fellowship programmes that encourage socialization with other employees may also be instigated to promote coworker support. The advent of social media has simplified this role a bit. Companies may open social media groups for employee socialization to enhance co-worker support.

6. Conclusions

As more and more companies engage in display rules through emotional labour, the study found out that surface acting leads boundary spanners to emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction. Contrary to suppressed emotions, the study concluded that if employees genuinely act through deep acting, they are more likely to enjoy their work and that reduces emotional burnout. Therefore, companies responsible for managing frontline employees, should promote natural development of empathy and compassionate which promotes deep acting.

The study also suffered some limitations. Different policies of emotional labour and display rules among all banks in Zimbabwe poses a limitation of comparability. It was difficult to compare the impact of emotional labour on all banks in Zimbabwe because they were at different levels of emotional labour policy implementation. To counter that limitation, the researchers restricted themselves to a homogeneous group of international banks who were at the same wave length with regards to emotional labour practices and policies. Regardless of the said limitation, the study managed to validate the effect of emotional labour on front line employees.

Future researchers may study on the relevance of emotional labour against employee emotional deterioration as a result of surface acting. The scope of the study may also be broadened to study even the hospitality industry where emotional labour and emotional contagion are equally topical issues today.

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